



# Assam Legislative Assembly Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

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

NOVEMBER SESSION

VOLUME II

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The 19th November 1955



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

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The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 10 A.M. on Saturday, the 19th November, 1955.

**PRESENT**

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

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**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**UNSTARRED QUESTIONS**

(To which answers were laid on the table)

**Establishment of Judges Court in Barpeta Circuit House**

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED** asked :

6. Will the Minister-in-charge of Judicial be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Government has lately received any representation from Barpeta Bar Association regarding the establishment of Judges Court at Barpeta in Circuit House ?
- (b) If so, whether Government propose to consider the matter ?
- (c) If not, why not ?

**Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister)** replied :

6. (a)—No. The Government has not received any representation from the Barpeta Bar Association as yet regarding the establishment of Judges Court at Barpeta in Circuit House. But a representation has been received from the said Association for the establishment of Judges Court first in Circuit at Barpeta.

(b) & (c)—The Government is considering the feasibility of holding a Circuit Court by the Subordinate Judge at Barpeta and has invited the opinion of the High Court on the subject.



**Construction of a Bund along with the Southern bank of Garanga Beel to close the Katarihanajan**

**Shri BALIRAM DAS** asked :

7. Will the Minister-in-charge of Embankment and Drainage be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether he is aware that Mayong mauza in Nowgong district is the worst flood-affected area ?
- (b) Whether he is aware that due to the non-closing of the Katarihanajan of the aforesaid mauza, the flood situation is much aggravated every year ?
- (c) Whether he has received any public representation lately to construct a Bund along with the Southern bank of Garanga Beel to close the Katarihanajan, with a view to protect the thousands of bighas of agricultural land of the aforesaid mauza ?
- (d) What step is being taken by the Government in the matter ?

**Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister)** replied :

7. (a)—Yes. This is one of the flood-affected areas of the State.

(b)—This requires careful examination.

(c)—Yes. This is one of the Schemes selected by the Embankment and Drainage Advisory Committee at its meeting held on the 2nd December, 1953 in the district of Nowgong, giving II priority to the Scheme.

(d)—Both for want of sufficient fund and trained staff it has not been possible to take up the work during the 1st Five-Year Plan period. This will be considered as one of the Flood Control Schemes in 2nd Five-Year Plan.

**The Assam Disturbed Areas Bill, 1955**

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Hareswar Goswami will now speak on the Assam Disturbed Areas Bill, 1955.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think first I can move the Motion for consideration, and then he will be able to speak.



**Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI:** Sir, so far as the Bill is concerned, we may not have much to speak about the Clauses, what I want to speak is about the principle underlying the Bill. If that is allowed, I have no objection to speak after the Motion is moved.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes, you can speak on the principle.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Assam Disturbed Areas Bill, 1955, be taken into consideration.

**Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am opposing this Bill on a fundamental principle, and that is this—that when we have the normal laws to deal with the normal situation, it is not necessary to bring in any extraordinary legislation. About the situation in the Naga Hills, the Mover of the Bill has said that the situation there is only not very happy in a particular area and the alleged acts of violence and lawlessness reported by the Chief Minister, we find that the normal law is sufficient and adequate to deal with such a situation. Riotous assembly can be dealt with under the ordinary law. Anybody who interferes with the administration of law and order, can be dealt with under the ordinary law. Arson, and murder can be dealt with in a similar manner. I therefore say, Sir, the Chief Minister has not been able to make out a case to show that such wide-spread powers need be given to the officers. Sir, my objection is that once we have such legislation in our statute book we rarely think of repealing them and unscrupulous person take advantage. Because in our democracy there is room for such unscrupulous persons to be in the helm of affairs and may use such powers not to maintain law and order but to maintain themselves in power. History abounds in such cases of extraordinary laws being used to keep oneself in power. The other day the Chief Minister also said that the situation in the Naga Hills is also improving, and the trouble spots have been confined to only limited areas. The Bill is intended to have its application to the whole of Assam so that Government may have the power to declare any area as disturbed area and used the various provisions under the Bill. If, Sir, this is mainly a question of the Naga Hills, then the Bill should have clearly referred to it. Therefore I feel that this Bill goes beyond the limit of necessary requirement, and it gives wide powers to the Executive. The other day the Chief Minister also said that some people of the Naga Hills are co-operating with the Government, and I am confident that if



we can have that co-operation in a greater degree, a piece of legislation as the one now envisaged in the Bill will no longer be necessary. Naga Hills, as most of us know, is full of difficult terrains. It is therefore very difficult for people to go from one place to the other. In a place like this, I am afraid, a Sub-Inspector of Police or a Magistrate may not be able to go to the various places where enforcement of the provisions of the Bill, if passed, will be necessary. If maintenance of law and order is the primary consideration weighing with the Government in bringing, in this Bill, then I maintain, Sir, law and order should be maintained with the willing co-operation of the people. As has been stated by the Chief Minister himself, that a large section of the Naga people are now gradually feeling that these facts of non-co-operation with the Government are leading them nowhere and that they are gradually extending their co-operation to the Government in carrying out the constructive activities taken up by the administration. The more this feeling is widespread, the more they will realise that this is the time when they can do much better work by engaging themselves to various welfare activities. Therefore our attention should go in that direction in trying to secure the willing co-operation of the people. I would like our Chief Minister to visit the various places in the Naga Hills, meet the Naga people—may not be as representatives of the Naga National Council but as ordinary Naga people—and explain things to them and I am sure the tendency that is slowly emerging towards co-operation may be lasting. But if we have such a piece of legislation which gives such wide powers to the Police then it may be made an issue for further disturbance and an instrument of baseless propaganda. Mr. Medhi said that uptil now there has been no occasion to use such power and I am told that the situation today in November is much better than what it was in July. If so then what is the necessity of giving such powers today? I am sure that more we refrain ourselves from using such powers better it is for all concerned. If the situation is such as can be controlled by ordinary power given by ordinary law then there will not be any point of dissatisfaction among the people and there will not be any propaganda against the authority. If we use ordinary power given by ordinary law, we will be maintaining the democratic principles, we will be able to show that the disturbance is not so much as to call for extra ordinary law. It is not so. The other day we were told by the Chief Minister that Naga people were coming forward to co-operate in the various development projects and we also read in the newspaper that the Naga National Council gave an assurance that they would refrain from such acts of violence, that they



would go to the people and say that violence is not the method for achieving whatever their goal may be. If assurances are there and if they are acted upon then I feel it is not necessary to have such a Bill before us.

**Shri HARINARAYAN BARUAH:** On a point of information, Sir, নগা নেচনেল কাউঞ্চিলৰ নেতা সকলে আমাৰ মুখ্য মন্ত্ৰীক লগ ধৰাৰ পিচত নগা পাহাৰত তেনেকুৱা হিংসামূলক কাৰ্য্য কৰাৰ উদাহৰণ তেখেতে দেখুৱাব পাৰিব নে ?

**Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI:** It may be that there were some isolated instances of violence. In this connection I would request my Friend, Mr. Baruah, to remember our own movement. Although we pledged ourselves to non-violence and our leaders exhorted the people to maintain law and order and act upon our pledges of non-violence, there were people who indulged in violence and for that we did not hold ourselves responsible. Therefore it is quite possible that there might be some stray instances—isolated instances of violence—and for that we cannot hold the Naga National Council responsible. Sir, I am not in favour of the philosophy propounded by the Naga National Council. I am against it, but we have not also declared the Naga National Council an illegal body. On the other hand if we accept their *bona fide* and when their accredited leaders come to us and say that they do not believe in violence and when they tell us that they can prove by facts and figures that it is not due to the propaganda of the Naga National Council that these acts of violence are taking place, then it will be wrong to hold them responsible. Until it is proved that the assurances given to the Chief Minister, by the Naga leaders, that they will refrain from any kind of violence and preach non-violence amongst the people, have been violated, the Naga National Council cannot be held responsible. So my whole submission is that when we have such assurances from the accredited leaders of the Naga people, when the situation is such that from July to November there was no occasion to use the wide powers contemplated in this Bill, when we know that the willing co-operation of the people is forthcoming and will be forthcoming in a greater degree, when we know that the co-operation of the people is adequate enough to stop violence in those areas, then to have such a legislation will not be very good and justified. If however the situation deteriorates to such an extent as to call for a stringent measure, the Governor is there to promulgate an Ordinance. But why give legislative seal to an Ordinance which was not necessary according to our Chief Minister's own admission ?



The Assembly will be prorogued and if after prorogation a situation, arises, the Ordinance may be promulgated. There is nothing in our Constitution that the Ordinance once repealed cannot be promulgated once again. The Ordinance will lapse with the meeting of the Assembly and if again after the prorogation of the Assembly it becomes necessary to promulgate such an Ordinance, the Governor can do it.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) :** If it is adjourned ?

**Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI:** Now what we find ? We find that the Assembly will be prorogued, so there will be no necessity for having such a legislation. What I am submitting is if after the prorogation a situation crops up which demands promulgation of such an Ordinance, it will be done.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** But we are open to the charge that has been surreptitiously done.

**Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI:** My Friend, Mr. Mookerjee, said that to bring in Ordinance every time would look bad. Yes, that is true, but even if we bring in a Bill, a disturbed area will not always remain a disturbed area. After some time it will cease to be a disturbed area. It may be again a disturbed area after it has ceased to be disturbed. Then you will have to make a fresh declaration. So there is no difference between a Bill and an Ordinance, and the argument advanced by Mr. Mookerjee, therefore, does not hold good. What I am saying is that as soon as the Leader of the House has said that this extraordinary powers given under this Ordinance has not been used and that the people are giving us more and more co-operation, there is absolutely no necessity for such a legislation. The main argument against this Bill is that this is an extraordinary piece of legislation.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If you go on promulgating Ordinance will it not look bad ?

**Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI:** The passing of this Bill means that this Act remains in the statute book and we only take help of it when necessary.

This is an extraordinary piece of legislation and should not remain in the statute book. Therefore, my submission is that on the basis of the statement of Mr. Medhi himself, I would request him not to move this Bill and not to proceed



with it any further. Rely on the *bona fide* of the people and rely on the good sense of the people and also have confidence that we will be able to deal with the situation even with the ordinary law. This will also give no opportunity to the people to make wild propaganda that we are using extraordinary powers against them and that we are simply harassing them. But let us rely more on those people who are well meaning people who really want to maintain law and order and then and then only we will be able to tackle this situation.

**Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, to-day, the Naga National Council or Mr. Phizo is not on the dock so as either to defend his position or criticise his or the Naga National Council's action. We should consider the Bill as it is before us. When we look into the provisions of this Bill what do we find ? Firstly, I hope that it will be admitted by all that this is an extraordinary piece of measure. Does the Government think that the law and order situation in the country has become such as to make the ordinary law of the land incapable to tackle the situation ? If that is really so, and if really our State is going in such a way as to make the ordinary law of the land quite unfit to tackle the situation then of course we should consider the passage of such an extraordinary piece of legislation. I would, therefore, like to have an answer from the Government side as to whether they agree that the situation has really become so bad.

Now, from the preamble of the Bill we see that it is envisaged to provide for suppression of disorder and for the restoration and maintenance of public order in the disturbed areas of Assam. The very preamble makes a sordid suggestion. We do not think that there has been any wide-spread disturbance in Assam of late so as to warrant such an extraordinary measure. We do not think that there has been such a wide-spread disorder in the State that such a Bill should come to the House.

We are generally borrowing political and legal concepts from Great Britain. And what do we find in that country ? There except when the country is in a state of war, such extraordinary powers are not given to the Executive. But here in our country we find that even on very flimsy grounds the Executive seeks to take such extraordinary powers. Are we in a state of war ? If so, where is that war ? Now let me refer to page 193, paragraph 717 of the States Reorganisation Commission's Report. There it is stated that some people represented to the Commission about the situation in the Naga Hills which our Government did not agree. It is stated in



that Report that—"It has been represented to us that the law and order problem in the Naga Hills district is the same as in the Tuensang area of the North-East Frontier Agency and that unless the entire area is brought under the authority the situation cannot be effectively dealt with. However, it has been stated on behalf of the Assam Government that the Naga Hills district has been relatively quiet during the last two or three years and that there are indications of the people of the area abjuring violence in favour of peaceful methods." This clearly shows that the situation is improving in the Naga Hills and therefore those who are out to take away Naga Hills from the State of Assam are not right. After stating this before the States Re-organisation Commission the Government spokesmen have come to say today that the situation there has become worse than ever or at least than what it was when Government gave the information to the States Reorganisation Commission. In reality, however, we find that the situation has rather improved. Many elements in the Naga Hills who had not previously co-operated with Government have now co-operated. Even the Naga National Council and their leader, Mr. Phizo, have discouraged terroristic activities. All these things show that there is a tendency growing in the Naga Hills whereby people are coming more and more to co-operate with Government to maintain the law and order situation in that District. Are we going to help that process or hinder that process by passing this sort of legislation? Will these people be encouraged to co-operate with us, or will they be dismayed and discouraged by the passage of such a Bill? These are the questions which we should consider. We should know what is the most appropriate approach in delicate matters. We should know how to tackle a situation, what steps should be taken and at what stages. Therefore, in our approach to these problems especially when this is a question of extraordinary powers for the police and military, we should be very cautious. A very small mistake may create a situation which we may have to repent in the future. I therefore request the Executive to consider the situation in that prospects.

Now, we see in clause 1(2) of the Bill that this measure is not only meant for a particular area of Assam, but it is meant for the whole of Assam if and when it is necessary. The extent of the Bill is the whole of Assam subject to the provision of section 3 of the Bill.

Now, we find that by clause 4 of the Bill even a Sub-Inspector of Police or a Havildar of the Armed Battalion or an officer of the Assam Rifles not below the rank of a Havildar has been



proposed to be given power which goes so far as to use fire arms even to the extent of causing death. We should consider whether this power to the extent of causing death is really warranted in the present circumstances to be given in the hands of a Sub-Inspector of Police or a Havildar. Do we expect that these officers, as they are at present, are so well acquainted with law that they can be given such wide and extraordinary powers? In ordinary course it is only a Magistrate who is given this power and now this power is sought to be delegated to a Sub-Inspector of Police or to a Havildar. Let the Government think more carefully whether actually the situation is so bad as to demand such a measure.

The other day when this Bill was introduced, the Chief Minister had said that the Bill would have a deterrent effect. I will only suggest that in a democratic form of Government more stress should be given to persuasion than to deterrent measures. The most precious thing in a democracy or in a parliamentary form of Government is the liberty of the citizens. Unless and until the very existence of the State is at stake, liberty of the citizens should not be curtailed, far from destroying it. If this Bill is enacted the liberty of the citizens will be greatly jeopardised, and they will be at the mercy of a Sub-Inspector of Police or a Havildar. The other day, while explaining his position, the Chief Minister had said that recently the trouble centre was Tuensang in the North-East Frontier Agency and not the administered portion of the Naga Hills, but some people had come here and created some amount of disturbance. If it is really so, and if it is only an effect of the disturbance in the Tuensang area then I think the situation is not so serious as to warrant this sort of legislation. If the situation in the Tuensang area improves then it is clear that the situation in the administered portion of the Naga Hills also will surely improve. We know that the terrain there is dangerous. There are no good roads as in the plains areas or in the other hill areas and the people there are used to certain ways of life, certain methods of behaviour which are specific to themselves. Moreover, we do not know what actually those officers of the Assam Rifles or of the political expeditions are doing in the Tuensang area. We know only one side of the picture. We have no free access to that area to know actual things. If this Bill be put in the statute book, one inevitable reaction will be that those people there who are gradually coming to us and are trying to understand us will be irritated and disappointed.

Lastly, I want to say that we should remember that the adjourned Budget Session of this Assembly had taken place in



the month of June. How is it that the Government could not visualise such a situation in that month of June and as soon as Assembly was prorogued, there came the Ordinance in July? The reason is that at that time it was perhaps thought not proper by the Executive to disclose facts to the Legislature and therefore recourse was taken to the passing of the Ordinance in an extraordinary way. Once an Ordinance was promulgated, we were confronted with a *fait accompli*. The new posture is, "well, when there is already an Ordinance, let us just legalise this by meekly agreeing to what has now been placed before the House in the form of a Bill." To put any measure in the statute book all the facts ought to have been placed before the Legislature and after due consideration, after scrutinising all the facts, if the Legislature was satisfied that such a measure was necessary then only the measure ought to be placed in the statute book. Without imputing any motive to the Government I should like to say that a very dangerous tendency is being developed now in the State by brute majority rule. The brute majority here is not tending towards democracy, but towards autocracy. I want to give a friendly warning to the party in power not to be puffed up and dizzy because of their having an overwhelming majority by which they can willfully ignore the small number of the Opposition. Rather because they have an overwhelming majority, their responsibility is all the greater. They may have a sense of security for their party and they may think that they can pass any measure they like, but they should see that if by passing such a measure they do not have closer understanding from the people of different portions of the State and if by passing such a measure they only accentuate a feeling of suspicion among those people then it will be a very bad thing for the Government and the country.

With these words, Sir, I request the Government specially the Chief Minister to reconsider the situation whether actually the situation in our country is such as warrants such an extraordinary piece of legislation.

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should like to oppose the Bill which has been presented before the House, namely, the Assam Disturbed Areas Bill, 1955. This Bill, as is stated, seeks to make better provisions for suppression of disorder and for the restoration and maintenance of peace and order in the disturbed areas in Assam. The fact of its presentation is a clear indictment upon the administration—indictment in the sense that ordinary laws of the land



fail to protect or maintain law and order in the State. So, it is obvious that there is some unrest in the administration of the State which failed to rule the country properly within the purview of its ordinary laws. The first thing which I oppose is that the Bill as presented will cover not only the disturbed areas of Naga Hills but it covers the whole State of Assam. Until we heard the Chief Minister the other day while presenting the Bill, nobody could find out for what areas particularly the Bill was meant for. If one reads the Bill he finds that it is for the whole of the State of Assam—it may be for the Naga Hills, for Cachar, for Goalpara, etc. So, my first opposition is that the necessity of this Bill, if there be any, should have been for that particular area of Naga Hills and not for the whole of the State of Assam. Secondly, Sir, the Chief Minister has given only one side of the picture regarding the state of affairs prevailing in the Naga Hills. It is unfortunate that there is no elected representative of the Naga Hills District in this House from whom we could get the other side of the picture regarding the actual state of affairs there. It has been stated by the Chief Minister that disturbances are going on there for long and, therefore, the necessity for such a Bill is urgent. But it might be, Sir, that the Chief Minister has exaggerated things because we have seen from his past speeches that his utterances have very little bearing on facts. In one breath the Chief Minister said that this Bill was necessary to suppress disorder, anti-State activities, etc., and in another breath he said that during the last 3 or 4 months the situation had improved and the necessity of the Ordinance was not there. But still he wants this Bill in order to have more power to suppress any disorder which may come in future. It will thus be seen that the Chief Minister's statements are contradictory and it is difficult for us to understand what is the actual position in the Naga Hills. During the last 7 or 8 years the Government had pursued a policy of suppression by force. I would now ask the Government to view the problem from a different angle. It has been stated that some people in the Naga Hills are co-operating with the Government ; it has also been stated that the Naga National Council had some sort of talks with the Government. So, taking these as the nucleus of a solution, why should not our Government start negotiations and see whether the difficulties can be removed by a different kind of approach ? It is not difficult for us, the Indians, to see things from that angle as we have a natural inclination for non-violence, which has been taught by the leader of the country. So, considering all these things, I would request the Government, particularly the Chief Minister, to realise that what he failed



to accomplish during the last 8 years by force, it will be impossible for him to accomplish during the next few years. Trial was given about our strength. Let us now divert our energies and wisdom in other directions. If we can pacify these people, if we, by a different approach, can make them understand the spirit of democracy and law, the problem will be solved. The people creating disturbance are not all dacoits, they do not want wealth. So, there must be some grievances. They are carrying on with some agitation not for any personal gain, but for what they consider to be the interest of the people concerned. In every part of the world this kind of agitation took place and wise statesmen have acted in the line of conciliation. I do not agree with the Naga people when they say that they want self-determination outside the Indian Union; nobody here will agree with that, but I think timely concessions are the only way to bring the Naga people under control.

With these few words, I oppose the Bill that has been presented before the House by the Chief Minister.

**Shri HARINARAYAN BARUAH:** মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, আমার মাননীয় প্রধান মন্ত্রী ডাঙরীয়াই যিখন বিল (The Assam Disturbed Areas Bill, 1955) উপস্থাপিত কৰিছে.....

**Mr. SPEAKER:** ইয়াত আপোনাৰ কিবা কোৱাৰ প্ৰয়োজন আছে জানো ?

**Shri HARINARAYAN BARUAH:** হয়, প্ৰয়োজন আছে বুলিয়েই দুয়াৰমান কব খুজিছোঁ।

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, প্রধান মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ে যিখন বিল উপস্থাপিত কৰিছে তাক মই সমৰ্থন কৰিছোঁ। এই বিলখনৰ ওপৰত আমাৰ বিৰোধী দলৰ সদস্যসকলে কিয় যে আপত্তি কৰিছে—মই বুজিবলৈ টান পাইছোঁ। অৱশ্যে বিৰোধী দলৰ পৰা মাননীয় সদস্য শ্ৰীযুত গোবীন্দৰ ভট্টাচাৰ্য্যই যি ভাবে সংখ্যা লঘু পাৰ্টিৰ দায়িত্বৰ কথা বৰ্ণাই—সংখ্যা গৰিষ্ঠ পাৰ্টিৰ দায়িত্বৰ কথা স্মৰণ কৰি দিছে তাত মোৰ কব লগা নাই। সংখ্যা লঘু সদস্য সকলে যেনেকৈ নিজৰ দায়িত্ব উপলব্ধি কৰিছে—থিক তেনেকৈয়েই সংখ্যা গৰিষ্ঠ দলেও দায়িত্ব উপলব্ধি কৰিয়েই এই বিল উপস্থাপিত কৰিছে আৰু দেশৰ শান্তি আৰু শৃঙ্খলাৰ ওপৰত চৰকাৰৰ যি দায়িত্ব আছে—তাকে উপলব্ধি কৰিয়েই—চৰকাৰী পক্ষৰ পৰা মাননীয় প্রধান মন্ত্রী ডাঙৰীয়াই এই বিলৰ অবতারণা কৰিছে। এই বিল অবতারণা প্ৰসঙ্গত তেখেতে সমষ্ট নগা পাহাৰত অশান্তিৰ সৃষ্টি হোৱা নাই বুলি কৈছে। মাত্ৰ ধাৰাবাহিক ভাবে অশান্তিয়ে দেখা দিছে। এই পাহাৰৰে টুৱেনচাং অঞ্চলত আৰু তাত উপদ্ৰৱ কৰিবলৈ কিছু লোকে অস্ত্ৰ-সস্ত্ৰেৰে সুসজ্জিত হৈ হিংসাত্মক আৰু ধ্বংসাত্মক কাৰ্য্য আৰম্ভ কৰিছে। তাৰ ফলত, চৰকাৰী চিপাহী মিলিটেৰী আদিৰ লগত সংঘৰ্ষ হয়। বাস্তৱ-পথ ভাঙি-ছিঙি দিয়া, ঘৰ-বাৰী পুৰি দিয়া, যাতায়াতৰ অসুবিধাৰ কাৰণে দলং আদি ভঙা কাৰ্য্য চলিবই লাগিছে। এনেবিলাক ধ্বংসাত্মক কাৰ্য্য ভবিষ্যতে যাতে হবলৈ নাপায়—তাৰ প্ৰতিৰোধ হিচাবে চৰকাৰে যদি কোনো আইনৰ সহায় লোৱাৰ প্ৰয়োজন বোধ কৰে তেনেহলে



আমাৰ বিৰোধী সদস্যৰ কব লগা কি আছে। কিন্তু প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে এটা প্ৰতিস্থিত চৰকাৰৰ সেই ক্ষেত্ৰত দায়িত্ব যথেষ্ট আছে আৰু সেই কাৰণেই এই বিল উত্থাপন কৰাৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তা বোধ কৰিছে। এই বিল খন যদি পাচ কৰা হয় তেন্তে, তাকতো গোটেই পাহাৰত প্ৰয়োগ নকৰে। প্ৰয়োগ কৰিব উপদ্ৰৱ অঞ্চলত ; আৰু যদি অসমৰ কোনো উপদ্ৰৱ অঞ্চল নোথাকে তেন্তে, এই আইনো প্ৰয়োগ কৰা নহব।

( টুৱেনচাং তো অসমৰ ভিতৰত নাই—*A voice* ).

যদি সেয়েই সত্য হয় তেনেহলে এই সদনত এই বিলখন 'পাচ' হবলৈ দিয়াত—বিৰোধীদলৰ দুই এজন সদস্যৰ কি আপত্তি থাকিব পাৰে— বুজি নাপাও। ইয়াৰ বাহিৰেও এই বিলৰ এনে উদ্দেশ্য নহয় যে ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা নগা পাহাৰবাৰ্গী ভাই-ভনী সকলক— নিৰ্মূল কৰা হব।

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, ইয়াৰ লগতে মই এইটো নকৈ নোৱাৰো, শ্ৰীযুত বৰ্ণেন্দ্ৰ মোহন দাসে যে কৈছে—সেই উপদ্ৰৱকাৰীসকলে কোনো ধন-সম্পত্তিৰ আশাত এনে কাৰ্য্য কৰা নাই। ইয়াত মই তেখেতৰ সৈতে অমিল। কাৰণ, অলপতে,, নগা পাহাৰৰ কিছু লোকে অস্ত্ৰ-সস্ত্ৰ লৈ মানুহ মাৰি ধন-সম্পত্তি লুটি লৈ যোৱাৰ কথা আমি জানো আৰু শ্ৰীযুত বৰ্ণেন্দ্ৰ মোহন দাসে তেখেতৰ পিচতে বহি থকা শ্ৰীযুত সৰজু প্ৰসাদ সিং ডাঙৰীয়াৰ স্মৃতিলৈই ইয়াৰ উত্তৰ পাব। আজি দুমাহ মানৰ আগতে তেখেতৰ সমষ্টিতে এনে দৰে মানুহ হত্যা কৰি ধন-সম্পত্তি লুটি নিছে। যদি এই স্বংসায়ক কাৰ্য্য বিলাক প্ৰতিৰোধ কৰাই নহয় তেনেহলে দেশবাসীৰ ৰক্ষা কত ?

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS:** For suppression of dacoits he wants the Bill.

**Shri HARINARAYAN BARUAH:** অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, মই তেখেতৰ কৈবল আনুসঙ্গিক ভাবেহে উত্তৰ দিছো। তেখেত সকলে এইটো অসঙ্গত বুলি ভাবিলেও আমি সঙ্গত বিবেচনা কৰো। মই নিশ্চয় বিশ্বাস কৰো যে নগাপাহাৰৰ এই অশান্তিত নগা পাহাৰৰ ভাই-ভনী সকলৰ মনত তেনে ভাৱ প্ৰকাশ কৰি প্ৰকৃততে ইন্ধন যোগোৱা নাই বুলি। কাৰণ, নগা পাহাৰৰ ভাই-বন্ধু সকলৰ লগত আমাৰ যি মিলা-প্ৰীতি—সেই মিলা-প্ৰীতিৰ আৰ্হি যদি বন্ধুৰ শ্ৰীযুত বৰ্ণেন্দ্ৰ মোহন দাসে দেখিলেহেঁতেন, তেনেহলে আজিৰ এই সদনত, তেখেতে তেনে মন্তব্য প্ৰকাশ নকৰিলেহেঁতেন।

নগা ভাইসকলৰ লগত আমাৰ খুব সম্বন্ধ আছে, আৰু তেওঁলোকৰ আটাইবোৰেই যে এই অশান্তিৰ কামত যোগদান দিছে সেই কথা কোৱা বৰ যুক্তি সঙ্গত নহব। মাত্ৰ কেইজনমান নেতাৰ বিৰোধী ভাবাপন্ন মত হোৱাৰ কাৰণে কিছুমান নগা বিপথগামী হৈছে। এই বিপথগামী নগাসকলক বৰাই বুজাই শান্তিৰ পথলৈ অনাটোৱেই এই বিলৰ মাই উদ্দেশ্য। সেইকাৰণে মই বিশেষকৈ বিৰোধী দলৰ নেতাজনক অনুৰোধ কৰো যে তেখেতে এই বিলৰ প্ৰতি যি বিৰোধ ভাৱ প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে সেই ভাৱ যেন পৰিহাৰ কৰে।



**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think, my Friends on the other side, could not understand the importance of this Ordinance. I have already mentioned the circumstances justifying the promulgation of this Ordinance and stated that some of the armed gangs with modern weapons were taking shelter in our region in Mokokchung area and with enormous difficulty Assam Rifles and our Police there could disperse them but could not capture the arms and ammunition. Is it the idea of the hon. Members that because Criminal Procedure Code is not applicable in the Naga Hills, our officers are not to be empowered by a special provision to deal with the situation?

**Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI:** Spirit is applicable. So far as the Naga Hills District is concerned, Criminal Procedure and Civil Procedure Codes are not applicable but the spirit is applied and very carefully applied.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** I would ask the hon. Members to consider the situation created there. Big number of gangs seeing the strength of the Military ran away but they have penetrated into such jungles that it is difficult to capture them and their arms and ammunition. Under these circumstances, it is essential to empower our officers so that these gangs with arms and ammunition can be arrested and so that they cannot keep hiding in jungles and attack officers and loyal citizens. Some of these gangs for want of food under threat of arms are looting and injuring innocent and loyal Nagas, Duvashies and others. They are committing dacoities in the entire region of about 100 miles. In such an atmosphere, it is essential that our Police officers and other officers are not put in a helpless position. This provision of the Bill will be applied in the border areas.

At the time when the States Reorganisation Commission came, I made a statement that there was no trouble except in Mokokchung area. The other parts are normal at present also. But we consider that the border area is in a disturbed condition, not only they are looting for food, besides, large number of armed gangs are coming down to Jorhat area and terrorising the innocent people and committing dacoities. These people have come down under pressure of Military in Tuensang area.



To meet such disturbed conditions, it is absolutely necessary that sufficient powers are given to our officers for meeting the situation effectively. I assure that no undue advantage will be taken of these powers and where there is no violence it will not be applied. If it is known to these gangs that Government have given sufficient powers to the Police and other officers then they will be afraid to act as they have been acting now. In fact these gangsters have chopped off heads of many loyal Nagas of that area. It is our duty to protect these loyal Nagas.

**Raja AJIT NARAYAN DEB of Sidli:** May I know, Sir, how these gangs could be supplied with arms ?

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** The whole of Naga Hills was the field of battle during the last war and a large number of arms and ammunition were kept hiding and underground. Some of the people know where these were kept and they unearthed them from various jungles. Tuensang area is difficult of access and from these areas these gangs generally come. There is smuggling of arms from the border also.

These are the reasons why this measure is necessary.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The question is that the Assam Disturbed Areas Bill, 1955, be taken into consideration.

(The Motion was adopted.)

*(After a pause.)*

Consideration clause by clause of the Assam Disturbed Areas Bill, 1955, will come up on the 25th November, 1955. Notices of amendments, if any, to this Bill should reach the Assembly Secretariat before 4 P.M. on the 21st November, 1955.



**Discussion on the Motion to consider the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission relating to Assam.**

**Shri EMONSINGH SANGMA (Garo Hills-Phulbari-Reserved for Scheduled Tribes) :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to give you and through you, the hon. Members of this august House an idea about the feelings of the people of the Garo Hills in regard to the report and recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission. First of all, I think, I shall be failing in my duty, if I do not express my great joy and gratefulness to the Government through you for giving me also, the opportunity and privilege as to have a talk and discussion about the report and recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission on the floor of this House as a responsible representative of the people.

Sir, as you all know about the census figures of Garo Hills district, I like to say that Garo Hills can be termed as the miniature of Assam where plains tribals and non-tribals other than Garos live together permanently since a very long time in friendship and harmony. The total population of these tribals and non-tribals in the district is almost 50,000 out of the total population of 2,42,075 in the district. These people speak different dialects and languages. The Garos, the plains tribals and the non-tribals in the district are interdependent just the same as the entire district of Garo Hills is interdependent with the plains districts, particularly with the Goalpara district, for their existence and development.

Sir, it may not be out of place to say in short about the traditional talks and belief of the Garos how they were and who they were during the ancient time of their forefathers. They believe that after migration from Tibet to Assam they were once ruling in certain parts of Assam; and they still claim to have certain important places of Assam; such as, Kamakhya in Kamrup, Jogighopa, Thokeswary, Habraghat and some other places in Goalpara and other plains districts as the places of their important events and relics in history. So, the Garos from their traditional talk have a strong belief even up to this day that Assam is their home of love and memory, although now, most of them had to be in the hills of Garo Hills after having been defeated by stronger people who invaded Assam during those days. Even now, Sir, you will find a large number of Garos still living in these



plains districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang and Nowgong. They are quite akin with the Kacharis and Rabhas of the State. According to their tradition the Garos still have a strong belief that, these Kacharis and Rabhas and the Koches of Cooch-Bihar are the grand-children of the sisters of the Garos. As an evidence to this belief, it can easily be seen that the Garos have great affinity with the plains tribals of Assam in respect to their mode of living, language and religion. Therefore, it can easily be understood what close relationship and affinity the Garos have with other plains tribals of Assam; and under such conditions and belief how deep the love of Assam the Garos will have in their hearts, may be imagined. To me, and to the home-loving Garos, the love of Assam is equally unfathomable as it is to Garo Hills. Thereby it cannot be denied and it is an undoubted fact that the Garos of Garo Hills love Assam and the people living therein irrespective of religion, language and caste. As defeated victims, if the Garos of Garo Hills are to confine themselves inside hills and rocks for years to come against their wishes and desire, it will be unfair and an injustice to these Garos of the Hill District in these days of democracy during which these undeveloped and backward Garos of the district greatly need rapid development with wide outlook. However illiterate the Garos may be, they have sense to think for themselves at least by having experience in the contact and relationship with the people from the plains for existence in life. These Garos fully realise that without close relationship and interdependence with the plains people, their means of existence and development will be greatly hampered and badly affected.

Further, these people understand that they do not have any connection with other Hill districts for interdependence in business and commercial purposes which are the main sources for their existence and development. If they will be cut off from interdependence in these respects from the plains districts these people instead of improving and developing themselves shall be doomed to perpetual backwardness. Besides this, the Garos know plains languages better than any language of other hill districts, and I understand, people from other hill districts also are in the same position in this language problem as our Garos do. Memorandum submitted by the sponsors for this Hill State to the States Reorganisation Commission failed to clarify this very important matter. As they stated in that memorandum regarding language, is not for the mass illiterate



people but only for a few literate people. Mass people are not expected to know English throughout the Hill districts of Assam. If so, then these people would have been the most advanced people in India, at least in matter of general education this can be found at page 13, Chapter V of that Memorandum dealing with 'Language of the Hill State'. So here again, if Hill State is formed, language comes to the front as one of the greatest problems regarding which, allegations have been made against the Assamese friends. I don't know, which tribe amongst these hill tribes will have to bear the similar allegation if such a State would be formed.

Sir, regarding the financial position of the proposed Hill State, I think, I must say something. First, I would like to have more clarification. Whether this proposed Hill State will be Part 'A' State or Part 'B' State or Part 'C' State or Part 'D' State? Of course, there is a mention in the Appendix "A" of the Memorandum at page (ii) that the sponsors will have no alternative than to have a separate Part 'A' State. So, Sir, it is evident that this proposed Hill State should be under the same category as other Part 'A' States in the whole of India. If so, the proposed Hill State should have her own State Exchequer or State Fund to which, as I understand, all revenues from all the Hill districts must come for necessary expenditure to these districts besides for State Headquarters requirement for administration and various purposes as we are at present doing here in Assam. Of course, there is no doubt that certain amount of finance from the Centre also will come to this proposed Hill State Headquarters. But, will it be possible to do more development works to these Hill districts as they are at present having more facilities to do so living together with Assam? Will each district have the same opportunity there, to spend or use its own revenues for its own requirements as being done now under the District Council? I think, it will be impossible for each of these Hill Districts to enjoy the same privilege and facilities when such a State comes into being. From the experience of running the District Council in the Garo Hills, I understand that this Council is practically impossible to proceed on for development works unless help comes either from Assam State or the Centre. Then, if the Garo Hills is to be in the Hill State, I fully realise that this district will have to pay more taxes. Even now, more taxes have been imposed by the District Council upon the people. The



people who no doubt are very poor and cannot afford to pay their increased revenue taxes. Now, Sir, the hon. Members can imagine what an unbearable pressure will be upon these poor people if the Hill State is to be formed. The States Reorganisation Commission in their report rightly stated regarding this vital point of consideration at page 187 under paragraphs 693 and 694. The people of the Garo Hills are at present feeling that in regard to payment of taxes and in other matters the pressure is more than enough for them, that is, pressure from the existing District Council of the Garo Hills to people has become unbearable.

Sir, if Hill State is to be formed as a separate Part A State, I think this State will have to come under the general fundamental rights without special protection and safeguard, that is, these Hill districts will have to be deprived of all the provisions under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. Then, Sir, we shall be as if drifted to the wide ocean without protection and safeguard. Regarding this matter the Union Home Minister during his recent visit to Assam publicly spoke in Shillong. I have seen this in the Assam Tribune published on 2nd November. I think that the Union Home Minister has rightly said in this matter. He said, "Under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, each Autonomous Hill District had Autonomy, but if a Hill State was forged out, they would lose this Autonomy, which would mean a retrograde step". If we happen to lose District Autonomy, it will be worst and an injustice for the Hill districts. So, it is not at all welcoming to demand for a Separate Hill State for these Autonomous Hills Districts of Assam, and to exchange better for the worst. Therefore, Sir, the Garo people and other people living in Garo Hills are against the proposed Hill State.

They feel that any Hill State if formed will bring disaster and ruin to them. They have always to come in contact with the people of the plains for their own economic existence. They are living in friendship and harmony with the brothers and sisters of the plains. There have been no cause of disharmony with them. Both are interdependent for their own development. The conception of a separate Hill State is opposed to unity and harmony which are so essential for the solidarity of India. Moreover, if a separate Hill State comes



into being, then the Garo people who are most backward feel that they will be exploited by the more forward and educated people as they have been oppressed and exploited even now by the ruling members of the District Council. In this connection, it would not be out of place to mention here that the present District Council of Garo Hills is not working for the good of the people of which there is mention in the States Reorganisation Commission's Report. The people consider this to be an exploiting agency of a few literate persons. You can, Sir, well imagine what would be the fate of these backward and illiterate people if, God forbid, separate Hill State comes into being. Moreover, such a Hill State cannot be conceived at all in view of the fact that languages, customs, usages and culture are different from district to district. Besides, there is the question of distance and road communication from one Autonomous Hill District to another. All the Hill districts are not equally developed. So, the people of the backward areas such as Garo Hills, Mikir Hills and others feel that they will be exploited by a few handful of persons who are now sponsoring the move for their own personal interest. Again, such a proposal for a separate Hill State is economically unsound and if given effect to, would be a political blunder. All the Hill districts are at present economically very poor. So a Hill State cannot be self-sufficient. Centre cannot prop them up for all times to come. Secondly, this frontier State if vivisected, would be weakened and vulnerable, whereas we want this State to be a bulwark of defence, being surrounded almost on all sides by foreign States.

In view of the facts stated by me, we should wholeheartedly support the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission's Report and implement the same for the unity, solidarity and security of the country as a whole.

With these few words, Sir, I conclude my speech (*Applause*).

Thank you.



\* **Shri GHANA KANTA GOGOI (Lakhimpur-Moran)** : Mr. Speaker, Sir, rise to make a few observations on the Report of the States Reorganisation Commission. I feel, for the sake of integrity, solidarity and administrative convenience, the whole region of the Union on the east of East Pakistan should be brought under one State, i. e., the Government of Assam.

The regions of Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, etc., have got historical and cultural affinities with Assam. It might be mentioned here that Biswa Singha, Naranarayan and Chilarai are the national heroes of Assam. The integration of this area will help and facilitate the administration, development and defence of this part of the Union on a well defined compact area and also bring about the re-union of the Garos, Koch-Rajbongsi people now living scattered in two different States.

The region now under the North-East Frontier Agency is constitutionally, geographically and by historical association, to a great extent, a part of Assam. The relationship between the tribes living in these areas with that of the Assamese people and the ruling classes of the pre-British days were mostly fraternal. Assamese was, from the time immemorial, and to a great extent, even to-day, is the *lingua-franca* of these tribes. I therefore, feel that the administration of the North-East Frontier Agency area should immediately be brought under the administrative control of the Government of Assam. The Centre may continue to give financial aid and lend officers to help to run the administration and carry on development works without any hindrance.

I also feel that Manipur, like Tripura, as recommended by the Commission, should immediately be integrated with Assam. This integration will help the development and solidarity of the whole eastern region of the Union. The Central aid for the development of these two States may be given through the Government of Assam and officers may also be lent to run the administration of this expanded State.

I fully support the view of the Commission that the administration of Tripura and Cachar—the two Bengali speaking areas may be carried on by a Commissioner.



Now, Sir, as regards the demand of the Hill brethren for a separate Hill State, I feel that there is certainly some misgivings in the hearts of the Tribal brethren that their interests are not likely to be quite safe under the Assam administration. Something should be done to allay this suspicion. This, to my mind, may be done by setting up some special administrative machinery for the administration and development of the autonomous districts under the State of Assam. Sir, the inner line system practised by the British still continues. This, as in the past, has been keeping the one from the other at distance and has resulted in giving rise to a feeling of suspicion and distrust. I therefore maintain that this inner line system of administration fostering growth of the feeling of seclusion and isolation should at once be removed so that a spirit of brotherly and fellow feeling may grow among the people of the Hills and the Plains.

Last of all, Sir, I want to speak a few words about the Nagas. We are very sorry that we do not find any Naga friend here in our Legislature. During the last Assembly Session our Chief Minister gave us an assurance that soon the representatives of the Naga people will partake their due share in the deliberations of this Assembly. But this has not yet taken place. I, therefore, feel that something should be done immediately and earnestly to bring the Nagas inside this House so that they may also play their part in the administration.

Assam is a multi-lingual State and not a uni-lingual one. The languages and culture of all sections of people of the Union as well as that of the States are guaranteed the protection and due encouragement for their growth. I therefore feel that no one need be apprehensive that in the expanded State of Assam his language and culture will not find fair and equitable treatment for its growth. What to my mind is essentially necessary is that the development of the country should receive the first priority. What we really want is the development of the country in the spheres of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, etc., by the united and co-operative endeavours of all the people—both tribals and plains—so that our country may take its rightful place amongst the sister States of the Indian Union.

With these observations, Sir, I resume my seat.



**Shri NANDAKISHORE SINHA (Cachar-Sonai) :**  
Mr. Speaker, Sir, following Prime Minister's statement on 22nd December, 1953 in Parliament, the States Reorganisation Commission was appointed on 29th December, 1953 by the Government of India so that the welfare of the people of each constituent unit as well as the whole nation is promoted and accordingly, the Commission after giving due consideration to the procedure prepared questionnaire inviting members of the public as well as public associations interested in the problem of the reorganisation of States to put their views and suggestions before the Commission and also by submitting written memoranda on the matters.

The Commission after studying the answers and memoranda carefully granted interviews to express public views freely and frankly by touring the entire country. Thus they studied the various problems over the entire country before coming to any final conclusion about any particular region.

Sir, this House is aware of the fact that the agitation, particularly in the Cachar District, for creation of a separate State firstly with Tripura and Manipur States and the districts of Cachar, Lushai Hills (now Mizo Hills District) and Naga Hills of the State of Assam ; secondly with Tripura and Manipur States and Naga Hills, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Garo Hills and Goalpara districts by a small group of people headed by some frustrated and disappointed so called leaders and thirdly of the proposal of West Bengal Provincial Congress for taking out the district of Cachar from Assam, is not a new move but dates back from the year 1948 with the movement of creating a separate Congress Province named as 'Purbachal' which the Working Committee of the All-India Congress rejected in its meeting, dated 12th and 13th November, 1948, after full and mature consideration on hearing the representatives of all shades of public opinion of Cachar District.

Sir, giving due consideration to the aims and objects of the formation of the States Reorganisation Commission, the three Congress Committees (Silchar, Hailakandi and Karimganj) in the district of Cachar, Cachar Cha-Sramik Union (I. N. T. U. C.), all Congress Members of Legislative Assembly and Members of Parliament submitted a memorandum to the Commission expressing the views of Cachar people.



Assam stands as a sentinel on the north-eastern border of India, of which Cachar, Lushai Hills districts along with Tripura and Manipur States are the frontier gates and any move to create a separate State or States must weaken the security of Assam and ultimately of India and the anti-social elements or interested people from within or outside the country may take advantage of such separation move. As such Cachar people's views were expressed through that memorandum and also by appearing before the Commission when they visited Cachar and suggested that the State of Assam should be reorganised by the merger of the State of Manipur and Tripura and North-East Frontier Agency especially for the security and integrity of these frontier areas and also to make a stronger economic and powerful administrative unit. In this connection, I must heartily congratulate our leader for his right and most useful statement made on the floor of this House on 16th wherein he requested the hon. Members to consider dispassionately the recommendations of the Commission and wanted to hammer out our differences in a cool and sober atmosphere to come to a reasonable decision for broader national approach of unity and solidarity.

Sir, we, Cachar people, welcome the Commission's recommendation for merging Tripura with Assam and would be more happier if the Commission would recommend for merger of Manipur State with Assam and request the State Government to move the Central Government for consideration of the same for the reasons already mentioned and also according to the States Reorganisation Commission's note regarding Manipur State in page 197, paragraph 732 which says, 'Manipur cannot maintain its separate existence for long and that the ultimate solution should be its merger in the adjoining State of Assam \*\*\*and if a unit such as Manipur wishes to have representative Government at the State level, it must be prepared to join a larger unit' (*i. e.*, Assam).

Our leader also in his statement clearly said that 'from the point of national security and unity of India it will appear clearly that the entire region to the north-east of Pakistan needs an integrated administration from various points of view and should form one administrative homogeneous unit so that it can be developed as a self-sufficient economic zone under a plan.



In conclusion, I feel ashamed to point out a thing which offends against the prestige and well being of the people of Cachar. This is regarding the speech delivered day before yesterday by my Friend in the Opposition, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das. His baseless remarks against the Congress M.L.As. and M. Ps. of Cachar, especially against my colleague, Shri Moinul Haque Chowdhury, in a most undignified, filthy and unparliamentary language which really goes against the public of Cachar and their prestige also in as much as they do not think in the line in which my Friend feels with regard to Purbachal.

My Friend, Shri Das, should note that the Congress M.L.As. and M. Ps. from Cachar whom he attacked are not less respectable than him, rather they represent almost the entire population of the district, and as such they command the respect of the district as a whole. I request this Hon'ble House to note his conduct seriously and further I would request my Friend to apologise to this House and to the people of Cachar even to-day although it may be considered as late otherwise the people of Cachar will never be able to forgive him and he will be an object of pity for all time to come.

With these words, I support the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission and also the views expressed by the Leader of the House on 16th in this House.

JAI HIND

**\*Shri MAHAM SINGH (United Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Cherra—Reserved for Scheduled Tribes) :**  
Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has taken nearly two years for the States Reorganisation Commission to submit its Report. During the course of its existence and particularly at the time of taking evidence there has been widespread agitation throughout the whole country of ours. It is a matter of deep regret that many of us have been led away by sentiments and we have not been able to consider the question calmly and in a dispassionate manner. The demand for realigning the map of India originally started with the idea of forming States on linguistic basis. When, however, the Commission was finally



appointed, a most current view has been taken that the primary and most important objective of any scheme of re-organisation is the preservation and strengthening of the unity and security of India. I feel it is the sacred duty of every Indian to fight against any movement which tend to destroy this unity. The strength of India also depends on economic advancement and the welfare of the people. It has been well decided therefore, that another important factor which should be borne in mind is to promote the welfare of the people of each constituent unit and also of the nation as a whole. We find that in the claims put forward before the Commission two forces are at play—one force is for realising a better and fuller life of greater unity and economic advancement and another force is the force of isolation and narrow parochial outlook. We all hope that the final decision in re-adjusting the States of India will be of such a nature that the main objective of building a stronger, prosperous and unified India shall be achieved.

When we come to the case of Assam I consider that we are fortunate in that there are only three main proposals before the Commission. I have not included the Naga demand for complete independence as I am of the opinion that this is an absurd and fantastic proposition. The bulk of the population of Assam is in favour of maintaining the *status quo* and to merge Manipur and Tripura in Assam provided the people of these units are in favour of the merger. Assam, as we all know, is an epitome of India, and no other State in India possesses so many communities different from each other in their manners and customs, language and dress. That there should be only these main proposals are clear indications that the mistrust and suspicion between the different communities have been removed and the ties of unity have been strengthened. No single community having a common language and culture of its own has demanded for a separate existence. The Hill State as proposed and demanded by some leaders of the Autonomous Districts of Assam will also be composed of different communities with a language, culture and mode of living distinct from one another. That all these communities have prepared to be grouped together also shows that common bond of unity and interdependence has strongly developed amongst them. But in this demand for a Hill State there has been a sharp difference of opinion between the tribal leaders of the Autonomous Districts from the very beginning.



The Commission in paragraph 696 of its Report has stated "Generally speaking, the United Mikir and North Cachar Hills and the Mizo (Lushai) Hills are not in favour of a separate Hill State and the District Council in the Lushai Hills and the Karbia-Durbar (Mikir Hills National Council) are in favour of the *status quo*. The agitation in favour of a Hill State is, therefore, confined virtually to the Garo and the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. Owing to their geographical position, these two districts have necessarily a closer association with the adjoining plains districts than the rest of the hill or tribal areas; even in these two districts, therefore, an influential section of opinion views with disfavour the formation of a separate Hill State." Besides, complete separation and the formation of a full-fledged Part A State has never been demanded by the supporters of the proposed Hill State. The Commission in its Report in paragraph 694 has noted: "The Scheme for a Hill State, it must be noted, also contemplates that the capital of Assam and of the proposed Hill State will be common, and that many institutions, apart from the Governor and the High Court will be shared—an arrangement which will involve, in practice, a great deal of inconvenience and even conflict." The Commission has also rejected the demand on economic and other reasons.

So far as the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills District is concerned, its complete merger with Assam has come gradually and in different stages. In the beginning only Shillong was included with Assam, later the areas known as the British areas and ultimately the whole of the District and along with it the Autonomous Districts which were then outside Assam. Eight years after this complete merger there is a great disagreement amongst the tribal leaders as to whether a separate Hill State should be formed or these districts should continue to be part and parcel of Assam. An impartial lead composed of three eminent persons has decided as to what is best for the hill people. We have come to the close of the chapter and I think it is for the good of all of us to sink all our differences and work unitedly for the development of the country.

Some of my Friends have viewed with the greatest disfavour the remarks of the Commission in paragraph 689 regarding the Christian missionaries. That there should have been



such a remark is most unfortunate. In the actual working of the administration, however, I find that the Assam Government has never treated the foreign mission with any mistrust or suspicion. So far as my district is concerned, they have been encouraged and supported in their activities. Most of the development grants are being spent through them and the education is also practically controlled by them. Even now it is they who mould and shape the mental out-look of our people. I do not think, therefore, that we should lay too much importance on the remark of the Commission in this respect.

How then are we to build up the unity of all these different communities? We can do so only if we live and work together as equals. There should be no show of superiority of one community over another. No one should think that he is raising another from backwardness. All cases should be dealt on justice and no favoritism should be shown to any one only because he belongs to a particular community, religion or creed. There also should be a feeling of oneness and if any part of the country is in distress all should co-operate to overcome it. Above all a language of one community should under no circumstances be imposed on another community. The Chief Minister in his address has stated that Assamese will never be imposed on the hill people. I would go further and say no attempt should also be made to spread Assamese in the hill districts. In case, however, any one wants to learn Assamese or any other language out of his own free will, then in that case full scope should be given to him to learn that language. A Khasi or an Assamese should be given full scope to learn Garo or any other language if he wishes. It is, however, very important that Hindi should be taught throughout the whole of Assam. Hindi should in course of time be the common meeting ground between the different communities in Assam amongst themselves and also with the rest of India. Once unity is achieved, then and then only can we hope to lift the masses out of their present poverty and want. To achieve this unity and to be able to develop the country, I feel, Sir, is the most important duty for all of us.

**Shri KHAGENDRA NATH NATH (Goalpara-Goalpara):** মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, রাজ্য সীমা নিরূপণ কমিটির তিনি জন প্রার্থনীয়



নেতাই ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ বিভিন্ন প্ৰদেশ, বিশেষকৈ আমাৰ আসাম প্ৰদেশৰ বিভিন্ন ঠাই পৰিদৰ্শন কৰি আৰু বিভিন্ন দলৰ লগত আলোচনা কৰি যোৱা চেপ্তেম্বৰ মাহত কমিশ্যনে যিখন প্ৰতিবেদন প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে মই তাক সৰ্বসন্মতিকৰণে সমৰ্থন কৰিছোঁ।

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, আমাৰ গোৱালপাৰা জিলা খন জমিদাৰ প্ৰধান দেশ আছিল পূৰ্বতে জমিদাৰ সকলে বঙ্গদেশৰ পৰা কৰ্মচাৰী আমদানী কৰি কামত নিয়োগ কৰিছিল তাৰ ফলত কিছু পৰিমাণে বঙালী সকলৰ প্ৰাধান্য বিস্তাৰ হয় আৰু কৰ্মচাৰী সকলে সকলো প্ৰকাৰে জনসাধাৰণক বঙ্গভাষা ও কৃষ্টিৰ প্ৰতি অনুগামী কৰিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰে। বিশেষকৈ চেন্সাস কৰাৰ কাৰ্য্যও বঙালী কৰ্মচাৰীৰ হাতত পৰিছিল, সেই কাৰণে চেন্সাস বিপৰ্কটো তেওঁলোকৰ অভিকৃতি মতে হৈছিল। আমাৰ অসমীয়া মানুহ সকল সেই সময়ত স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনত লিপ্ত থাকিব লগা হোৱাত এই বিষয়টোৰ প্ৰতি উদাসীন থাকিব লগা হৈছিল। পিছত দেখা গল যে 'চেন্সাসত' বহুতো অসমীয়া আৰু ট্ৰাইবেল সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ মানুহক বঙ্গভাষা ভাষী বুলি লিখিছিল। সেই কাৰণে বৃটিছ আমোলৰ 'চেন্সাস' গণনা সঠিক নহয় বুলি মই দাঙি কব পাৰোঁ। ১৯৩১ চনৰ 'চেন্সাসৰ' লগত ১৯৫১ চনৰ 'চেন্সাসৰ' বহুত খিনি অমিল দেখা যায়। দেশ স্বাধীন হোৱাৰ পিছত ১৯৫১ চনৰ 'চেন্সাস' সঠিক বুলি চৰকাৰ আৰু বাইজে ধৰি লৈছে। ফলত দেখা যায় যে গোৱালপাৰা জিলাত শতকৰা ১৭% হে বঙ্গ ভাষাভাষী মানুহ। গোৱালপাৰা জিলাত যি সকল হিন্দু বঙালী মানুহ আছে তেওঁলোকে চহৰ, বন্দৰ, বেলগুৱে কলোনি ইত্যাদি এলাকাত বসবাস কৰি থকা মানুহ, গতিকে তেওঁলোকে সেইবোৰ ঠাইত তেওঁবিলাকৰ লৰা-ছোৱালী সকলৰ শিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে বঙালী স্কুল স্থাপন কৰিছিল। তেওঁলোকে Lower Primary পৰা মেট্ৰিকলৈকে ১১০-২০ টকাকৈ মাচুল লৈ স্কুল চলাই আছিল। কিন্তু আচৰিত বিষয় যে সেই স্কুল বিলাকৰ পৰা কেতিয়াও চৰকাৰী মঞ্জুৰিৰ কাৰণে আবেদন অহা দেখা নাযায়। আজিলৈকেও ৭/৮ খন স্কুল সেইদৰে চলি আছে। এটা প্ৰশ্ন উঠে যে গোৱালপাৰা জিলাত যি ২৫১ খন বঙালী Lower Primary স্কুল আছিল তাৰ ঠাইত এতিয়া হঠাতে কেনেকৈ ৩ খনলৈ নামি আহিল?

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয় ইয়াৰ কাৰণটো হৈছে আজি প্ৰায় ৩০-৪০ বছৰ আগতে পূৰ্ব বঙ্গৰ পৰা যি সকল পমুৱা মুছলমান মানুহ এই জিলালৈ আহি বসতি কৰেহি তেখেত সকলে জিলাৰ বিভিন্ন এলেকাত সিচৰতি হৈ থাকি এই বোৰ স্কুল প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰি চলাই আছিল। কিন্তু যেতিয়া মুছলীম লীগৰ পাকিস্থান আন্দোলন দেশত প্ৰবল আকাৰ ধাৰণ কৰে তেতিয়া যি পমুৱা মুছলমান সকলে লীগৰ আন্দোলনত যোগদান কৰি গোৱালপাৰা জিলা খনক পূৰ্ব বঙ্গৰ লগত অৰ্থাৎ পাকিস্থানৰ লগত চামিল কৰিবলৈ যথেষ্ট চেষ্টা কৰিছিল যদিও কংগ্ৰেছৰ অশেষ চেষ্টা আৰু যত্নৰ ফলত 'বেড্‌ক্লিভ কমিশ্যনে' ৰায় দি ঘোষণা কৰে যে গোৱালপাৰা জিলা অসমৰ অবিচ্ছেদ্য অঙ্গ আৰু ই অসমত তথা ভাৰতবৰ্ষত থাকিব। উক্ত ঘোষণাৰ ফলত ১৯৪৭ চনৰ ১৫ আগষ্টৰ পিছৰ পৰা গোৱালপাৰা জিলাৰ পমুৱা মুছলমান ভাই সকলে সিদ্ধান্ত কৰে যে তেওঁলোক সকলোৱে অসমীয়া শিক্ষা লব। উক্ত ২৫১ খন Lower Primary স্কুলৰ ২৪৮ খনে অসমীয়া ভাষা গ্ৰহণ কৰে। সেই কাৰণে ধুবুৰী মহকুমাত বৰ্তমানে মুঠ ৩ খন বঙালী স্কুল চলি আছে।

ধুবুৰী মহকুমাৰ কেইজনমান সুবিধাবাদী বঙালী মানুহৰ প্ৰবোচনাত পৰি যিবিলাক যুক্তিৰ দ্বাৰা গোৱালপাৰা জিলাক পশ্চিম বঙ্গলৈ দাবী কৰে সেই দাবী একেবাৰে যুক্তিহীন, অমূলক ও ভিত্তিহীন। সীমা নিৰ্দ্ধাৰণ কমিটিয়েও গোৱালপাৰা



জিলা পৰিভ্ৰমণ কৰি বহুতো দল, উপদলৰ লগত আলোচনা কৰি শেষত পশ্চিম বঙ্গৰ দাবী নাকচ কৰি দিয়ে। ইয়াতেই প্ৰমাণিত হয় যে গোৱালপাৰা জিলা অসমৰ অবিচ্ছেদ্য অঙ্গ আৰু গোৱালপাৰাৰ মানুহ হাবে হিমজুৰে অসমীয়া।

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, সুকীয়া পাৰ্বৰ্ভতা ৰাজ্য এখন গঠন কৰাৰ কাৰণে যি সকলে দাবী জনাইছে মোৰ বোধেৰে সেই দাবীৰো কোনো ভিত্তি বা যুক্তি নাই। অসম দেশখনেই হৈছে সীমান্ত দেশ। গতিকে এই অসমক সৰু সৰু ৰাজ্যত বিভক্ত কৰিলে ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ এই সীমা ৰক্ষা কৰা ৰাজ্যখন দুৰ্বল হৈ পৰিব আৰু তাৰ লগে লগে ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ ক্ষতি হব পাৰে। কিয়নো আসাম ৰাজ্যৰ তিনিও পিনেদি বিদেশী ৰাজ্যবোৰৰ সীমা আগুৰি আছে। সীমান্তত আজিও গোলমাল চলি আছে। এনেকুৱা অৱস্থাত যদি সীমান্ত প্ৰদেশ খনক খণ্ড-বিখণ্ড কৰি ৰাজ্য গঠন কৰিব লগাত পৰে যি বোৰ সৰু সৰু ৰাজ্য আছে যেনে ত্ৰিপুৰা, মনিপুৰ আদি সেই বোৰ সীমান্ত ৰক্ষা কাৰ্য্যত কিমান দূৰ সক্ষম হব মোৰ সন্দেহ। সুকীয়া পাৰ্বৰ্ভতা ৰাজ্য যদি দিয়া হয় তেনেহলে তেখেত সকলে সীমা ৰক্ষাৰ কাৰ্য্যত ৫০ ভাগৰ ওপৰ খৰছ কৰিব লাগিব। এই কাম অতি জটিল আৰু অত্যাধিক দায়িত্ব পূৰ্ণ। এনেকুৱা বহুতো প্ৰশ্ন আমাৰ সুকীয়া ৰাজ্য হলে কি হয় সেই বোৰ চাব লাগিব। সেই কাৰণে মই পৰ্বৰ্ভতীয়া ভাই সকলক আবেদন কৰো যে আমি পৰ্বৰ্ভতে ভৈয়ামে সকলোৱে একা বদ্ধ হৈ মিলি জুলি কাম কৰি এখন ধুনীয়া শক্তিশালী আৰু সমৃদ্ধিশালী অসম তথা ভাৰত গঢ়ি তুলিম।

ত্ৰিপুৰা ৰাজ্য খন অসমৰ লগত চানিল কৰিবৰ বাবে কমিশ্যনে যি প্ৰতিবেদন দিছে সি অতি যুক্তি সঙ্গত হৈছে। কিয়নো ৬ লক্ষ ৩৯ হাজাৰ জন সংখ্যা আৰু ক্ষুদ্ৰ আয় লৈ এখন বেলেগ ৰাষ্ট্ৰ হব নোৱাৰে। কাৰণ ইয়াৰ তিনি ফালেই বিদেশী ৰাজ্যৰ সীমা। এই সীমা ৰক্ষাৰ কাৰ্য্যত তেও লোকে সদায় ব্যস্ত থাকিব লগাত পৰিব। এনেকুৱা অৱস্থাত মই ভাবো ত্ৰিপুৰা বাগী ভাই সকলে আনন্দ চিন্তে অসমৰ লগত চানিল হৈ থাকি অসমৰ তথা ত্ৰিপুৰাৰ শক্তি বৃদ্ধি কৰিব। মই ইয়াকে কৈ মোৰ বক্তব্যৰ সামৰণী মাৰিলো।

(Name of Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy was then called by the Chair.)

**Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY (Minister)—(Shillong—United Khasi and Jaintia Hills):** Sir, I may kindly be allowed to speak on Monday.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I think, we are concluding the debate to-day.

**Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY (Minister):** In that case, I may be allowed to speak last.



**Mr. SPEAKER :** That can be allowed.

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister) :** If you allow me, Sir, I may speak a few words.

**Mr. SPEAKER :** Alright.

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister)—(Goalpara-Kokarajhar-Sidli—Reserved For Scheduled Tribes) :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I feel, I shall be failing in duty, if I do not voice the feelings and reactions of an important section of the people of Assam whom I represent.

To-day is the fourth and the last day of the discussion of the States Reorganisation Commission Report and I am glad to find that almost all hon. Members with the exception of two or three have extended their whole-hearted support to it.

So far as the Plains Tribals are concerned, they constitute an important section of the Assamese people, in the Plains districts of Assam, and on behalf of them, I may inform the House that we are unanimous in regard to our stand in this connection. When the States Reorganisation Commission visited Dhubri, myself along with some other gentlemen gave evidence before the Commission on behalf of the Plains Tribal people in Assam and submitted a Memorandum and in that Memorandum we stated also that if the people of any area contiguous to Assam were willing to come to Assam, we would heartily welcome them. Regarding slicing of a portion of Goalpara from Assam, we opposed it tooth and nail, as out of 7 lakhs of Plains Tribal living in Assam as many as 2 lakhs of these people are there in the district. And if any portion is taken out as demanded by West Bengal then that will vitally and dangerously affect the interest of tribal people as a whole, because, you know, Sir, that Plains Tribal people in Assam are living from the Goalpara district right upto Sadiya then again to Cachar. They are inseparably connected. In Tripura the Tripuris are closely allied to the Bodo Kacharis living in the State of Assam.

Sir, on behalf of myself and on behalf of Plains Tribal people, I whole-heartedly support the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission so far as they relate



to Assam as in my opinion, these are very sound and acceptable. The Members, of the States Reorganisation Commission in making the recommendations were guided by the principles of security, stability, and unity of India.

Sir, so far as the recommendations which relate to the State of Assam are concerned, they have made these recommendations on the same principles, after going deep into the matters and taking into consideration the strategic importance of this North-Eastern Frontier State of India.

If we take into consideration these main fundamental principles, which guided the Commission, there cannot be, I think, any question of having a separate State within a State. We should always remember that Assam is a very strategic State. I am sorry there is a sense of dissatisfaction and disappointment and some sort of suspicion among a section of our brothers in the hills. One of my Friends from Hills said that there were certain wrongs somewhere. So far as protection of culture, language, usage and religion is concerned, our Chief Minister has given solemn declaration in his statement and in view of this, I do not think that there should be any room for suspicion or misapprehension. Sir, I do not like to take much time of the House. I have vented the feelings of our people.

Now, Sir, I would make an earnest appeal to our brothers and sisters in the Hills that they should take into consideration deeply and dispassionately the strategic position of our State and hope that they will no longer entertain the idea of a separate State. I do not think that there is any room for suspicion or misapprehension after the statement of our Chief Minister. If there is any difficulty, we should discuss them with the Chief Minister and other leaders to solve them and such difficulty or problem is not difficult to overcome.

Sir, in the plains portion of Goalpara district there are thousands of Garos who are Hill Tribals but they are not treated as scheduled tribes there. This fact has also been mentioned by an hon. Member from Garo Hills. In plains portions of the Nowgong district we find lots of Mikir Hills scheduled tribes who are not treated as scheduled tribes. There is of



course some anomaly and this can be solved by discussing between the leaders. In my opinion, there should not be two lists of the Scheduled Tribes for hills and plains, and these scheduled tribes, whether in the Hills or Plains, should be shown under one list, instead of having two separate lists. (*Hear, hear*). Taking all factors into consideration I strongly feel that our tribal brothers and sisters in the hills should not press for a separate Hill State, after the recommendation of the State Reorganisation Commission. So, I would appeal to them very earnestly that they will not hesitate to join with the people living in the plains in having one solid and strong State in this North-East Frontier region of India.

So far as Assam is concerned, the States Reorganisation Commission have recommended merger of Tripura and also ultimate merger of Manipur and the North-Eastern Frontier Agency. Personally, Sir, I am of the opinion that so far as Tripura is concerned, we welcome the recommendation of the Commission and I think there should not be any objection on the part of the people of Tripura itself because there is no way out. In view of the feeling that small States should no longer exist, I see there is no way out for Tripura—if the State is to merge, it must merge with Assam and with no other State. Our position in this regard is that if the people of Tripura decide to come, we welcome them. And I feel that in the interests of the tribals and non-tribals of Tripura the State of Tripura should merge with Assam. Similar is the case with Manipur also. Here I am speaking my personal feelings and not as a Member of the Cabinet. I feel that instead of keeping the question of merger of Manipur pending, it would have been better if it is merged with Assam along with Tripura, if possible. We welcome Manipur also because we have many things in common—historically culturally, anthropologically and in all respects we do not consider the people of Manipur to be a different people altogether. There are tribal people there and I do not think there will be any difficulty to merge Manipur with Assam and I hope the people of Manipur themselves will be in favour of merger of Manipur with Assam. Sir, with these few words I again support the recommendations of the States Reorganisations Commission's Report so far as they relate to Assam and hope that the hon. Members of this House would try to be unanimous in accepting the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission.



**Raja AJIT NARAYAN DEB OF Sidli (Goalpara-Kokrajhar, Sidli):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was not really serious about taking part in the discussions on this subject. But when I heard what some hon. Members are trying to inform the House with regard to language of Goalpara, I feel I should try to clarify some mis-impression. At the outset Sir, I must say that this Report of the States Reorganisation Commission is laudable and I consider that discussion about this Report is very futile and unnecessary so far as Assam is concerned. The arguments given by the States Reorganisation Commission for keeping the *status-quo* of Assam are the best arguments and we cannot improve on them. So I have very little to add to what has already been said in the report itself.

Sir, in these days when we are thinking of world federation and unity it looks parochial and useless to waste our time and energy in discussing the reorganisation of the boundaries of States. To me, it looks like another Congress stunt. The Congress from a long time have committed itself to some principles. They have appointed some Commissions which have given some proposals. I remember that they set up the Backward Classes Commission where evidence of backward classes and hill tribes of the whole of India were recorded, memoranda accepted, but I do not know what has happened to them. I feel that this kind of thing may be repeated once again here.

As you know Sir, at first the Congress was committed to and accepted the principles of division of the provinces on linguistic basis. That was probably at the time when the Congress wanted to be more popular when they were not saddled with the responsibility of administering the country. They thought that it would be good and nice to divide the country on linguistic basis. But as soon as they are burdened with responsibilities of administering the country they found that they were committed to many principles such as the unity and security of the nation and many other things which are not easy of disposition. To my mind Sir, there should be only one principle for the whole nation. We should consider India as a whole. There should be only one principle and that is—administrative convenience coupled with development and nothing else. We have only one culture and that is Indian culture and we should have only one language and that is Hindi. There may be many regional dialects and languages but they should not be given so much importance as we should have given to Hindi. Now to think of dividing the country on



linguistic basis is ridiculous in these days. If you look at the map of Canada you will see that the shape of some of the States appears like squares and rectangles—they probably thought of course of language, culture and such things—but these things can never be limited by squares, rectangles, as they always overlap. But their first consideration was about administrative convenience. I do not know why we cannot think in the same terms as Canada.

Sir, some people are arguing that language should be the basis for re-organisation of States. But the best arguments against this idea are in the Commission's Report. Next comes history. But I do not think that history should be very reasonable basis for fixing the boundaries of States because history changes with years and circumstances. We have seen the Roman Empire which has tumbled down. We have seen also the Greek city States and according to history, India also belonged to the British Empire which has now changed. So, history should not be the basic principle for dividing the country. Now, on the question of culture, I have said that there should be only one culture, that is, Indian culture. Even if we have local differences, when we compare ourselves with the peoples of other foreign countries we can discover, how we Indians are united by a common culture distinguished from those of others.

Now, I will speak about Goalpara district. Some hon. Members have said that the language of Goalpara was Assamese and that it was the Zamindars who imposed Bengali on it. In fact Sir, it is not true, it is farthest from the truth.....

**Shri NILMONI PHOOKAN:** Their Dewans did it.

**Shri BISNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** I think it is better to allow him to speak on.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes, please do not disturb him.

**Raja AJIT NARAYAN DEB OF Sidli:** The district of Goalpara is a border district and it is natural that the inhabitants would absorb the culture and languages of both of the contiguous States. It is axiomatic everywhere.

Well, Sir, I have seen in the District of Ganjam which is a border district, where people speak Telegu as well as Oriya very fluently. Same is the case in the district of Midnapur where the people speak Bengali as well as the language of the neighbouring State and in the same way our people living in this border district can speak Bengali also. So, it is nothing



unnatural for us, the people of Goalpara to know both the languages namely, Assamese and Bengali, and both the languages are easy to us. Then, Sir, Bengali exists in other parts of Assam as well. It is nothing new. There are Bengali schools in the Goalpara district and also in other districts and this does not mean that the people of Goalpara choose the Bengali language as their language. If we have to stay in Assam why should we not learn Assamese language and take the privilege in services and other benefits and fall in line with other parts of the State ?

Sir, Zamindars' officers have very little to do with the language problem. The Dewans have very little to do with the people as they do not mix with them. It is the lower officers who mix with the people, *viz.*, Borkondas, Moharirs and Amins, etc. These lower officers, I know, are recruited locally and cannot dictate to our people or any one that they should take up Bengali language. If we go into the interior of the district we find many people of our district speak distinct language which is similar to that of the language of Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri which is of the West Bengal. In West Bengal they call it North Bengali language, while some people call it "Bahe language". But now it has died down and it is a dialect now. This dialect has affinity with Bengali and Assamese. The scholars say that it was derived from the same language in which Mahapurush Sankardev wrote. Only a few instances can be traced in the old songs and incantations or Mantras of Goalpara, Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri. Now, Sir, the States Reorganisation Commission has rightly rejected the claims of West Bengal on Goalpara on this issue. It is also true that some people from Goalpara had submitted Memoranda for inclusion of Goalpara district in West Bengal. I like to make it clear to this House, Sir, that none of the indigenous population of Goalpara want such inclusion of the district in West Bengal. It is only an interested section of the people of Goalpara who wanted to go to West Bengal had submitted such memoranda. I have had contact with the refugees. They also want to remain in Assam. The old Bengali settlers also told me that they had deliberately and definitely selected Assam as their home and they do not want to take away Assam into West Bengal which they had left long ago. The refugees also want to live in Assam and they do not want to go back to West Bengal.



With regard to Hill State much has already been said, and I have very little to add to it. Sir, I think due to some other thing, other than the Missionary work, our brothers and sisters from the hills lost confidence in us and that they want to remain in isolation. May I ask, Sir, if our hill brethren consider it desirable to remain in isolation in the present set up? I think the best argument is in the Report itself against the formation of the Hill State. I hope our brothers and sisters from the hills ought to be satisfied with the argument adduced by the Commission against the formation of the Hill State. After all we the people from the hills and the plains have to live together and in near future we have to build the Assamese nation to form a part of the great Indian nation. But at the same time, I would like to remind our ruling party that it should act in such a way that our hill people may not lose confidence in us with a view to remove mistrust and suspicion from the minds of the hill people we must not merely demonstrate our sincerity by our declaration of policies but by our practical action. Sir, the assurance given by our Chief Minister, if rigidly carried into practice, I see no reason why there should be suspicion and mistrust in the minds of the hills people.

Sir, I do not like to speak about the Purbachal State. I think the best argument is given by the Commission itself in their Report.

Now I want to speak on another matter namely 'Kamata' State. I hope, my honourable Friends will not misunderstand me, as Shri Motiram Bora did during the budget speech when he said that I was dreaming of being the King of Kamata, which was probably his own ambition. Sir, every effect has its cause and the demand for a separate State of Kamata is based on a cause. It is the result of dissatisfaction, frustration and disappointment due to discriminatory treatment meted out to the people of Goalpara and for this certain people demanded Kamata State. During the last March Session of the Assembly I made a reference to the discriminatory treatment meted out to the people and the people thought that if they could have a State of their own they would try to redress their own grievances. Now this is a closed chapter. Because in Kamata the people wanted Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar and some other places. When the districts of Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri did not



seriously move in the matter and their feeble voice was silenced, the question of formation of Kamata by Goalpara alone cannot but be dropped.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Kamata extended up to North Lakhimpur.

**Raja AJIT NARAYAN DEB of Sidli:** Sir, that was not the demand. They wanted Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar in Kamata State.

Now, Sir, before I close my speech, I would like to suggest to the Government that the suspicion in the minds of the people of Goalpara can be well allayed if Government assures some kind of liberal treatment to them. I have seen new Bengali Primary Schools. If Assamese is imposed in these Primary Schools it would be very difficult for the little children to take to Assamese now. I have found also that there is delay in sanctioning grants to those schools. Sir, I would like that the assurance given by the Hon'ble Chief Minister should be given effect to without reserve and he should see that his officers imbibe his ideals and the assurances are strictly followed.

### Adjournment

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

### After Lunch

**Shri OMEO KUMAR DAS (Minister) (Darrang—Dhekiajuli-North):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, after the illuminating speech delivered by the Leader of the House explaining the Government position with regard to the recommendations of States Reorganisation Commission, it was not necessary for me to take part in this debate. But certain mis-statements made by my Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, necessitate clarification. His charges had been rather vague and wide. And to illustrate his wide charges, he quoted a Letter No. PSB/15/48/534-48 which was alleged to have been issued by the Secretary of the State Primary Education Board to the Secretary of the Dhubri Subdivisional School Boards sanctioning a recurring grant of Rs.201 per month for 7 Lower Primary Schools at Rs.30 per month for the month of February, 1949.



The actual fact behind this is this: these 7 Lower Primary Schools are situated in the Forest area near Gosaigaon inhabited by tribal people who desired to organise schools with the medium of a language of the region. Bengali had not been their mother tongue. Nor it has been possible to use the tribal language in the Primary Schools for lack of text books. As such, this grant was issued towards the close of the financial year. However, for the information of the House, it may be mentioned that we have now prepared suitable text-books and they are now being published. By no stretch of imagination, this can be cited as an instance of suppression of the Bengali language. I would have accepted his charge of suppression if these people had been Bengali speaking. But they were not so.

He mentioned another instance. It is the reduction in the number of Bengali Lower Primary Schools in the district of Goalpara. It is true that the medium of instruction is by far the majority of Lower Primary Schools in Dhubri Subdivision had been Bengali. Reason for this has been mentioned by some Members of this House, and I feel that it is not the place to enter into the field of research why the people adopted a language which was not their mother tongue and subsequently changed it.

But, it is a fact that there had been a great upsurge amongst the people of Goalpara after 1947, and they held meetings expressing desire to be taught in Assamese. How can a popular Government go against this upsurge and do anything against the wishes of the people? How this can be cited as an instance of suppression of the Bengali language?

A doubt has been raised in the minds of some as to why no arrangement has been made to cater to the children of the Bengali speaking population of Goalpara by establishing adequate number of Primary Schools.

The Members of this House are well aware how the Primary Schools are organised. Nowhere in Assam has the department organised these Primary schools. Primary Schools are organised by the local people. It is they who locate village land and construct a temporary house and even appoint teachers and submit petition for recognition of the school. The School Boards after having caused inspection of such schools give recognition



which include maintenance. The School Boards, it must be remembered, have been constituted with the elected representatives of the Local Bodies such as Municipal and Local Boards. But I must mention that since the agitation outside and within the State of Assam regarding this, we have gone into this matter further and have issued instructions to the few Venture Schools using Bengali medium to come in for departmental recognition. But the fact is that these primary sections are appendage of the Middle Schools and fees are charged against departmental instruction. We have made primary education free. Owing to not very high enrolment in the upper classes and owing to the difficulty in finance, fees collected in the primary sections by these Venture Middle or High Schools are also utilised for management of the Middle or High Schools. The Managing Committees of these schools find it difficult to maintain these schools if they have to accept the loss of fee income realised for the primary sections. On the other hand, it has not been possible to bring all the Venture Middle and High Schools which have sprung up during these years for grant-in-aid. I propose to deal with this question later.

We have three Primary Schools in Dhubri Subdivision using Bengali medium which have agreed to abide by the departmental instruction and following the prescribed curriculum. The House is aware that nowhere in any State of India adequate number of Primary Schools has been established to cater to the needs of the total number of children population of the age groups between six and eleven years. The Planning Commission has taken a note of it in the First Five Year-Plan and suggested measures so that 60 per cent. of the total children population can be provided facilities instead of the present percentage of 40.

Sir, this lack of adequate number of Primary Schools to cater to the needs of all the children of the Bengali-speaking population cannot be mentioned as an instance for suppression of Bengali language or lack of sympathy for their children. I must make this clear that the Government is ready to help the Primary Schools in Goalpara with Bengali medium where the people organise schools just as is being done by other people of our State in other districts and agree to abide by the departmental instruction not to realise fees from the pupils and to follow the prescribed curriculum.



No mention has been made about the district of Cachar which area is mainly Bengali-speaking area and the School Boards have been running schools with Bengali medium. Total grants made to the three Subdivisional School Boards in this region is about Rs.15 lakhs out of the total expenditure for more than Rs.80 lakhs.

Does this, Sir, indicate suppression of Bengali language ?

Having failed to cite any instance of suppression he mentioned despatch of a few posters in Assamese to Cachar. My Friend, Shri Hem Chandra Chakravarty, has already mentioned that a few posters in Assamese sent by mistake by some officers can never suppress the Bengali language which is so rich in literature.

Sir, I mentioned about the difficulties of the Venture Middle and High Schools. We have been awarding full grant to nearly 30 High Schools using Bengali medium out of 175 non-Government High Schools. The total grant-in-aid for this purpose amounts to Rs.5,22,504 out of 29 lakhs for all non-Government Secondary High Schools. Thus 17·8 per cent of the grant-in-aid being spent on Bengali medium Secondary Schools. 17·19 lakhs as Bengali population form 18 per cent of the total population. This expenditure does not include the expenditure incurred for the three purely Government High Schools using Bengali medium. Does this Sir, indicate suppression of Bengali language ?

Sir, it is a fact the House is well aware that during these few years many Secondary Schools have sprung up and it has not been possible to award full grant under the new scheme of grant-in-aid to these schools. Only 175 non-Government Secondary Schools have been brought under the new scheme and there are more than 175 schools which are still unaided and clamouring for aid. And out of them only 15 are Bengali medium and the rest are Assamese with the exception of 2 which are Hindi. These schools with Assamese medium have been organised on the local initiative in the backward areas and in spite of our best intentions to encourage the local initiative we have not been able to award grant due to financial stringency. But the case of these



15 schools are often mentioned to illustrate discrimination. I must state that we would consider the cases of these 15 schools along with other such deserving cases.

Before I conclude, I must mention with all the emphasis at my command, that we have not been following a policy of discrimination nor are we following a policy of suppression of Bengali language. The Bengali schools, Middle or High in Dhubri which are using the Lower Primary sections as a source of income should give up these sections and take steps to place them under the School Board and I assure that the School Boards of Dhubri and Goalpara would welcome them for recognition. I must emphatically state that this Government would not budge an inch from the policy with regard to the medium of language accepted in the Education Ministers' Conference in 1950 at New Delhi. As a matter of fact, previous to this Conference, there had been no clear policy in any of the States in India and after the acceptance of the Constitution necessity arose to enunciate a clear policy for this purpose. This Conference decided that the mother tongue would be medium in the Primary Schools and with regard to the Secondary Schools, the medium would be decided according to the number of pupils in the class, that is, if there are 40 pupils speaking one language and that language should be medium for that class.

Sir, I think I have fully clarified the policy followed by Government and with these words I resume my seat.

**Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY (Minister) (Shillong—United Khasi and Jaintia Hills):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I understand there are two other Members from the Hill areas who want to speak.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am not going to allow anybody. The Leader of the Opposition will require 30 minutes and I think the Leader of the House will require one hour.

**Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY (Minister):** It is very important that all the Hill Members should be given the freedom of speech.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Congress Members have expressed very well. Now we have given chance to the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the House to speak, who will require an hour to reply.



**Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY (Minister) (Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Shillong):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to speak a few words. I am not happy with the report and recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission concerning the demand for a Hill State and concerning the autonomous districts of Assam. I have however conveyed my views to the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister who are considering them, and I shall continue to negotiate with them. But as they are the highest authorities their decision will be personally accepted by me. In view of this I do not need to make any elaborate comment on the report and recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission.

But, Sir, I feel that it would be unfair to this House and to myself and my hills brethren if I do not say something about the references and appeals which some of the hon. Members have made to me personally. This is especially in regard to my connection with the demand for a Hill State.

I was the man in the past who worked hard for bringing the hills and plains together. During those years conditions were different from what they are now. I was in great hopes that the attitude of the people of the hills and of the plains would be fair and cordial and that the plains brethren would be able to appreciate the feelings of the hills brethren and that any difference that may have existed between them would be cemented gradually when they are brought together. But, Sir, I find that after some experience matters were quite different from what I had hoped for.

**Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN:** For better ?

**Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY (Minister) :** I hope it will be for better in the future. No one would be more happy than I shall be if hearts can be seen to have been changed now.

There has been much said about the goodwill of the people of the hills in order to have a stable Government in the eastern frontier of Assam. The hills are in the frontier and their goodwill will have to be obtained in order to create the unity and strength of India. Some efforts will have to be made by all from the top of the Government to the common men who come in contact everyday in the affairs of life and by all the officers of Government. With the hope that such will be the position afterwards, I have made the statement which I have made to-day.



I must however, before us all, remind ourselves of the principles which can bring the goodwill between the plains and the hills people. These are the principles which should be kept in mind and be followed by all :—

(1) We must recognise facts as they are. The intensity of the demand of the hills people for a separate Hill State is a fact. The supporters of this demand claim that they are the majority. The others who are against this demand claim otherwise. There will be a time when this will come before the tribunal of the people. Those who want to get the goodwill of the other should make a great attempt to settle differences, and the Plains and Hills brethren, should study the conditions in the hills and try to bring to a common ground at least before the next Election.

(2) The plains majority group should always keep in view that the hills people feel that they are being ruled by the majority group and are being counted as subjects. Whether the feeling is right or wrong, an attempt should always be made by the majority group not in any way to make the hills people feel that they are being slighted and looked down upon as subject people.

(3) The mentality of the officers of the Government and the Government itself should not allow any idea of exploitation of the hill areas without the goodwill and consent of the hills people and leaders. Such an idea and an attempt to fulfil that idea, must be remembered, will wound and hurt the hills people. Every attempt should be made for a proper understanding by approaching the Hills Leaders together. When this is done the goodwill of the Hills people will be forthcoming for the Hills people by nature are amenable to good, brotherly and friendly approach, but they resent compulsion, threat and force. That is human nature.

(4) The majority group should remember that they have the advantages making the Hills people feel that they are equal with them or that the Hills people are subjects of the majority. This psychological approach is a very important one to create goodwill.

(5) There is a feeling among the Hills people that there is an imperialistic feeling among the Plains Assamese brethren. The Assamese brethren should not feel offended when there is such a feeling in the hearts of the Hills people, but they should try by their action, and behaviour and attitude to dispel such an idea



from the minds of the Hills people. The Hills people also should not easily be offended, should train their minds that they are being counted equal by the Assamese brethren.

There are instances which indicate that among the growing generation the plains majority group show that they feel that they are the rulers and consider the Hills people as their subjects. Attempt should seriously be made by all Assamese Leaders to give this training to the younger generation and to the people in the common walks of life.

(6) The good promises made by the Chief Minister on the floor of this House how the Hills people and other minorities will be regarded by the majority group should be implemented by all officers in all Departments when they deal with the Hills people.

(7) The hearts of the rulers should really be free from an internally religious communalism which, the Hills people feel is manifested in the actions relating to Christian Missionaries. There should really be heart searching and an honest change of hearts.

(8) The attitude in the past which blamed the poor innocent missionaries for the demand for the Hill State should not be cherished by any leader of Assam.

(9) The Christians in the hills feel that there is an attempt by authorities to wipe out Christian teachings in the hills. I have no doubt that this will be contradicted by all leaders. I am glad if it is so contradicted. Let this be proved by real action. Of course, I should take for granted that all leaders in Assam and India have no idea to be against Christianity for after all if a man be a good citizen of India and love his mother country it matters very little what religion he professes. That should be the attitude in this secular State.

(10) We must all always bear in mind that in order to create goodwill among ourselves we must be truthful, honest and free from all kinds of hypocrisy and be free from corrupt practices. Sometimes people are purchased for the sake of gaining one's end. Any land, any State or society that is not based on truth and honesty and righteousness will crumble to pieces some day. There is almighty God who sees human hearts.



(11) Our leaders must be led by the spirit of love and service with a selfless motive. Untruth and corruption will always create dissension and separation.

(12) The Christians in the past have been a target for false propaganda. It should be the attitude of all to condemn such propaganda which comes often from the hearts of religious communalist, who may speak fair and sweet words outside but who may plan something else inside. To have truth in the inward heart is very essential to build up peace and solidarity and unity. It is only when the hearts of the people are honest before God that there can be real peace and unity. Unity and peace can only be brought about when the people are content and are a God-fearing people. I do not believe that any society or State can stand long without these principles.

(13) The hills people do really appreciate a real honest and brotherly approach which is selfless and will be together with the plains brethren on equal terms when their ways of life are not in any way threatened to be disturbed ; but if such an attitude is not forthcoming, the move of the Hill State, I am afraid, will gather strength and will not stop simply by the resolution of this Assembly. The intensity of their desire to rule themselves will gather momentum if the hearts of my Assamese brethren are not opened to think from this standpoint. I therefore appeal to all that there must be heart searching and change in mentality to cement hearts together.

Some people have shown some difficulties for the creation of the Hill State, but it must be remembered that opinions are divided. A people determined to rule itself can overcome all difficulties.

With these words only, Sir, I hope that there will be a good feeling and mental attitude in future so that the hills people and the plains people may come together as brothers and work together and I appeal to both sides that there must be heart searching before God and then heart to heart we shall be united, otherwise inevitable results may come and the hills people may go on their own way. I hope, Sir, the thoughts that I have presented before this House will be seriously considered and be put into practice and create a peaceful atmosphere in Assam. May God help us.

(At this stage Shri Emerson Momin rose to speak, but as he could not be accommodated for want of time, Shri Momin left the Chamber).



**Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI (Kamrup-Palasbari):**

Mr. Speaker, Sir, at long last the much awaited States Re-organisation Committee's Report is before this House. Never in our living memory this House had such a privilege of discussing the boundaries of the State and suggest to the proper authority what we wanted. Hitherto such questions were outside our orbit of discussion and we had to accept whatever was thrust upon us from above. It is therefore all the more necessary to look at the issue confronting us dispassionately, discuss them on a broader perspective and not to be swayed away by feelings of parochialism, linguistic fanaticism or aggressive provincialism. I am glad that in response to the noble sentiments expressed by the Leader of the House, the atmosphere has been kept healthy. We may differ and it is natural for us to differ in such vital issues but that is no reason why we should indulge in personal criticism or mutual rancour or cross the limits of decency.

The existing boundaries of the Indian States is more a result of accident and the circumstances leading to the growth of British power than to any respect for popular feeling or needs of economic development. The division of India into Indian provinces and princely States was itself fortuitous and had no basis in Indian history. Though in a separate garb princely States had to be maintained in the transitional stage and experience has taught us how unnecessary and expensive are some of these B and C States. For one thing we should express our unreserved appreciation of the work of the States Reorganisation Commission and that is—it has been able to reduce the number of States from 28 to 16 States curtailing a huge amount of expenditure which we so vitally need to-day for planned economic development of the country. Obviously, there was no rational basis in the formation of the States and the imperial interest was the key note to the alignment of the boundaries of these States—than called provinces. Naturally, the need for nationalization was actually felt in the early part of this century and demands raised from almost all political platforms for reorganisation of the States. With the passing of the years the emphasis as to the basis for this reorganisation has also shifted. At one time reorganisation was equated with redistribution on linguistic basis and language was considered to be the primary and most important factor for redistributing the boundaries of the State. But experience has shown



language alone cannot account for everything, nor lead to an ideal situation. Even in Europe when this proposition was pushed to its limit internal frictions and conflicts are not over and aggressive nationalism has often led to great catastrophe. Administrative convenience, geographic contiguity, economic viability and stability—all these are important factors and almost complementary to each other. If language alone is to be made the criterion India will have to be split up into at least one hundred States and Assam into scores of small 'City States' of Greek history without any advantage to anybody. That surely is not in the heart of anybody who wants unity and strength of India. No reorganisation of States will be worth its name if this is to undermine this fundamental unity and has a tendency to weaken our country. We are glad that the States Reorganisation Commission in all its recommendations have kept this basic principle in mind and has thrown cold water on all demands entailing fissiparous tendencies.

However, federal as the political structure of our country is and as there has been a division of subjects into union, state and concurrent lists, States are bound to exist and more homogeneous they are more suitable they will be for carrying out the great experience of democracy. It is therefore recognised that community of language between the Government and the people is an ideal thing, for the emotional response that is so very essential in carrying out our various plans will then be forthcoming in adequate degree. For fuller growth of the country and the people—no scope should be given for any suspicion about exploitation—economic, cultural, linguistic. But it is also necessary to be on guard against irredentism. It is really sad and unfortunate that we lost our head on the eve of the arrival of States Reorganisation Commission in Assam, and in momentary frenzy we did things for which we should be ashamed of. Even in the worst days of communal frenzy Assam kept herself above such acts of vandalism. It only proves what irresponsible utterances and language frenzy can do. I am not here to apportion the blame on anybody. That will serve no purpose. Nor can we console ourselves by saying that such things happened in other States. We must all—people, parties and the Government accept the blame for this. Whatever we might have done in the past, now that in the States Reorganisation Commission report is out and everybody has been given opportunity to express his mind fully and frankly, we must



accept whatever democratic decision we arrived at and must not tolerate any repetitions of wild behaviour. It is for this I want that the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission should be accepted *in toto* without any modification or alteration. Modification here will be a ground for modification there, alteration will lead for further alteration and we may end by instituting a separate States Reorganisation Commission. I do not agree with many of the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission. I consider some of their recommendations to be contradictory and unreal. Yet if the whole country accepts it *in toto* I am ready to do likewise.

States Reorganisation Commission has itself said that it is desirable to bring the entire border between India and Pakistan in this region under one single control, namely, that of the Assam Government. This means North-East Frontier Agency, Manipur, Tripura. Assam should compose into one administrative unit-compact and self-sufficient capable to withstand any vicissitudes of nature or other emergencies. Of course, we would have liked Cooch Behar to come into it if the people agreed to such proposal. However leaving the question of Cooch Behar apart, defence, strategy and economic development demand integration of this area in the interest of the country. Yet unfortunately the States Reorganisation Commission appears to be halting in its recommendations. North-East Frontier Agency it has kept apart and has degraded the status of Manipur from that of a State, to that of centrally administered territory. While it speaks of ultimate merger of Manipur, it does not say the same thing in regard to North-East Frontier Agency and the reasons put forward for keeping North-East Frontier Agency separate are not at all convincing. The British wanted the segregation of the tribal areas for its own imperialist ends. While science was bringing down the natural barriers, artificial barriers were being raised and almost no attempt was made to develop these regions and raise the standards of living of the people in the name of 'leave alone' and non-interference.

This has resulted in misunderstanding, suspicion and, what is most injurious, in encouraging a separatist tendency. The States Reorganisation Commission has, therefore, rightly held that in these changed conditions it is neither advisable nor desirable to confer on the tribes any immunity from external



contacts as to hamper their development. It is difficult to understand why after holding such strong views against the policy of insolation the States Reorganisation Commission should recommend the continuance of the existing arrangements regarding North-East Frontier Agency. There is no doubt the amalgamation of North-East Frontier Agency with its 8 lakhs of tribal population will augment the percentage of entire tribal population in Assam which will itself be a safeguard against their exploitation in any form and bring a sense of confidence to that section of our hill brethren who have advocated a separate Hill State. During our discussion with the States Reorganisation Commission a question was posed as to why the Centre should hand over this area to Assam when it is spending so much money for setting up an administration there and if it is transferred to Assam where from Assam will get the finance to run the administration there. Our reply was very simple. We do not appreciate this way of looking at the problem, as if the Centre and the States are two altogether separate entities and as if one is not responsible to the other and either must not come to the other's help. In a federal constitution although the Centre and the State are two different entities yet they are complementary to each other. The Centre that is spending so much money for North-East Frontier Agency to-day must also do so if North-East Frontier Agency is brought under Assam tomorrow and Assam need Centre's help for the purpose; for the Centre is equally responsible for better Government and development of territories under the State. Moreover, we are to remember the eternal truth that further the seat of Government from the people, the greater is the tendency for the Government to be less responsive and more bureaucratic. The reports we get about the administration of this area is none too happy, but this is not the occasion to complain about it. The position of North-East Frontier Agency in the map of India is somewhat intriguing. Geographically, it belongs to North Eastern Region, which the States Reorganisation Commission is too anxious to bring under one control. Constitutionally, it belongs to Assam and yet its administration is separate and conducted direct from Delhi through the agency of the Assam Governor. Even a separate cadre for the superior posts recruited on an All-India basis has been created. All these do not fit in well with the declared policy to merge this area in Assam at a date which is not known to anybody. We feel that if such be the desire of the Government of India, sooner the happy



union is brought about, better it is and with the people of Assam and North-East Frontier Agency will get chance to know each other better and work unitedly for the development and prosperity of this area. Such a policy also demands immediate removal of the inner line regulation and offering greater chance and facility of intermixing. We have age-old trade and commercial relations with these people. Even some of these people can speak Assamese. These considerations should not have been lost sight of.

After North-East Frontier Agency I would like to speak a few words about Manipur. The consideration which warrants the merger of North-East Frontier Agency with Assam equally warrants the amalgamation of Manipur with Assam and the States Reorganisation Commission by its recommendation to merge Tripura with Assam have reinforced the argument for such merger of Manipur in Assam. Manipur like Tripura is a Part C State and the States Reorganisation Commission having favoured abolition of such small and deficit States should not have made a different recommendation in case of Manipur. In the large context of India to-day there is no justification for allowing such small and deficit States to exist. However we would like both in the case of Manipur and Tripura that they should not be forced to join Assam against the popular will. This is also in accordance with the views expressed by the Indian Statutory Commission which is reproduced in the States Reorganisation Commission's Report :

“If those who speak the same language form a compact and self-contained area, so situated and endowed as to be able to support its existence as a separate province, there is no doubt that the use of a common speech is a strong and natural basis for provincial individuality. But it is not the only test race, religion, economic interest, geographical contiguity, a due balance between country and town and between coast line and interior, may all be relevant factors. Most important of all perhaps, for practical purposes, is the largest possible measure of general agreement on the changes proposed, both on the side of the area that is gaining, and on the side of the area that is losing, territory.”



We only stretch our hands to embrace them, it is for them to decide whether they would like such embrace or not. What however distresses us most is the treatment meted out to the popular demand in Manipur for a responsible democratic Government. There can be no reason for denying such privilege when we all admit the rich culture of the Manipuris and their high level of development. In fact the recommendation to treat Manipur as a centrally-administered territory is actually its degradation in status and I doubt if Manipuris will feel happy with such a status. We can assure the Tripuris and Manipuris, if they decide to merge in Assam, all their rights and privileges will be scrupulously guarded and that their language and culture will ever be protected. Our tribal brothers should also welcome such merger as Tripura and Manipur will bring about 3 lakhs more of tribal people to our midst and increase tribal population.

We are glad that the States Reorganisation Commission has rejected the claim of West Bengal over Goalpara as unsound. We have all sympathy for West Bengal who has suffered during the Partition and we also appreciate the magnitude of their problems. But this can be no justification for casting her eyes on Goalpara. As my Friend, Shri Hareswar Das, has rightly pointed out, the density of Goalpara is already considerably high. There is no industry worth the name in that district. Most of the people are agriculturists and a fairly large percentage of them are landless. It will be criminal to bring in new people before giving land adequate to ensure a decent living to those who are already there. We have also no doubt that there will be little land to go round after such re-distribution. West Bengal's economic problem cannot be solved in this manner. This theory of 'Leben Serum' or 'living space' is fraught with grave dangers and no one can yield to this. Even history was requisitioned to support West Bengal's claim. But history has almost no relevance to the determination of such issues for since when history began and when it can be taken to end nobody knows. History is dynamic and it indicates only certain trends and all the events it relates cannot be bottled up into a particular era. Moreover, Partition has proved that the problem of minorities cannot be solved by transference of territories. What will happen to Bengali minorities living in other part of Assam? Who will protect them? The solution of this problem lies in devising adequate safeguards and in getting rid of minority-complex and not in separation.



The demand for Purbachal is almost similar and has emanated from a section of people whose affinity with Bengal culturally and linguistically they deem closer. The States Reorganisation Commission has rightly said that creation of such a Purbachal will create a new set of problems in place of some old and will never be an appropriate remedy for the grievances of the minorities. A State who from its very birth will not be economically viable, which will neither solve the problem of language nor the problem of the minority groups of people like the Nagas, the Mizos and the Manipuris, can have no justification to exist. It is no wonder that none of these people have supported this move.

Lastly a few words about the demand for a separate Hill State. We are glad that the States Reorganisation Commission has rejected it as impracticable and inexpedient. A Hill State comprising of different hill tribes sooner or later is bound to present the same problems as they face to-day. All these hill tribes are not on the same level of development and the more developed and advanced group will dominate for a long time to come. They will face the same language difficulty, the same financial troubles in carrying out economic programmes which they need most. Moreover, all these hills are not in a contiguous geographical area and sooner or later this is bound to lead to a demand for a corridor and emergence of a new problem. I do not deny they have some grievances and may be very vital. I do not say that they live in a land of milk and honey. I admit that we the people of the plains have not been able to mix with them freely and conquer their hearts. Years of segregation and our moribund social system are to a great extent responsible for them. But there can be no justification for demanding separation. He is a bad surgeon who easily uses his knife and does not try to cure a disease with medicine when it is so curable. For our State is like our body nature's gift. If the Government have failed to redress the genuine grievances of the hills people, by all means, remove the Government for this Government is as much their as ours.

**Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY (Minister):** Even in this House all Hill Members, were not allowed to speak.

**Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI:** But let us not disturb nature's gift which is Assam, where hills and plains people are ordained to live together in mutual amity and good will. I



echo the sentiments of Mr. Saprawnga and say that these people are the flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood and in many veins of the so called plains people still runs the blood of our tribal brethren. We are against all forms of exploitation whether of the poor by the rich, the hills by the plains, of the Bengalees by the Assamese or *vice versa*. Such a society is quite the anti-thesis of a Socialistic Society. What we actually suffer from to-day is static economy and under-development. Once our economy starts expanding and avenues for gainful occupation opens much of these sense of exploitation will vanish. Yet, I will urge upon the Government to consider the problems of the hills on a different footing with sympathy and tolerance, with far sightedness and large heartedness and behave in a manner that will banish all mutual suspicion and fear and feelings of being ignored or neglected. We must also do away with all distinctions between hill tribes and plain tribes and must enable a tribal to enjoy all his rights and privileges guaranteed by the Constitution wherever he may be. Time has also come to amend the Sixth Schedule of our Constitution to incorporate the genuine urges and aspirations of the hills people and make the District Councils the real organs of self-Government and capable of safeguarding the true interest of the people living in the hills. While we appreciate the suggestion of the States Reorganisation Commission for the appointment of a Commissioner, to make him a real liaison between the District Councils and the State Government and keep the Government alive about the needs and requirements of the hills people, we want him to be the agent of the Provincial Government. It is also necessary for the Chief Minister to convene a meeting of the hills representatives of all shades of opinion to discuss and determine all problems confronting us.

Assam is destined to remain a composite State. Here is an unique opportunity for us all to show that in spite of all difference in language, custom, culture we can live together, work together and build together a happy and prosperous Assam. This is a challenge of the time and we must be prepared to accept it. I have no doubt this tiny State in the north-east corner of India can yet prove that all these squabbles for language, culture, homogeneity are meaningless pursuits to which frail human beings like us very often fall victim and even in a sea of diversity we can live happily if we trust each other and are determined to live together. Let Assam reflect India correctly.



Recently a cry has been raised to make Assam a bilingual State. Such cries are mischievous and sure to lead us in great trouble. Until we all willingly decide to make a particular language a State language, there can be no question of imposing any language upon others and we must remain a multi-lingual State. After all language is merely a vehicle of expression and let us not destroy what we have gained by an idle fight over such issue which the common people by whom we swear understand little.

**Mr. SPEAKER :** I want to tell Rev. Roy that out of 16 Members from Hills in this House, two Members are absent and out of the 14, thirteen spoke.

**Shri HARINARAYAN BARUA :** মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয় যোবো কিছুখা কবলগা আছিল। কবলৈ দিব লাগে।

**Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY (Minister) :** But, Sir, the impression is made that two of the Hill Members who wanted to speak were not allowed to speak.

**Mr. SPEAKER :** There are 16 Members from Hills, 13 spoke, 2 are absent and one left the House.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) :** (Kamrup-Hajo) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this House I had great desire that everyone of the Members would find an opportunity of expressing their views and for this purpose four days were kept but we have unfortunately lost half a day on the first day which we could have utilised in discussing such a vital matter. So it is no good quarrelling now. Wasting valuable time of the House in this fashion by responsible public representatives like ourselves does not reflect credit on us.

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS :** That is not an explanation.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) :** We must be businesslike in this House and we must regulate our programme and work in such a manner that we do not waste valuable time in this House.



**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS :** He is putting blame on the Members.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) :** In this I have not excluded myself. Yesterday, I left the matter to the House whether we could not sit longer but the House did not agree.

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS :** I was not given time to speak.

**Mr. SPEAKER :** He was given 45 minutes but he exceeded that and took 2 minutes more.

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS :** I had many things to say but I was not given time.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) :** It is a vital matter on which depends the future of Assam and India. But, fissiparous tendencies have crept in. We should try to bring about unity of all sections of the people of India to unite amongst diversities and thus show example to the country.

Sir, it is refreshing to note that as far as this demand of the Reorganisation Commission's Report which is before the House is concerned, almost all the representatives here including the Opposition are unanimous in supporting the maintenance of the *status quo* of the State for the safety and security of the country. This is the most important factor. There may be slight differences regarding details. I propose to point out some of the difficulties in detail to my hill Friends—those who are thinking of having a Separate Hill State, to bring home to them the difficulties inherent in such a claim.

I am grateful to my hon. Friends, the Members of this House, for appreciating the statement I have made, laying down the policy of this Government for the protection of the minorities and I expect that every Member of this House and the people at large should appreciate our stand and help me by giving me timely information where this policy is not implemented in action, instead of going to the Press for propaganda purpose. Sir, it is found that some people, instead of writing to



the Government or informing the Government or the officers concerned about their grievances, go directly to the Press outside the State and send all sorts of news without ascertaining facts. My Friend, Mr. Ranendra Mohan Das, was very loud in his outburst, but he has never been to Goalpara ; he never cared to ascertain facts.

I draw the attention of the House, particularly the minorities to the portion of the report of the States Reorganisation Commission which lays down a sound policy to be followed in these matters—"While minorities are entitled to reasonable safeguards to protect their educational, cultural and other interests, it has to be borne in mind that such safeguards should not so operate as to perpetuate separatism or to impede the processes of natural assimilation". Now, this conduct of some people to muster outside help in the solution of internal problems of the State will always impede solution of those problems. So I appeal to him and men of his type to rely on his own Government and to approach the Government and then only these problems can be solved. I do not say that I know everything that happened in the State but it is the duty of every one of us as well as the representatives of the public to bring to my notice and to the notice of the Government about any fact that goes contrary to the policy as laid down by the Government. If after that the Government does not do justice or pay any attention, then only one can go to the Press or platform for redress their grievance, if any. But if instead of doing so, and without ascertaining facts one just goes outside and looks up to those who are not in authority over the State for redress of the grievances, it only indicates that such people are satisfied with propaganda to encourage reactionary and fissiparous tendencies in the country. Sir, as you know we in the majority have great responsibilities—"the system of guarantees to minorities should not be such as to lend itself to misuse by parties interested in promoting a sense of disloyalty to the State". Sir, I place before him this valuable principle that has been laid down by the States Reorganisation Commission. I repeat that by carrying propaganda in Calcutta or elsewhere it only creates disloyalty instead of helping in solving the problems of the minorities.

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS :** I would like to refer to paragraph.....



**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** There can be no substitute for a sense of fair play on the part of the majority about minority. That is another very salutary principle—"no substitute for a sense of fair play on the part of the majority and a corresponding obligation on the part of the minorities to fit themselves in as elements vital to the integrated and ordered progress of the State. That sense of integration, that sense of unity for the interest of the State is very vital". Sir, in this connection I can cite an instance. Those persons who led propaganda for merger of a part of Goalpara with West Bengal had an organisation by the name, "Bengali Citizens Association." When I went there I asked those people—you have been living here for more than a generation, are you not the citizens of Assam? Or are the Bengalees consider separate citizens?" I am grateful that that organisation's name was subsequently changed by the gentleman who was himself the prime mover for this merger of Goalpara with West Bengal. Sir, it clearly appears from the various voices in this House that my Friend, Mr. Ranendra Mohan Das, is ploughing a solitary furrow without a following.....

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS:** Unfortunately the States Reorganisation Commission accepted the recommendation as true.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** Sir, it is unfortunate that my Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, in his outburst used most undignified and unparliamentary terms and he went to the length of describing some hon. Members as animals shown in the gramophone records—His Master's Voice. I hope he will realise in his cooler moments that use of such expressions is not becoming of a gentleman—(Voices from the Treasury Benches—*Shame, Shame*).

Sir, the Education Minister has already met his allegation about attempted suppression of Bengali language by Assamese in educational institutions in Goalpara. I shall not speak on that again. I propose here to deal only with the question raised by my Friend, Mr. Ranendra Mohan Das, regarding Domicile Rules and the census figure anomaly.

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS:** What about other recommendations of the Commission?



**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** I want to deal only with the principal recommendations regarding the constitution of the State. I do not want to go out of my way to deal with matters which concern the Central Government. That is why I did not make any reference to those matters, for example, constitution of the Public Service Commission, appointment of a Commissioner.....

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS:** These are matters recommended by the States Reorganisation Commission as.....

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** Do not disturb me please?

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS:** I only want.....

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Das, please restrain yourself. We know you have your difficulties; you have not been used to restraint, therefore, it is better to exercise yourself a little here.

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS:** But other hon. Members also failed in their restraint.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** Now Sir, as regards the Domicile Rules which are guided by rule 307 of the Assam Executive Manual, which have been referred to by the hon. Member were made more than 30 years ago and remain in force under the Government of India Act, 1935 under Section 292. Statutory rules are included in the terms, "laws in force" used in article 35(b) of the Constitution. It will thus be seen that this rule—307 of the Assam Executive Manual which lays down required qualifications as to residents to the State as in force of law, and cannot be altered except by an Act of Parliament under Article 16 (3) of the Constitution.

So this is a Constitutional matter. Any one who is aggrieved can go to the court for determination of the validity of this rule. The two main elements of the rule are—

(a) permanent residence of the applicant at the time he applies to be recognised as a domicile, and

(b) intention to live there permanently.



These are the two ingredients. As a collateral evidence of this is the possession of a homestead for ten years and the intention to live there till death has been mentioned.

As I have already said that these rules were made more than 30 years ago and remain in force under the Government of India Act, 1935 under Section 292, unless the Government of India makes law under the provision of Article 16, clause (3) of the Constitution of India.

It may be known to the hon. Members that in this matter we have had some cases decided in the Supreme Court as well as in the High Court.

I will place also the relevant article of the Constitution, *viz.*, Article 35.

No objection has ever been raised against it until after partition when large number of speculators and fortune-seekers entered Assam especially from the District of Sylhet often leaving their families and properties in charge of members of their families with a view to secure a footing in Assam as well as to continue to derive benefits of their properties in East Pakistan.

Though the language in the rule admits of various interpretation, the interpretation put by Government has always been the broad one, namely, that the homestead acquired by the applicant has become his permanent home where he intends to live during his life-time. Absence from one's home for short or long period does not necessarily imply that the person has left his home and made his permanent home elsewhere. Once a person is recognised as domicile, he and his children are automatically domiciled and acquire the same status as natives of the State for purposes of Government employment, unless he himself or his children voluntarily decide to give up the domicile in Assam.

The Assam rule is no way harsher than those of many other States and does not place any real impediment to the acquisition of domicile certificates by bonafide permanent settlers in the State. I incidentally mention that the Uttar Pradesh rule insists that the applicant should have no intention of returning to his State



of origin, if any. The owning of a residence is not regarded as a conclusive proof of domicile and the candidate's mother tongue has also to be one of the regional languages or dialects of Uttar Pradesh. Further, residence in Uttar Pradesh for any number of years for a temporary purpose such as service, trade, profession, etc.; is not by itself regarded as establishing a claim to domicile. I drew attention also to the rules of West Bengal regarding domiciliary qualifications of candidates. They appear to be discriminatory against persons not of Bengalee descent. The Assam domiciliary rules are free from any such discrimination.

This means non-Bengalees in Bengal will not get benefit under the existing domicile rule. Assam domicile rules, however, are very liberal.

Requirement as to residence is an important condition for appointment under any State Government, till any law is made by Parliament under Article 16, sub-clause (3) of the Constitution.

I now quote Article 35, clause (b) which continues to be in force.

"35, Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution—

\* \* \* \* \*

(b) any law in force immediately before the commencement of this Constitution in the territory of India with respect to any of the matters referred to in sub-clause (i) of clause (a) or providing for punishment for any act referred to in sub-clause (ii) of that clause shall, subject to the terms thereof and to any adaptations and modifications that may be made therein under Articles 372, continue in force until altered or repealed or amended by Parliament".

This has further been clarified in Government of India's letter, dated the 6th April 1950. A liberal interpretation has, however, been made of these rules by the State Government and it made recommendations to the Government of India as far back as 1951 to undertake Parliamentary legislation to make the Domicile Rules uniform in all States.



DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION TO CONSIDER [19TH Nov.  
THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STATES  
REORGANISATION COMMISSION  
RELATING TO ASSAM

The Domicile Rule of Assam has since been further liberalised by issue of the Circular on the 30th July, 1953. According to this Circular, persons of Sylhet origin who have permanently settled in reconstituted Assam, the optee Government servants and their children have been ensured the same status as any other native of the State. Under this new circular, a person having built homestead on land taken on lease would also be recognised as owner of the homestead.

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS:** Sir, the members of the States Reorganisation Commission also supported me.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister):** Then another point of view he quotes--practically vomiting something from somewhere without caring to know anything. He vomits from the Memorandum submitted by the sponsors of the Purbachal State that the number of Bengalee-speaking population has risen by 300 per cent. in twenty years' time. The figures quoted by him are misleading as most incompatible comparisons have been made in order to arriving at very strange and astounding deduction to suit their purpose. First of all a comparison has been made between the percentage of Assamese speaking population of 1931 Census, which included the district of Sylhet, with that 1951 Census, when the district of Sylhet barring a small portion thereof is no longer a part of Assam. In the 1931 Census 95 per cent. of the population of the Sylhet district which alone had 27,24,342 people out of the total population of 92,47,857 for the whole of Assam were Bengali speaking. As such the percentage of Assamese speaking population to the total population of Assam including the Sylhet district would be naturally much less than the same percentage of the 1951 Census, when almost the entire portion of Sylhet is no longer part of Assam. Again, in the population figures of Assam in 1931, the population of the State portion of the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills which was shown separately in the 1931 Census Tables, has not been included. In the 1951 Census Tables, the population of these areas has been included in the total population of the District. After making the above adjustments in the 1931 Census figures, i.e., by excluding the ceded portion of Sylhet and including the State portion of the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the percentage of Assamese



speaking population of Assam in the 1931 Census would be 31.4. The Assamese speaking population of Assam as per 1951 Census is 49,72,493 and not 59,65,159 as stated. Even if bilingualism is taken into consideration, the total population speaking Assamese including those who do so as a second language, would be 58,63,159, but it would be wrong to compare the same with that of the quoted figure of 1931 Census on the basis of mother-tongue only. Thus the percentage of Assamese speaking population in Assam in 1931 would be 31.4 if the necessary adjustments mentioned earlier were made, and this has risen to 55 per cent. in 1951 of the total population of 90,43,707 for the State as a whole.

The increase or decrease in the number of people speaking a particular language between 1931 and 1951 Censuses is dependent not merely on natural growth and biological factors. Emigration, immigration and natural absorption of immigrant groups are all relevant factors. In all previous censuses, there were certain factors which resulted in inflation of the population of Bengali speakers, as for instance, the language of a fairly large number of tea garden tribes was returned as Bengali. Besides, the ideas on the real character of the language of the people of Goalpara were confused and it was usual to return it as Bengali. In the 1951 Census, these mistakes of the previous censuses were avoided. In the booklet entitled 'On Language Statistics of Assam Censuses', this question has been dealt with at length, and I do not want to go further into this. But what I want to impress upon the House is that my Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohon Das, is trying to make a capital out of these entirely wrong and distorted figures which have no bearing whatsoever to actual fact. If my Friend is really sincere in his professed service to the Bengali speaking community, he should try first to ascertain facts and figures before running to the press or making a speech and thereby poisoning their minds with incorrect and absurd statements. Such statements harm the cause he professes to uphold more than doing any good.

I am, however, glad that the policy that has been laid before the House by me during the early part of the debate while initiating the motion has been successful in dispelling some doubts and misgivings from the minds of some of my Friends coming from the Hill districts. But they have, while



delivering their speeches on the floor of the House, exhorted on me the utmost importance of the implementation of that policy. I assure my Friends in reply that I am determined to implement this policy to the best of my ability. But in this matter, I invite the co-operation of all sections of the House, and more specially of the hon. Members representing the minority groups. I urge upon them all to cast off any feeling of inferiority, if they have any. After all our Constitution has ensured for equal opportunity for all people inhabiting this vast country, whatever the caste or creed may be. Our brethren in the Hills have also the equal right, provided they can qualify themselves and have the confidence of the people, to the office of Governor or Chief Minister or even to the very exalted position of the Rastrapati of our Sovereign Republic. I therefore fail to understand why should they be labouring under an illusory suspicion that they are being governed by the majority communities. I therefore again call upon them in all sincerity to cast off their inferiority complex and come forward to work for the prosperity and progress of the country as a whole hand in hand with the majority communities. Particularly in Assam, minorities form about 70 per cent. of the total population of the State. That itself is an adequate guarantee for their protection. No Government whoever be the personnel composing it, can afford to ignore the welfare and prosperity of the minorities who form such a dominant factor in the administration of the State. Otherwise, that Government cannot expect to continue in office for any length of time. I assure you, whatever I say, I say from the core of my heart and there is not the least ambiguity in my mind. The present Government is run by persons coming from the great Congress Organisation. The whole life of the Congressmen are dedicated to the well being of teeming millions of the country. Such men cannot be expected to have any duplicity or ambiguity in their professions. They have their definite objective and set purpose, and they cannot be true to their salt unless practise in their daily activities what they publicly profess.

I am sorry to learn that Mr. Khongphai who gave a long discourse yesterday is under the erroneous impression that the rule regarding reservation of posts to (Tribals), Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is not preserved. But I request him if any instance regarding violation of the rule comes to his notice, he will please immediately bring it to my notice so that



I may take a note of it and try to remedy it. I may mention here that the posts in all services are reserved for Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes on the basis of population and my attention has not been drawn to a single instance where this rule has not been observed. For his satisfaction I may mention that some of the Tribals are occupying very high positions in Government services. I may mention a few of them. They are, *i. e.*, the Excise Commissioner is a Khasi, the Deputy Commissioner, Dhubri is from the Naga Hills and the Special Superintendent of Police is also a Naga. The Under-Secretary, Tribal Areas Department is a Khasi, a Member of the Assam Public Service Commission is a Khasi, the Secretary of the Assam Public Service Commission is also a Khasi, and a number of Divisional Forest Officers and there are also Subdivisional Officers, Superintending Engineers and other officers. I do not want to name them. In this case, the Khasi people being more advanced, most of the post went to them and there is already some sort of dissatisfaction among the people of other hills and we will have to find out ways and means to remove dissatisfaction. So it is for my Friend also who is the representative of the Khasi people to give me some well thought solution of the problem.

Although at the beginning of the initiation of the debate, I did not mention the difficulties in regard to the constitution of a separate State, I propose to do it now, so that this fact may be dispassionately taken into consideration by the hon. Members of the House as well as the people outside.

Some of the Tribal Friends have stated that they are not happy with the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission not conceding the claim for a separate Hill State. Of course we will have to find out the reasons of this problem and try to solve it. We will have to sit round the table and find out what are the reasons for this. They are under an impression that the expression "New Class" referred to by the States Reorganisation Commission in paragraph 687, means Christian Community. Under that assumption they have felt that the Members have got a strong prejudice against the Christian Community and that their findings and conclusions in this connection are vitiated due to such biased outlook against the Christian Community. I therefore propose to place before the Members a few facts giving the background to enable them to find



out what is meant by the "New Class" referred to in the Report. I do not hold any brief for the Members of the States Reorganisation Commission but I shall endeavour to remove the wrong impression which has practically been the basis of some of these Tribal Friends being unhappy although they appreciate that States Reorganisation Commission have advanced strong and cogent reasons for not recommending separate Hill State.

I propose to place the following facts and circumstances giving the proper background for consideration of the Members to enable them to find out what is meant by the "New Class". India is a secular State not merely from the time the Constitution came into force, but from the earliest times and Christian saints came to India and spread Christianity long before Europe was christianised. Millions of Christians live everywhere in India without the slightest interference with their religious customs and ways of life. From the ancient times, facilities have been given for the construction of churches and property endowed, and by and large the Indian Christians throughout India are Indians first and also nationalistic in their approach.

During the British administration the hill districts were completely isolated from the rest of the country. At the beginning it might have been actuated by a desire to protect the Tribal people from possible exploitation by unscrupulous elements among non-tribals and also to administer those territories according to tribal ways. But with the growth of Indian nationalism the political purpose became more apparent and the hill people were sought to be isolated from any kind of national influence so that British domination could be continued at least in those strategic areas even if the rest of the country became free. The conception of a separate Hill State came into being towards the latter part of British administration and it was carefully developed by some British administrators in charge of various hill districts with the blessings of the then irresponsible Provincial Government. The idea was to combine all the hill districts into a separate administrative unit which could be administered as a Crown colony. The alternative of such a separate State being directly administered by the Central Government in the event of a Crown colony not materialising was also considered at different stages. Ultimately, the British Parliament did not favour any such idea and the Tribal Areas became part and parcel of Assam and India.



The influence exercised by the British during their administration, however, continued to affect the minds of some people in those areas even after the British had left. The British administration adopted various devices for isolating the tribal people from any contact with other sections of the Indian community and they rigidly enforced the Inner Line Regulation. The administration in those areas was mostly in the hands of European officers and hardly any contact between the tribal population in general and other sections of the population in Assam was possible. The Inner Line Regulation was not enforced against foreigners from the West and those following the western culture and way of life, together with the policy of the then administration. The age-old cultural relations between the hills and the plains were thus terminated to a great extent and the tribal people generally were left to be influenced psychologically by western ways of thought and culture. Education was imparted generally on western lines and everything coming from the West was placed before the people as ideals to be longed for and achieved. Communications in the hill areas being extremely difficult, the influence of western culture and thought did not generally penetrate effectively into the interior or rural areas. Western culture and mode of life naturally influenced those who lived in towns and areas easily accessible and since contact between people in the interior with those in the towns and developed areas was not easy, a psychological gulf automatically developed between them. Educational facilities and other advantages accruing from a close association with the British administration necessarily became more or less the monopoly of those in the urban and easily accessible areas and the people in the rural areas who were economically backward continued to suffer in their isolation under difficult economic and physical conditions. Due to isolation from the healthy influences of the Indian culture and the penetration of western ideas and mode of life into the urban areas generally, an urban outlook developed and it created a psychological barrier between those who lived more or less a primitive life under difficult circumstances and those who got education on western lines and other facilities in trade, commerce, etc., consequent upon their closer association with the British administration. Many among those who came under western influence naturally lost contact with the indigenous tribal ways of life, customs, etc., and being otherwise isolated from the influence of Indian culture, grew into a new class to which the States Reorganisation Commission has probably referred



to in their Report. This new class developed because of the influence exercised by the British administration and their policy to keep the tribal people apart from the great mass of the Indian people together with the free play which western culture was allowed to have in influencing the psychological attitude of those who readily came under its influence.

Some among this class continued to be imbued with western culture and ideas even when the British had left and when Indian independence came there was manifestation in some Tribal Areas of this influence which in some cases led some people of that new class to think in terms of independence, separation from India, etc., not conducive to the growth of a strong Indian nation. The United Mizo Freedom Organisation in the Lushai Hills demanded the merger of Lushai Hills with Burma. The Mizo Union, the principal political party in that area also demanded at one stage that they should be connected with the Government of India only in respect of Defence and External Affairs and that they should have the option of separation from India after a period of five years. In the Khasi-Jaintia Hills, the Khasi National Durbar demanded a centrally administered State in the Khasi Jaintia Hills. The case of the Naga Hills is entirely different and the Naga National Council still holds fast to their demand for complete independence. Only in the Garo Hills, the Garo National Council, representing the Garo people, generally accepted the idea of remaining with Assam. Gradually, the atmosphere became more clear and the concept of Indian Nationalism held away over the minds of most of the people in those areas. Progressive forces started to exert their influence and ultimately except the Naga Hills, the other Hill Districts accepted the Indian Constitution with all its safeguards for the protection of the rights, privileges, customs, traditions and ways of life of the tribal people as embodied in the Sixth Schedule.

When the constitution of the States Reorganisation Commission was announced on 29th December 1953 some lurking separatist tendencies in the minds of some of the tribal people belonging to the class influenced by western ideas and culture began to revive and manifest themselves. The first manifestation came when some elements in Shillong under the name of "Highlander's Union" and the "Khasi National Durbar"



submitted a memorandum to the States Reorganisation Commission demanding a separate Hill State with the five autonomous hill districts and the Tribal Areas in the North-East Frontier Agency.

The same Khasi National Durbar had persistently opposed in the past the integration of the 25 Khasi States in Assam after independence. But the representatives and responsible organisations in the hill districts who allowed themselves after independence to be influenced by the concept of Indian Nationalism did not associate themselves with those extremist and reactionary elements. The unhealthy influence of some of the reactionary elements known for their anti-Indian activities in the past began, however, to spread but till June, 1954, they did not succeed in influencing most of the leaders of the people with progressive ideas. In June, 1954 a meeting was convened in Shillong which was attended by the Chief Executive Members of the various District Councils with the idea of determining the attitude to be taken towards the issues which the States Reorganisation Commission would be called upon to consider. It was decided to take up the question of amending the Sixth Schedule suitably to confer upon the District Councils the right to manage their own affairs as in their opinion the Sixth Schedule as it was did not adequately safeguard the tribal interests. It was also decided not to press the demand for any separate Hill State. In pursuance of that decision in the Conference, Shrimati Bonily Khongmen, M.P. gave notice to move a Bill in Parliament embodying various proposals for amending the Sixth Schedule. Government sent their comments intimating the desirability of constituting a Commission under clause 14 of the Sixth Schedule to remove any difficulty that may retard the successful working of the autonomy in the Hills. A Conference of tribal leaders, was again held in Tura in the early part of October, 1954, and only then it was decided to submit a memorandum to the States Reorganisation Commission demanding the constitution of a separate Hill State. A memorandum was accordingly submitted in pursuance of that decision. The Conference at Tura was not attended by any tribal leaders from the Mikir Hills and the Lushai Hills. Only one tribal leader from the North Cachar Hills attended the Conference but it appears that he did not put any signature in the memorandum submitted to the Commission. As the Naga National Council continued to press for complete independence, that district was naturally



not associated with that Conference in any way. The Mizo Union which is the major political party in the district, passed a resolution in March, 1954, approving the opinion of their leaders expressed in a meeting held in February, 1954, deciding that it was not feasible to accept the move for the formation of a separate Hills State for the Hill Tribes of Assam. The Mikir National Council which is the major political party sent a memorandum in July, 1954, expressing itself against any separate Hill State and advocating the continuation of the district as a part and parcel of the State of Assam.

It will, therefore, be seen that the demand for a separate Hill State from any responsible quarter originated only recently and long after the constitution of the States Reorganisation Commission was announced. It appears that less progressive elements with ideas not conducive to the growth of a healthy concept of Indian nationalism succeeded to some extent in influencing some leaders in some of the hill districts with ideas relating to a separate existence. It is unfortunate that the development of progressive ideas based on a clear appreciation of the common interest of the hills and the plains should have suffered a setback after the constitution of the States Reorganisation Commission and that some elements should have found it possible to extend their sphere of influence. From the trend of psychological development since independence, it cannot but be admitted that the recent move for a separate Hill State from some leaders has resulted in a serious setback in respect of the progressive growth of healthy ideas based on friendly and cordial relationship between the people of the Plains and the Hills which is so vitally necessary in the mutual interest of both. People of good-will, will, however, still feel confident that mutual respect and appreciation of the feelings and sentiments of both sections of the people will not be materially affected as a result, and that the old cordial relations between the two will be fully restored.

That the concept of a separate Hill State cannot be based on sound considerations does not require elaborate explanation. Financially, a separate Hill State can in no case be viable as rightly pointed out by the States Reorganisation Commission. The Hill areas are chronically deficit and in running the administration of those areas according to the



present levels, a huge amount of money has got to be spent annually from the revenues collected from the other areas of the State besides grants made by the Government of India under Article 275 of the Constitution. I may refer to my statement made while I moved this Motion where I stated that in 1955-56 expenditure from the State Revenues for the Autonomous Hills was expected to go up more than Rs.2 crores, excluding expenditure for institutions catering to the needs of the State as a whole in addition to the grant from the Government of India to the extent of Rs.2 crores and 10 lakhs. The share of the Hill Districts of the expenditure on common organisation like the Secretariat and other Heads of Departments or institutions serving the State as a whole, on area-cum-population basis is estimated at Rs.62.44 lakhs. As roughly estimated above, a separate Hill State will require a probable annual expenditure of more than Rs.4 crores even according to the present standard of administration and development. It has been estimated on the basis of revenue derived by the State Government and the District Council from those areas, the yearly revenue may come up to Rs.46 lakhs only. In my previous figures I gave receipts on State level only; the receipt of Rs.21 lakhs from District level has been added here. A separate Hill State, if constituted, will thus be able to raise not more than 10 per cent of its expenditure from internal sources and will have to rely on outside help for the rest.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Members to some of the other difficulties of formation of a separate Hill State. The hill areas are deficient in foodgrains and large quantities of rice and paddy have to be moved to the deficit hill districts from the plains areas all the time. The hills produce potatoes and many crops like oranges, pine-apples and other agricultural produce like betel leaf, tezpata, etc., have to find their market in the plains. The economic life of the hill people is also closely integrated with the neighbouring plains districts and not with the neighbouring hills. The problem of profitable marketing of their produce has yet to be solved, but outlet is being found in plains. In order to facilitate the transport of these commodities, improvement of road communication has been taken up under the First Five Year Plan for transport of these commodities to the market in the plains and throughout the rest of India. The Khasi Hills as well as the Garo Hills have had their trade relations with Kamrup and Goalpara districts through market places,



existing for centuries. All economic relations of the Mikir Hills people are with the plains people of Nowgong and Sibsagar districts. It is also usual for the hill men from many of these districts to go down to the neighbouring plains for employment against cash wages during the slack periods of agricultural operations in the hills. This natural close integration of the economy of the different hill districts with their neighbouring plains districts, the diversion of trade after partition has resulted in a closer integration with the plains districts of Assam. The Autonomous Hill Districts are a series of economic islands joined only by the plains in a separate Province. They will be much more vulnerable on the economic side and are likely to be on a much weaker position than the plains in case a separate Hill State is formed. A separate Hill State with no economic link between its different units but almost wholly dependent upon the plains districts constituted under a separate administration will find it difficult even to maintain existing standards and face extreme difficulty in planning and executing measures of economic upliftment and betterment of the standard of living of the hill people.

I have already stated that nature has made the hills and plains of Assam mutually dependent on each other for their prosperity and well being. The hills are the sources of rivers and consequently of water power, and its development is going to play an increasingly important part in the future development of the country. If the hills and plains form parts of separate States, the difficulties that would arise in planning and executing any project would be enormous, especially if the background is one of mutual suspicion which will inevitably follow and accentuate if any separate Hill State is formed.

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS :** What about D.V.C. ?

**Shri BISNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) :** You do not know what quarrel is going on between Bihar and West Bengal.

Sir, I am giving a quotation from one of our friends, who was a Governor of Assam.

"Experience shows that it is easier to divide States than to unite them and there is little doubt that setting up of two provinces would create vested interests in both areas which would oppose a union. Antagonisms tend to arise, economic



barriers grow and people drift apart rather than together. The hill men, whose future depends on healthy intercourse with the wider world and who have a good deal to contribute to it, might well find themselves shut up in their fastness with a petty impoverished Assam and look to her diversity and to her capacity for toleration which is greater than that of other provinces to provide her strength”.

I have already stated that injury which will be done to the people of both the plains and the hills if a separate Hill State is formed and that is why I am asking my friends of the majority community to realise that it is our duty to come in contact with the hills people in such a way as to create confidence in them. We must try our level best to draw the hills people closer to us if we are to build a prosperous country. The plains districts are chronic victims of floods and erosion of soil in the hills which is very important problem vitally concerning all of us. No effective flood control measures can be undertaken without works at the sources and in the catchment areas of the rivers, which are all in the hills while the rivers flow down to the plains and create havoc. Any unified control over the river system which is of vital importance for the existence of the State and its future prosperity will founder if there are two separate States. I need hardly emphasise the maintenance of reserved forests according to established standards and their proper exploitation and conservation as necessary to prevent flood and erosion. Any careless exploitation of forests or lack of proper conservation measures under an artificial separate Hill State is likely to endanger the future wellbeing of the hills and plains alike.

I have already stated that no effective measures for flood control can be undertaken without works at the sources and catchment areas of the rivers. We must remember that it is not a question of one single river, but hundreds of tributaries are flowing down the hills into the Brahmaputra. Nature wants us the hills and plains people to co-operate and build up a prosperous Assam by joint efforts.

The geographical position of the hill districts makes such a separate State an untenable proposition. There is no communication link worth mentioning between the different hill districts and they can contact each other only through the plains. The communication system in the hills is linked up



with the principal rail and road communications in the plains and with the main trading and commercial centres in the rest of the State. Extensive road development programmes have long been undertaken connecting the hills with the plains and the hills districts themselves through the plains and a separate Hill State will result in complete dislocation of the existing communication system necessitating the forging of new communication links involving huge expenditure and enormous difficulties.

The State Government have given top priority to the rapid development of the Tribal Areas and in fact the extent of development that has already taken place in those areas in various fields is enough to do credit to any Government. The entire grant under the First Five Year Plan from the Government of India is expected to be fully utilised and in the Second Five Year Plan the development works are proposed to be greatly intensified. The tempo of development of the hill areas, which has been appreciated by the States Reorganisation Commission and which has been steadily rising will suffer serious reverses if any major change is to be effected in the administrative set up of the hills and the plains.

The whole of Assam presents a picture of the mingling of innumerable races and tribes and it will continue to be heterogeneous with an underlying current of broad unity and a composite culture. Any artificial vivi-section of the State is not likely to be conducive of the welfare of any section of her people. This great collection of peoples in the hills and the plains, have been set in a particularly well demarcated corner of the world and their welfare will depend on their proving able to live together. Assam should look to her diversity and to her capacity for toleration to provide her strength.....

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS :** Sir, will we have to sit beyond four for another hour ?

**Mr. SPEAKER :** If required, we will have to sit.

**Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) :** The State Government have opposed separate Hill State not because of any hostility to the Tribal people for their legitimate aspiration, but because in their opinion a separate Hill State will be no solution to the problem, and the sentiment



behind it, if not checked, are likely to undermine national unity which is detrimental to the interest of the hills and plains. I therefore request the hon. Members who have stated to be unhappy with the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission to consider these difficulties and accept the recommendations whole-heartedly and work for building up New Assam with abundance of good-will of the people of the plains. It will be also for us, the majority in the land, to remove any suspicion and misgivings that may be lingering in the mind of anyone living in the hills and it will be our duty to bring them closer together by our good-will for this joint endeavour of building New Assam. The overwhelming desire of the people of Assam is for the plainsmen and hillsmen to march hand in hand towards national unity and progress and a richer life for all. I can rightly expect that our brothers in the hills will appreciate and accept this good-will of the majority people that the path of progress and self-realisation of the hill people does not lie in isolation but in the unity with the rest of the State and India. (loud applause).

### Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 10 A. M., on Monday the 21st November, 1955.

Shillong :  
The 29th June 1956.

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







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