

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

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 10 A.M. on Monday the 12th March, 1956.

PRESENT

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

Discussion on the Governor's Address

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, is absent. However, for the information of other hon. Members, I would like to say a few words with regard to the points raised by Shri Bhattacharyya so far my Departments are concerned.

Sir, the first target was the Second Five-Year Plan. The charges were vague and so it was very difficult to understand. Except accusing the Government, that no effective measures had been taken to increase the provision of the Second Five-Year Plan, no other definite charge was made and no constructive suggestions came from him. In his speech he did not suggest what effective measures, according to him, could or should have been taken by this Government. There was a full-dress debate in the last Session of this Assembly when all these points raised by him now had been discussed and from the Government side I explained all the points raised at that time. Sir, if the proceedings are consulted, it will be found that the points that were raised this time, were raised on that occasion also and the matter was fully explained. But, Sir, when one wants to attack the Government simply for the sake of opposition or to give vent to one's biased and motivated ideas, it is really very difficult to reply. I thought that after the visit of Messrs. Bulganin and Khruchev, my Friend, the Communist Member, would change his attitude. As a true follower of world Communism, I expected that bit from him. But, Sir, my expectation has been belied. When the whole world is praising the Government of India for our steady

progress and development, one or two Members here and there, sitting in the opposition benches, are trying to decry the activities of the Congress Government. Not only that, Sir (at this stage Mr. Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya entered the Chamber). I am fortunate that my Friend has come and I hope he would not misunderstand me. Now I first take up the point raised by him regarding the symbol of the Congress. My Friend was not satisfied by comparing the British Lion with the Indian Bull; he went a step further and remarked that they were not even bulls but bullocks; thereby what he meant I need not explain. But, Sir, if my Friend cares to consult the dictionary from English to Assamese or Bengali or Sanskrit, he will find "bullock" means "বলদ" "Balad." What is the meaning of "বলদ"—"Balad"? I would ask him to consult the dictionary. "Balad" means one who gives power "বল-দা-ক কৰ্তৃ-বা। "Balad" gives power and in the dictionary he will find that it has got some other meaning also. For instance, বলদাতা, পিতা। দেশজ, বৃষ।

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: 'চিনিৰ বলদ' এর অর্থ বলে দিন না ?

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): My Friend, Shri Das, himself is an example to the point; so no more explanation is needed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not be harsh.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): No, Sir, being requested by Shri Das, I am just describing the Chinir Balad by showing an example instead of explaining the meaning of "Chinir Balad". It may sound harsh at first but I shall make it very very sweet for him ultimately. He is carrying the entire load like a চিনিৰ বলদ without getting the chance of testing the sugar. Whatever is poured into his ears against the Government he always blurts them out without entering into the merits and truthfulness of the same. But this time, Sir, I must say that he did not act as "Chinir Balad" in all cases and was in some cases sensible in his speech. Sir, my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, forgot that the very name "lion" should not frighten anybody. Sometimes a young bull is more effective than an old lion without nails and teeth. My Friend forgot that the symbol of our State—I hope that though he belongs to a different political party, he would not disown the symbol of his own State is rhino. He should not forget that also. It is not only the horns of bullocks but also the *kharga*

of rhino that are to be remembered. These two are quite effective. Sir, the symbol of my Friend's party is a hammer and a sickle. These are used when something is to be destroyed.

Now, Sir, to refer to the symbol in the way it has been done by my sickle Friend was not fair on his part, but some of my Friends might as well say that no fairness can be expected from a member of the Communist party. But so far as my Friend is concerned, Sir, at the very beginning he mentioned that he was not of very good health yet with his weak and failing health he did something whereas the other Friends who are strong enough did not come to help him when that help was expected of them. I remember that sentence that my Friend's weak and failing health is troubling him. I am sorry for that, but at the same time I would like to point out to him that that weak condition will not act as a shield against our pointed replies.

Mr. SPEAKER : Your time is half an hour only.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Sir, I will touch only a few points regarding my Department and the Chief Minister will give a general reply to all other points. Sir, as I told you before, the points raised by him are difficult to understand because they are very vague in some cases and are repetition of the old ones ; in most cases the answers were given in the past. It was said that Assam had only one project costing only 58 lakhs.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: 1 crore 58 lakhs.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister) : I went through the proceedings and I found only 58 lakhs.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: That is incorrect proceedings. I have also seen that.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Very well. Regarding the same project if my Friend had cared to see through the Second Five-Year Plan, he would have found that there is a provision for 153 lakhs in two stages for the same scheme and there are two other items for extension of Umtru high tension lines to connect Nowgong and North Gauhati

and for distribution system. There is a provision of Rs.21.58 lakhs to connect Nowgong and a provision of Rs.21.66 lakhs to connect North Gauhati including the distribution systems. If he had taken these figures and added them together, he would have found that the amount is not a paltry sum which my Friend wanted to prove by wrong statement.

Then my Friend said that we went like a "Sen" but returned as a "Fensa". Sir, not only the Ministers but many officers including the Secretaries and Heads of Departments went with us. We placed our case quite ably and forcefully; we went like *Sen* and we returned also like *Sen*. পেচাৰা এখানে পেচাছেহা Sir, it was stated very clearly in the revised draft of the Second Five-Year Plan, Part I, which has already been supplied to the hon. Members, that at every stage we wanted to impress upon the Planning Commission about our undeveloped condition and what was actually necessary for the development of our State. If we did not have drafted a plan showing the requirements according to the expectation and desire of the people of the State, we would have surely been blamed by many. Now my Friend's action is just like one of those who takes away the ladder after one climbs the tree. "গাছে ভুলে দিয়ে নৈ সৰিয়ে নেয়" These Friends are not Friends indeed, of course.

My Friend wanted that we must not suffer from lack of imagination or broadness of mind; that we must proceed with broader outlook. Whatever we thought necessary, we should include in the Second Five-Year Plan, but unfortunately when it was reduced due to paucity of funds, we submitted a supplementary demand to increase our share. That is the measure which has been taken by the Government. What other measure actually my Friend wanted or wants even now to be taken by the Government has not been stated by him. The other day my Friend, Maulavi Moinul Haque Choudhury, also, during his speech, mentioned the same thing. What actually does he want? Does he want that we should non co-operate with the Central Government and declare war against them? We are placing our case before them and we are getting some help from them. Sir, if I quote the latest figure that has been communicated to us by the Central Government regarding the money that has been allotted for different States for the schemes to be implemented under the Second Plan it will be found that the case of Assam has not been totally neglected.

A comparative statement showing allocations given to various States by the Planning Commission under the Second Five-Year Plan, I am just quoting—

| State | Population (in million) | Plan outlay excluding Irrigation and Power Schemes (in rupees crores) |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Assam | 9.0 | 54.7 |
| Andhra | 20.5 | 69.0 |
| Bihar | 40.2 | 140.5 |
| Bombay | 36.0 | 180.0 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 21.2 | 92.3 |
| Madras | 35.7 | 105.0 |
| Orissa | 14.6 | 50.2 |
| Punjab | 12.6 | 72.4 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 61.2 | 180.5 |
| West Bengal | 24.8 | 129.5 |
| Hyderabad | 18.7 | 60.0 |
| Madhya Bharat | 8.0 | 37.2 |
| Mysore | 9.1 | 46.2 |
| PEPSU | 3.5 | 22.9 |
| Rajasthan | 15.3 | 57.8 |
| Saurashtra | 4.1 | 36.2 |
| Travancore-Cochin | 9.3 | 46.1 |

Sir, out of this, you will find only in two cases, that is PEPSU and Saurashtra that the allocation is higher than what they

should get according to the proportion of our quota. In case of PEPSU it is very negligible but in case of Saurashtra, it is rather high—they have got proportionately 50 per cent more than what we have got. But comparing with all other States, our allocation is not disproportionate.

As regards the Central sector, we do not know as yet what actually is the amount of money that has been kept for the Central Ministry.

Mr. SPEAKER : What is the *per capita* expenditure here —have you worked it out ?

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): From these figures I can say that we have got 6 crores for one million population whereas Andhra should have got, according to their population, 120 crores, but they have got only 69 crores. Bihar should have got 40×6 , i.e., 240 crores, whereas they have got 140 crores. I have calculated on that basis and accordingly PEPSU has got a little over six crores per million and Saurashtra about 9 crores per million, but in all other cases the quota is either equal or below, that of our figures per million of population.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: What is the amount for Provincial sector as against Central sector ?

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): As regards Central sector, we cannot say anything as this has not been finalised as yet. Irrigation and Power Schemes have been included in the Central sector. From the Central sector how much money will be spent for different States will depend on the schemes that will be approved by the Planning Commission.

Sir, my Friend also stated that nothing has been done for big industries and he mentioned about coal, cement, paper mill, hydro-electricity and other potential industries which the State could have easily taken. It was made clear in the Revised Draft Second Five-Year Plan, Part I, page *iv* of the Introductory portion, how much money has been allotted for these industries and what assurance was given by the Central Government and the Planning Commission. It reads—

“The Planning Commission has accepted responsibility for seeing that these schemes materialise as early as possible, namely in the private sector. The need for a textile mill,

a jute mill, a sugar factory and a spun silk mill has also been accepted, and further the Planning Commission have tentatively agreed to the following provision for these projects in the Central Sector of the Second Five-Year Plan.

| | | Rs. |
|----------------|-------|----------------|
| “Spinning mill | .. | .. 40 lakhs. |
| Jute Mill | | 30 „ |
| Sugar factory | | 40 „ |
| Spun silk mill | | 30 „ |
| Total | | ... 140 lakhs. |

The Planning Commission has also accepted the need for setting up of a Cement Factory, a Rolling Cast Iron Foundry and they have taken up the responsibility to see that these industries are started in our State soon.

So far as the Cement Factory is concerned, a party which was selected by the State Government has already placed order for machineries.

Regarding Sugar Mill also, order for machineries has already been placed.

As regards Paper Mill, it is well known to the hon. Members that we invited applications for certain industries, by a notification published in the *Assam Gazette* of the 17th November, 1955 and in response to that notification, we have received several petitions for different branches of industries and these are under consideration of the Government—consideration in the sense that the Government are negotiating with the parties concerned individually and we are trying to find out best parties so that those who have got experience and who can undertake without having financial assistance from the Government, and I am glad to say, of that so far as Pulp and Paper Mills are concerned, there are parties, at least two, who do not want any financial assistance from Government and who have also good experience behind them. They have already toured different

parts of the State in order to find out suitable places where Pulp and Paper Mill can be started. So, Sir, to accuse the Government that nothing has been done is not the real position. Of course, it is easy to sit in the Opposition benches and accuse Government without rhyme or reason, and my Friend has not appreciated the position of Government which is moving in the right direction.

Now, Sir, regarding Cotton mill, rolling mill and cold storage plant. For cold storage plant, we have already decided as to who should be given license and the Central Government have also approved the party and it is expected to give effect to the scheme soon. Regarding Spinning Mill also we are collecting necessary materials and we are in a position to say that there is possibility of starting a mill.

So, Sir, so far as major industries are concerned, we are trying our level best to give effect to them as early as possible. As in the case of Hydro-Electricity, in the case of major industries also certain data are necessary. I am one with my Friends in the Opposition benches and some Members of this side of the House that our greatest difficulty is transport. Unless we can get rid of this difficulty and unless we can improve the system of transport with other States, there is very little chance of improving the situation. So far as our internal communication is concerned, we have taken up schemes for building new roads and we have submitted a scheme to the Central Government for a ropeway. As regards internal communication, there will be some improvement, but so far as railway is concerned, this difficulty cannot be met unless we have got enough of rolling stock.

Mr. SPEAKER: You might have read in yesterday's newspaper that out of 50 locomotives, Assam will get the major portion.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Yes, Sir. But this won't solve the problem.

In this respect, we are trying our best and the Government of India is also sincere in their effort to help us but still there are difficulties which are not easily surmountable. In India workshops have been built for producing railway locomotives, wagons, etc., but this is not enough to meet the requirements of the country. Besides, we have got to import materials and other things for this purpose from outside India but this depends

on the exchange position and time. Thus, we are in a vicious circle—which has deterred our developmental activities. The State is in need of speedy development but regarding improvement of communication on which mainly development depends, this State will have to wait, it seems. If the Central Government cannot help us to get the necessary materials, the basic industries cannot be started. We understand the difficulties that are being faced by the Central Government regarding railway. When we have waited so long, I think, we can wait a year or two more to have speedy development in this regard so that we can get the necessary materials and take up operating the schemes at the earliest possible opportunity. Unless we can improve communication then only by spoon-feeding we cannot achieve speedy and real development of our State.

Now, Sir, regarding refinery. It was pointed out by one of my Friends who spoke before me that this matter was discussed threadbare in the political conference which was held recently at Barpeta and that this Government's views were expressed there. Even before the Barpeta conference, measures were taken by this Government to see that the refinery is located somewhere within our State. Some difficulties have been pointed out to us not only by the Oil Company but also by the Central Government. Our Chief Minister has himself taken up this matter. I am not divulging any secret when I say that my Colleague, the Revenue Minister, has also communicated to the Company that the Government would have to change their attitude towards them in case the desire of the people of the State is not given the due consideration. By that I do not mean to say that something wrong is being asked for or that we are trying to take undue advantage in this matter, but it is a fact that all of us feel that the refinery should be located somewhere within our State according to the company's convenience. It is not fair, Sir, to say that we have not done anything. If of course there is any suggestion that we should move in this or that line it becomes easy for us to say that we have already acted upon such suggestions or not. But without giving any suggestion to say that Government is doing nothing is really very unfair and does not serve any useful purpose.

Now, Sir, regarding the other Departments under me. There was a question raised by three of my Friends sitting on the Opposition benches, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, Shri Bhattacharyya and Shri Goswami, regarding the high prices of foodstuffs. Sir, I do not know from what source Shri Bhattacharyya got his information that sugar is selling

at 9 annas a seer in Calcutta. It may be possible that in some interior places the price of sugar is selling at one rupee a seer in our State. When the price of sugar as fixed by the Central Government is Rs.31-8-0 per maund, it is but natural that taking the cost of transport, etc., it is selling at rupee one a seer in the interior most places of Assam. But certainly it cannot be 9 annas a seer in Calcutta.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: What is the price of sugar in Shillong ?

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister) : It is not more than fifteen annas retail.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: In Calcutta it is 9 annas.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): It can never be, because as I have already said the Central Government fixed the price at Rs. 31-8-0 per maund, *plus* transport charges and dealers profit. Now, what will be the price per maund according to Shri Bhattacharyya ? It will be Rs.22-8-0 (retail price) which is absurd. It cannot be.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I know from personal experience that Khanseri sugar is selling at 9 annas a seer.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): I do not know whether it is Dhansiri sugar or Subansiri sugar. (Laughter).

I am not concerned with what different varieties of sugar or Gur are sold at what price, the price of the same kind of sugar that is brought from Calcutta to Assam and is being sold here should be compared with that kind in Calcutta.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD UMARUDDIN : Mr. Bhattacharyya may mean mixed sugar. Pure sugar cannot be selling at 9 annas, Sir.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: সেইবিধ খানচেরী চেনী ।

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the price in Bihar ?

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): It must be cheaper there, Sir, because the transport charges are lesser there.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is because it is manufactured there ?

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Yes, Sir, Besides, there is a fixed price among the mill owners too.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you completing now ?

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Yes, Sir, I am completing as I am fully alert that our Chief Minister gets enough time to reply to all the points raised by the hon. Member, relating to other Departments.

Now, Sir, my Friends in the Opposition also advise us that we should change what they call the blood and iron policy of this Government. Although this point will be fully dealt with by our Chief Minister, yet I would like to say a word or two in this connection because I was really pained to hear this type of utterance on the floor of this House from the hon. and responsible Members. Such kind of utterances really create bad blood amongst the people. It creates the impression that when there are persons who are doing mischief and who are practically trying to wage war against the Government of India by their expression that they are not Indians, yet there are some Members in this House who indirectly support that move and thereby emboldens them more. So it is really regrettable that our Friends in the Opposition could make a statement like this. Now, regarding my Friend, Shri Goswami—I should have said, Leader of the Opposition, as I did in the past but I am sorry, I cannot say so now obviously enough—he asked why the relatives of Shri Phizo, his wife and children were arrested ? Well, there must be certain valid reasons for doing that. It was also asked why the Government would be so vindictive as to arrest the family members of those persons who were doing mischief to the State by false propaganda? Sir, many things will come out of these arrest. Sir, in the newspapers yesterday we saw that question of practically similar nature was raised in the Rajya Sabha in New Delhi and in the course of a speech it was mentioned that there was allegation like this,

that the Government was unnecessarily doing something to harass people and that, that something was to keep in detention some persons.

I hope the right reply will be given by the Chief Minister. This is really very bad on the part of our hon. Friends to say like this. Sir, I do not want any sympathy or any assurance from Shri Bhattacharyya. But I want this much from him that he should not speak something which injures the State itself. He is no less interested than any one else in this House for the State. I hope, Sir, my Friends will not play with fire. We do not want to do injustice to anybody. How can we forget, Sir, that we are Indians? But many of our hon. Friends try to forget that they are Indians and that they want to create troubles in this State. Certainly the Government has the right to stop it and the Government has the right to decide as to what steps might be taken in such matters.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : How is it, Sir, some boys and girls were dragged and beaten in Shillong only three days ago?

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Sir, the Chief Minister will reply to that utterly false allegation. Did Shri Bhattacharyya see it ?

I find here again that my appeal has failed. I thought my hon. Friend will not play into the gallery at every stage, but alas ! To raise this point is only to play into the gallery and it is really very bad on the part of my hon. Friend.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, before I reply to the specific amendments, I want to speak a few words in connection with the points raised in the speech delivered by my hon. Friend, Mr. Lalmawia. Last time when I spoke on this subject he was absent. To-day also, unfortunately, he is absent.

Sir, it may be known that due to the contact with foreigners some of my hon. Friends have imbibed the idea of isolation and some sort of anti-Indian feeling so much so that Mr. Lalmawia as a Member of the United Mizo Freedom Organisation went so far as to demand secession of the Lushai Hills from

India, and as a matter of fact, some of the Members of the United Mizo Freedom Organisation went to Burma for negotiation with them for union. I am glad that the hon. Member after a lapse of few years has undergone a radical change in his outlook and feels the necessity of the Lushai Hills remaining apart of the Indian Republic, and made the other day a statement in this House that he wanted to remain in India. This is, I should say, a great achievement on his part. If he also takes into consideration all relevant facts with an open mind, I am quite sure, my hon. Friend will be able to be one with me with regard to maintaining the *status quo*, and be able to share the responsibility of Government with the people of the plains. I appeal to him to ponder over the matter with an open mind without any sense of suspicion. If he consider all the facts and circumstances, dispassionately, I am quite sure, it will be quite clear to him that the State Government is trying its best to solve the problems of the hills as well as the plains and he will see the danger of isolating the Hills as a separate State.

In this House, on the 19th of November, 1955, I made a statement while taking part in the discussion on the Motion to consider the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission relating to Assam. I draw his attention to those statements.

“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 sentiments 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 plains-men and hills-men 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 ”

“I have already stated that nature had 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.”

Then, Sir, I am giving quotation from one of our Friends who was a Governor of Assam and who was a European gentleman.

“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. Antagonism tend to arise, economic barriers grow and people drift apart rather than together. The Hillmen, 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”.

In case he considers these aspects with an open mind, he will soon realise that it will be conducive to the best interest of the Hills and Plains to give up the lingering feelings of isolation. Such disintegrating tendency goes against the solidarity and unity of India.

He has made another undemocratic proposal that there should be one Minister for each of the Hill districts in the Cabinet so that they may look to the interests of their own districts. Every hon. Member will agree with me that it is quite contrary to the principle of democracy and it cuts at the root of team work and is a negation of the principle of joint responsibility. As soon as a Member is taken in the Cabinet his duty will be to see to the interest of the State, as a whole ; instead of only looking into the interest of the area he represents. It shall

be his honest endeavour to serve the State, as a whole, so that by his work he can create confidence in the minds of the hon. Members of this House as well as the people outside.

If my Friend had said that these Hills are backward and that special measures should be taken for their development, in that case I would have been one with him and I would have been too glad to take all possible steps to bring them to the level of other areas of the country. As a matter of fact, my Friends in this House know full well that there are ample provisions in the Constitution itself to develop these tribal areas, Under Article 275 of the Constitution, the expenditure involved will be charged on the Consolidated Fund of India. Now, is it not the duty of the hon. Members representing the tribal areas to come forward and avail of these provisions, the tribal can march hand in hand with the rest of India, so that we of development and betterment of the condition of the people living in these undeveloped areas? They have got the necessary guarantees for the protection of their interest in land and in many other matters. The Central and State Governments are there to help them in all matters. It is not at all conducive to the best interest of the country even inspite of all these safeguards and the anxiety of the State and Centre to help them, to continue to suspect and harbour a separatist outlook. I appeal to him to come forward and work jointly for the betterment of the condition of people of the Hill areas and thereby help in creating a spirit of unity in the midst of diversity. This will bring about the much desired solidarity of our country which is most essential for the prosperity of Hills and Plains together. I am quite sure that if my Friends come forward with an open mind and work with us, the idea of isolation and the suspicion that was implanted in their minds by the foreigners to weaken India, will vanish in no time.

Next, my Friend, Mr. Lalmawia, has said that sufficient number of appointments in all services of the State Government should be made from the candidates belonging to the Hills districts. As a matter of fact, there is a reservation to the Hills in all these services, not only under the State Government on the basis of population, but even for all-India Services such as I. A. S., I. P. S., etc. In our State, on the basis of population, 12 per cent of the appointments in all services are reserved for them and also for the Scheduled Castes candidates, except in the case of appointments for districts offices; the idea being that for the appointments in the district offices, candidates residing in that district, if they

are otherwise qualified should be generally appointed. As regards the competitive examinations for entry in the Government offices, my Friend apprehends that if there is competition the candidates belonging to the advanced hills areas, for example the Khasis, will get these appointments. Sir, we cannot discriminate between one tribal and another. We consider all tribals as one. In the matter of appointments, subject to the minimum qualification consistent with the efficiency of the administration, there is a reservation for these candidates as mentioned by me; so there cannot be any grievances on that score. If there are 4 or 5 appointments to be made, and if there is a tribal candidate whose position is 100th in the list in order of merit, we try to take him in. But we cannot discriminate between one hill tribe and the other. If we do so, there will be trouble between the people of different hill districts.

Our idea is to distribute the money or any other benefit equally to all the hill districts according to the need and availability of money. We want that our tribal brethren should get their due share in all sphere of Government activities, and as a matter of fact, as you know, in the Assam Public Service Commission, there is a tribal member. In the Cabinet we have a Minister who is a tribal Member belonging to the Khasi Hills district. We have a Parliamentary Secretary who is also a Member of the Scheduled Tribes, from the Hills area. They have been entrusted with the responsibilities of looking after the interest of the States as a whole, instead of looking into the interest of the respective district.

This idea of isolation should be given up. If it is felt that the money that has been sanctioned for the development of the Hill areas is not sufficient or adequate, well, we can sit round the table and talk the matter over. As the hon. Member must be aware, there is abundance of good-will towards the Hills people, which can be seen from the various development measures Government have already taken up in the Hill areas, as well as from the declarations and announcements made by Government, as also from the pronouncement made by leading publicmen both inside the State and outside it. Apart from that, our Constitution itself solemnly pledges the development of the areas as a sacred duty, and we the Congressmen, and as a matter of fact, the great Congress organisation itself are bound by our solemn respect for these Constitutional provisions. We, the Congressmen, are firmly of the opinion that the prosperity and development of India is indissolubly bound with the development and prosperity of the Hill areas.

Of course, there are some people who want to fish in troubled waters, create chaos and confusion in the minds of the unsophisticated and backward people and thus draw them to their folds. But the aim and object of the Congress is to bring about unity of the country, to strengthen her and to develop her. It is true that during 200 years of British rule they created hundreds and thousands of problems to be left to us as their legacy. True it is, that we have not been able to solve them all to our own satisfaction during this short span of 6 or 7 years of Independence. But then it is humanly impossible to bring about magical cures, however strong may be our desire to do so.

Our Communist Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, sitting on the other side spared no pains to pour venom to belittle the achievements of our Five-Year Plans both for Assam as well as for India. But, in fact, what do we find? All people coming from different parts of the globe, from Russia, Great Britain, the United States, China, Japan and other places are unanimously of the opinion that India has really done marvellous things during this very short time, in the matter of implementation of her developmental programmes. I should like to point out here that our method of achieving our end is not revolutionary. True to the ideal of non-violence we want to achieve our ends by evolutionary and peaceful democratic means. We want to create an atmosphere so that every section of our people may steadily but with surer steps can march forward with a view to achieve that ideal, that objective, so that our country may not only prosper but can maintain that prosperity once achieved. But even inspite of that there are, of course, some people who want to create disturbance, want to undo whatever good is done and find fault with everything that is done by this Government just as they joined hands with the British Imperialist power during the last great war calling it a 'peoples war' when hundreds and thousands of our people courted imprisonments as a sequel to passing of the 'Quit India' resolution by the Congress. They helped in arresting people who in public meetings reiterated the 'Quit India' resolution. Sir, these are the people who now decry all the Congressmen who won Independence and try to find fault with Congressmen!

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: These are all bazar gossip, Sir.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): I have got all the documents to prove that my statement is based on nothing but facts.

What I am trying to impress is that these are people who try to drive a wedge between different sections of the people. I therefore call upon my Friend, Shri Lalmawia, who is now absent from the House, not to be influenced by the professions of the people like these and fall a prey to their mischievous and misleading propaganda. The need of the hour is to harness the abundance of good-will of the people all over the country and canalise them through constructive channels by our united and co-operative endeavours. I therefore call upon him to cast off any lingering feeling of suspicion that he may be harbouring towards the Government and the Congress and also hope and trust that after reading what I have stated now and taking into consideration the best interests of the Hills people themselves, he will extend his helping hand to us for implementation of our development programmes instead of harping on isolationism and help in building the country.

Now, Sir, I really expected that Shri Bhattacharyya after his years of experience in the Assembly would be more dignified in his utterances and would raise the level of the debate. But I am really sorry to say that I have been sadly disappointed in seeing that he was foaming and fretting and making vague and irresponsible statement without any basis of facts.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: If that is so, Sir, the fault is not mine.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Although he is ill, Sir, he has not the patience to listen to what I want to speak to the House. He should remember that while he delivered his speech I did not interfere. Of course, when a man is ill, he comes sometimes unbalanced, and that is a matter to be taken into consideration. It may be also that he was incapable of appreciating the full implication of the most irresponsible statement he made while moving the amendment.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: There are some people who, though physically sound, are mentally more unbalanced.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): What I want to say, Sir, is that whenever a person stands to speak without sufficient materials in support of his assertions, he gets easily irritated and his irritation is further aggravated when he has to take part in a debate in his failing health. I shall show by facts and figures that his assertions are without any basis whatsoever, and I believe Shri Bhattacharyya also in his sober moment will fully realise that he was not justified in making these undignified statements and insinuations which are both irrelevant and incorrect and have no basis or facts. But for the protection that he enjoys in this House, I am quite sure, he would not have been able to make such wild statements.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Shall I read out a list of such relations ?

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): If he had any desire to read out any such list, he would have done so during the time he delivered his speech. Now, Sir, he has no right to read out any such list when I am in the midst of my statement in reply. I mean what I have already said, and I repeat that such allegations are absolutely baseless and malicious. In the competitive examinations, candidates are appointed on the advice and recommendation of the Public Service Commission on merit and result of examination.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I can cite dozen of instances.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Sir, there cannot be greater travesty of truth when the Chief Minister has not have a dozen of children ; not even one. (*Laughter*).

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I was not speaking particularly of sons, but of his relations.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): So, naturally when a man gets irritated, he is liable to make most astounding and absurd statements. I therefore feel that no credence can be placed to his absurd accusations. I also believe that not only the Members of this House, but the people outside will also not place any credence in his wild and baseless statements.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I only wished, I had only been permitted to read out.

Mr. SPEAKER: You should now have the patience to hear the Chief Minister, Mr. Bhattacharyya.

Shri HARINARAYAN BARUA: তেখেতৰ অস্তিত্ব বজাই ৰাখিছে।

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Now, Sir, he was accusing us that we were discriminating in the matter of releasing political prisoners. In this connection I would like to refer him to the Government policy that has been laid down as well as to the statements that I have made in this House from time to time. He knows that as a believer of non-violence as the only means of changing the mental outlook of even those who do not believe in non-violence, we have been consistently following a policy under which those who might have been misled in the past and particularly impressionable youngmen who might have chosen a path of violence to achieve political objective, are always giving reasonable opportunities and chances to break away from their past and to begin a new healthy life. After the attainment of Independence there was absolutely no need for the use of violence for achieving political objectives. If such political objectives had the support of the general public then this could be decided through the result of the ballot. At the time when the Communist Party wanted to contest in the last general elections we allowed many of their followers to do so under a policy of permitting them to contest election. Many of the members of Communist Party and Revolutionary Communist Party of India had to be detained to prevent them from criminal offences like dacoity and murder, and some warrants were also issued for arrest of those who were organising underground subversive activities. As soon as they gave indication of change of their mental outlook and gave up violence and agreed to live in peace as loyal citizens, we began to release them gradually inspite of their past criminal activities.

I will now read out some extracts of the statements I made on the floor of this House in this respect. I quote from page 595 of Volume I, No. 9 of March-April Session, 1952.

“What were the firearms used by them? Single barrel and double barrel guns, sten guns, etc., and in seven different places

a large amount of arms and ammunitions were recovered. Party documents, leaflets, pamphlets, booklets and records were seized from different places. From these, names of the persons were collected. Some of the persons who were found to have been coerced or forced by show of violence to join this movement, were released on giving undertaking that they would not continue to take part in such activities. This shows that Government were always anxious to release persons who were found innocent and Government would not keep a man a single day more in the Hajot if it was found that his presence would not jeopardise with the peace of the country. A large number of them gave undertakings. As a matter of fact they were found to have joined his party under threats, that their lives would be in danger, given by anti-social elements. Whenever undertakings were given, Government released them. Some of these persons were of course kept under detention in case there was sufficient strong grounds justifying such detention. In such cases, the grounds and the representation and connected papers were placed before Advisory Board consisting of a High Court Judge and two other persons who are qualified to be appointed High Court Judges."

Another statement I made is to be found at page 109 of Volume I, No.3 of the the March-April Session 1952.

"The Constitution has guaranteed this right to all. I appeal to all those parties who have an underground wing to give up their underground subversive activities and adopt Constitutional democratic methods of winning the verdict of the country. There will be no need of applying the provision of Preventive Detention Act and Maintenance of Public Order Act, as soon as they give up the underground activities for the purpose of capturing power by violence. Our young Friends need not be afraid of the Gandhi Cap. This is a symbol of purity and an emblem of non-violence and truth. With the object of diverting their youthful energy to constructive channels, during the last General Election, Government remitted sentence of imprisonment and released many of them."

This is known to all the Members of the Assembly. The Government issued a Press Note on the 31st October, 1952 which runs as :—

"The Chief Minister gave an assurance on the floor of the Assembly that it was not the intention of the Government to

keep anyone in detention a moment longer than was necessary. Following upon this assurance, detention orders against a number of detenues belonging to the Communist Party of India and Revolutionary Communist Party of India were revoked and the warrants pending against underground members were withdrawn in May last."

After this I met certain leading representatives of the Communist Party and I was satisfied that they had ultimately given up violence of any shape whatsoever.

The Press note continued as :

"Government have also decided that the orders of detention against the following members of the Revolutionary Communist Party of India be also revoked and the persons released:—

1. Shri Jogendra Rava,
2. Shri Dadhi Mikir,
3. Shri Nazir Ali,
4. Shri Gagendra Sargiary,
5. Shri Parimal Kumar Shome,
6. Shri Pratap Rava,
7. Shri Santi Ram Boro,
8. Shri Boloram Basumatary,
9. Shri Amburam Bora,
10. Shri Ananda Basumatari,
11. Shri Bishnu Prasad Hazarika,
12. Shri Madhab Chandra Borgohain,
13. Shri Badan Chandra Barbarua,
14. Shri Paniram Saikia.

“The cases pending against Kukheswar Sonowal, Upendra Nath Borgohain, Upen Boro and Nabin Boro under Section 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act are also being dropped.

The Government expected that all members of the Revolutionary Communist Party of India will henceforth carry on lawful activities and divert their energies to constructive channels and refrain from organising subversive or violent activities.”

This is the policy we have been following since then. “Government expect that all members of the Revolutionary Communist Party of India will henceforth carry on lawful activities and divert their energies to constructive channels and refrain from organising subversive or violent activities.” This was only our expectation and on this expectation we acted after discussions with some of the leaders.

Then another Press Note was issued on the 26th November which states: “In accordance with the recent decision taken by Government, the ban on the Revolutionary Communist Party of India and its ancillary organisations has already been withdrawn and orders of detention against 14 detainees revoked. Government have further reviewed the cases of those members of the Revolutionary Communist Party of India, who are under-ground, and have decided that orders of detention and warrants pending against Kamini Kanta Sarma, Upendra Chandra Das, Majur Daimari, Kancharam Kachari and Jiba Kanta Bora be withdrawn. Government expect that they will divert their energies towards constructive channels and refrain from organising subversive or violent activities in any way.”

Then, in another Press Note it was stated, “in accordance with the assurance given by the Chief Minister on the floor of the Assembly that it was not the intention of Government to keep any one in detention a moment longer than was necessary, the cases of all those who are being detained as security prisoners have been reviewed and in view of the change of attitude of the Communist and Revolutionary Communist Party of India that they will not indulge in violence and subversive activities, Government have decided that the orders of detention against Shri Nilmoni Barthakur and Shri Bistoo Bora should be revoked. Detention orders and warrants pending against Dadhi Mahanta, Biresw Misra, Matilal Das Jagirdar, Sasanka

Mohan Das, Abinash Dutta, Sukhendu Bikash Barua, Jyotish Ch. Das and Nabin Majhi, members of the Communist Party of India who are at present underground, are also being withdrawn. Government expect that they will carry on lawful activities and divert their energies to constructive channels and that they will not revert to organising subversive or violent activities."

As a matter of fact, Sir, many of these persons were not known to me. But I acted in good faith.

The same policy was pursued in regard to convicted persons also. I will not go into the details of the cases of every convicted person who was shown mercy but I will give one case before the House about which Mr. Bhattacharyya complained of discrimination. I hope after I have stated the facts about this case, Mr. Bhattacharyya would be graceful enough to withdraw his statement and to express regret. Sir, we as believers in non-violence want to change the mental outlook of even our opponents. Even with regard to those who had resorted to violent activities for attainment of political objectives, we want to bring about a mental change in them and give them a change and opportunity to devote their energies for the peaceful development of the country. We want to bring back those who were misled in the past, those youngmen who had chosen a path of violence but had later realised their folly. We want to harness their energies towards constructive channels for the service of the country. That is our creed, Sir. We have, therefore, promptly responded to any change in mental outlook on the part of those who were misled into violent or subversive activities. Government have been consistently following a policy under which those who might have been misled in the past and particularly impressionable youngmen who might have chosen a path of violence to achieve political objective are always given reasonable opportunities and chances to break away from their past and to begin a new healthy life with useful and constructive services for the people and the country. Those who wanted to take advantage of this liberal policy of Government were given all possible facilities to render useful service to the community and to enable them to start a new life and to canalise their activities into constructive channels for the benefit of the society. In pursuing this policy no discrimination has been made or shown in any way. When they gave indication of any change of heart and outlook and indicated a sincere desire to start a new career in a constructive spirit their cases were treated with sympathy and consideration by Government at all times. Whenever

such persons, convicted of criminal cases, express their unqualified regret and repentance for their past action and make an honest declaration that they do not believe in use of violence as a means for achievement of such objective and undertake to cease to have any connection whatsoever with subversive activities and desire to start a new career or devote himself in education—technical or otherwise, the Government consider their cases without any discrimination and with great deal of sympathy to enable them to be law-abiding citizens and to live a life of service to the community. In the case of persons convicted for crime against person and property we insist that they must express regret for their past action and give a declaration of good behaviour in future. Those who do not give such declaration and show a defiant attitude cannot, however, be helped. If there are any still left in jail, it is because they refused to give this declaration.

I am sorry, Sir, that in the face of such a liberal policy pursued by Government, Mr. Bhattacharyya was trying to give a false impression to the House. He made some irresponsible statements taking advantage of his privileged position in this House. I expected that after being a Member of this House for four years, he would show a greater sense of responsibility. It is, therefore, for the House to judge what value can be attached to his irresponsible statements.

Then, Sir, for convicted youngmen, even without any undertaking, we allow them facilities to prosecute their studies and appear at examinations, because we believe that by imparting education their minds can be won easily. Even in some cases, the examination fees had been paid by Government. Can Mr. Bhattacharyya think of these things in any other country, which does not believe in non-violence ?

I shall now, Sir, give the facts about Shri Ani Ram Basumatari's case. Shri Basumatari, who was a dismissed Sub-Inspector of Police and was convicted in 4 criminal cases, was released by remitting the unexpired portion of his sentence on his representation to Government that he desired to follow a new path by completely abjuring violence and by devoting his time and energy in constructive work. As you know, Sir, during my visits to jails I come in contact with these people—the political prisoners who had been misled. In course of one such visit, he told me that he did not believe in the use of violence and that the Revolutionary Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India were going the wrong way,

particularly after the attainment of Independence. I, therefore, asked him to give a formal declaration in writing that he had changed his mind and would not resort to any violent or subversive activities in future. I also told him that after release he might communicate a similar declaration to his party. Then, Sir, he gave that declaration and he was released without any security whatsoever. I had personal contact with him in the Jail and found that he was speaking in right earnest. He gave an undertaking to the following effect:—

“I, Aniram Basumatari now confined in Tezpur Jail do hereby declare that I do not believe in violence and that I shall not resort to violence with political objective and I shall lead a new life and will be a worthy citizen of the country.”

On giving this undertaking he was released. This is an act of benevolence, which should be appreciated by my Friend.

Five persons were convicted to different terms of imprisonment in the Nazira-Balighat Dacoity case. They were involved in a dacoity case as well as in preaching violence to innocent people. No Government can think of releasing such persons committing such heinous acts, but this Government has taken the initiative of releasing them if they give an undertaking to the effect that in future they will not involve themselves in such acts of violence and will lead a good and honest life.

Har Kishore Rajbangshi was convicted to a term of 7 years' imprisonment in this case. A circular was issued by this Government to the Deputy Commissioners that all such persons if they give undertakings that they would in future not involve themselves in acts of violence and dacoity and they would live like honest citizens, they should be released. This Government has taken a bold step in this regard, but in case of any other Government their heads would have been chopped off. It is because we do not believe in violence we have won our Independence by mere means of non-violence. We want to give a chance to such people to rectify or correct themselves. If this action of this Government is criticised, let the country give its judgment whether it is an act in the right direction or not. For this act we should be given the due credit. Under the instructions of this circular, we directed the Deputy Commissioners that we were prepared to forget the past life of violence and misdeeds if these people regret their past actions and were willing to give an undertaking to the effect that they would in future lead an honest life, would not associate with

those persons who incite them to commit such acts and would stop propagating false patriotism to the mass people.

Har Kishore Rajbangshi was given this chance but he refused to express regret for his past acts and to undertake to give up violence and therefore he is serving the remaining term of imprisonment. He was involved in the Nazira-Balighat Dacoity. He gave a statement saying that he was not repenting his past actions of committing dacoity, he was not willing to dissociate himself with the violent activities of his former colleagues and party and that he was not going to lead a good life to do good to the country.

One of the 5 accused in this case, Shri Jyotirmoy Gupta was subsequently implicated in a case of murder of a Sub-Inspector of Police at Dibrugarh and was also wanted by West Bengal Government in connection with Dum Dum Bashirhat case. Asok Biswas who was convicted to 7 years was also wanted by West Bengal Government for Dum Dum Bashirhat case and their cases were not taken into consideration for release. Sakhiprasad Kachari was, in the meantime, released after completing full terms of imprisonment. Shri Har Kishore Rajbangshi and Shri Biren Medhi's cases were considered and they were contacted by the District Magistrate with a view to ascertain if they felt repentant for their past criminal and subversive activities and undesirable association. I have already narrated the reply given by Shri Har Kishore Rajbangshi. The case was not considered as he refused to give any undertaking and express repentance. In the case of Birendra he expressed unqualified repentance and a sincere desire to dissociate himself from crime and violence and to close the unhappy chapter of his subversive activities. He gave an undertaking for future good conduct and to lead a new life of service to the people. He was a youngman of about 20 at the time of his conviction and was a medical student. He passed his final examinations while in jail from the Berry White Medical School. His sincere repentance for the past activities and his anxiety to start a new life by abjuring crime and violence was considered by Government and it was decided to give him a chance to turn himself into a useful citizen. His father executed a bond for Rs.5,000 for good behaviour of his son and that he would be sent abroad for education for the purpose of dissociating himself from his former companions. So he was released and after his release he went abroad and got training in gynaecology and I am glad that now he is a completely changed man and does

not associate with any of his past associates who misled him. It is said that many of his past compatriots used to cut jokes with him and sometimes threaten him here and there ; but I hope they will leave him alone now, since he has decided to lead a good life. Now, may I ask, is it a crime to do good to a man like that ? Is it a policy of discrimination that the Government is following in matters like these ? I for one will never allow any kind of discrimination to be committed in any part of the administration.

Now, Sir, this is a very delicate point that I am coming to in connection with certain remarks made by my Friend. But I do not propose to go into the details of these remarks because, as I have already said, he made these remarks without knowing the facts and without fully realising the consequences of these remarks. I can only appeal to him that even inspite of his irresponsible and undignified statement, he will try to shape his behaviour in this Assembly befitting an hon. Member of the House.

Now, I am giving only a summary of what I have already said in connection with the position in the Naga Hills. Sir, I have elaborately stated in my previous replies to the debates in the year 1954 how the foreign missionaries and British officers helped to create a separatist idea and an anti-Indian feeling and atmosphere amongst the Nagas who were at the back of the so-called claim for Naga Independence. A handful of Naga National Council's members taking advantage of the illiteracy and simplicity of the Naga people under the influence of foreign missionaries and the then British officers held out false hopes of independence by a particular date. In order to remove that wrong impression and in the hope that the political parties like the Praja Socialist Party might persuade the leaders of the Naga National Council to see reasons and to persuade them to give up anti-Indian feeling and the absurd demand for independence a Praja Socialist Party delegation was allowed to visit the Naga Hills. I am only narrating this because there is a reference or a wish from the Communist Party also to visit the Naga Hills. But we have seen enough of the Communist activities. Even in matters of settlement of waste lands, acquisitioned lands and the like they retard the progress of work by encouraging people to encroach and squat in the lands even before commencement of the settlement under a plan. So long the Communists' programme was to create chaos and confusion among the people by holding false hopes before their eyes, and to fish in troubled

waters. As I have already said, even in matters of settlement of lands before final selection of deserving persons was made by the Land Settlement Advisory Committee, the Communists encouraged people to squat in those lands, to frustrate the planned settlement. In this way they are retarding the progress of work.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: These are all irresponsible untruths.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): I can prove the truth from records.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: But these records themselves are false. We know what these police and official records are ?

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): But they are judicial records. I don't think you can challenge the Court's records. From these records I can prove forcible encroachment of land by unauthorised people at the instigation of the Communists.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Because they are landless people.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): But there are other landless people as well whom we want to settle under a plan. Simply because some people are landless, they have no right to occupy any land by force. You have seen, Sir, that the cat is out of the bag now.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : It is the policy of the Government that is responsible for all the trouble.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): As I have said Sir, the Communists are very fond of fishing in troubled waters, and yet they want to visit the Naga Hills where murders are being committed every day by gangsters armed with powerful weapons.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Are not the police responsible for all these atrocities in the Naga Hills ?

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): The police are there to maintain law and order and they have every right to use force in self-defence and protection of lives and property of loyal people against those gangsters.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Is there a single Communist in the Naga Hills ?

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): We all know that one of Phizo's brothers is a Communist. He used to correspond with the Communist leaders and Phizo was once arrested because he was found negotiating with Pakistan.....

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: One of your cousins is a member of the R. C. P. I., does it mean.....

Mr. SPEAKER: No, Mr. Bhattachayya, I cannot allow this sort of personal attack.

(Voices—Yes, Sir, yes, Sir).

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): My point is that if we allow them to visit the Naga Hills they will only create chaos and confusion. But we welcome anybody who wants to work among the Naga people as social workers without any political objectives. This is the statement I have always made on the floor of this House and this is the policy that we have been following all along and we know that it is a correct policy which will be borne out by my Friends in this House.

Now, Sir, as I have said already, the Praja Socialist Party delegation was allowed to visit the Naga Hills. Their visits and contact with the Naga National Council leaders in the past have clearly shown that such visits were generally utilised by the leaders of the Naga National Council for strengthening their demand for independence and gave them the opportunity of broadcasting and distributing pamphlets to the effect that the Praja Socialist Party supported their demand for independence. Similar past experience indicate that any attempt to negotiate and discuss matters with the Naga National Council on the political issue, by individuals or representatives is invariably interpreted by them as a sign of weakness on the part of the Government and the people of Assam and any expression

of sympathy and good-will towards them is interpreted as a tacit support to their absurd claim for independence.

Sir, in this connection I would like to mention that Phizo against whom warrant has been issued for specific offences, instead of absconding and going underground, could have appeared before the Court and prove his innocence. He is reported to be involved not only in brutal murder but he is making efforts to collect arms and ammunitions for waging war against the established Government. Under the circumstances, how could we allow representatives of the Communist Party to go to the Naga Hills to contact these gangsters ?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: This is a hallucination , Sir.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): I do not know. They cannot contact the masses but will only contact the gangsters who have committed violence and brutal acts. These are some of the reasons why the Government cannot allow any and every person to go to the Naga Hills and contact these gangsters.

Then, Sir, I have also clearly stated in my former replies to the debate in 1954-55 that we cannot act in a manner so as to lend further weight to the prestige and influence of the Naga National Council. The Praja Socialist Party took full advantage of their visit to the Naga Hills and carried on intensive propoganda in favour of the party and instigated the Nagas against the Government. I did not expect this from the members of the Praja Socialist Party delegation allowed to visit the Naga Hills. I expected that they would explain to the misguided Nagas that the agitation they are carrying on would ultimately act against their own interests and that it is impracticable and unrealistic. The visit of the Praja Socialist Party members was utilised by the Naga National Council to mislead the unsophisticated Nagas by issuing a press note to the effect that the Praja Socialist Party had supported their demand for independence. On the 16th October, this press-note was circulated under the signature of Information Officers of the Naga National Council in the Naga Hills.

Of course, Sir, I quite understand that my hon. Friend, Mr. Goswami, could not control his party members who have dissociated themselves now and formed another party. He

could not accompany the party and the visit to the Naga Hills was left to the younger section.

Then, Sir, no contradiction, however, has been issued or circulated in the Naga Hills by the Praja Socialist Party. Any publication of the contradiction published in papers in the plains cannot reach the remotest corner of that district and remove their impression that had been created by the press-note of the Naga National Council. Further, it was circulated that the Praja Socialist Party of India stood for the liberation of self-governing people from political and economic domination of others and economic freedom was not possible where political freedom did not exist.

So, Sir, it is very difficult to allow this kind of propaganda to be carried on in the Naga Hills. Moreover, a party of the Naga National Council consisting of about nine Angami Nagas, one Sema Naga and one Ao Naga moved from place to place and from one end of Assam to the other when various parties were vying with each other to contact them, and the result had been that these members of the so-called goodwill delegation on behalf of the Naga National Council took full advantage of the platforms and opportunities given and arrangements made by different parties to speak in support of their demand for independence and also to carry on anti-Indian propaganda throughout Assam. The members of the District Councils and other tribal leaders in Assam advised them to give up their absurd demand for independence. None of the parties could persuade them to give up their demand for independence and the contacts made by the various parties left no impression in the minds of the members of this delegation. These contacts produced no results and there was no change in their anti-Indian attitude and in their outlook claiming independence. There is somebody behind their movement for independence. Members like Mr. Bhattacharyya, who is quite young, will not understand the psychology of this movement against Indians and India as a whole.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Sir, so far as our Communist Party is concerned, its stand is quite clear in this matter.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Not of the Communist Party of Russia, I am quite clear.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I do not know about Russia.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Our Prime Minister went there and Russian Prime Minister also believes in co-existence.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Sir, with regard to the Naga problems, our Communist Party's policy is quite clear.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): You can conveniently change your policy. For you there is one policy in the international sphere and another policy in the internal sphere. As a believer of non-violence as the only means of bringing about a change in mental outlook of those who do not even believe in non-violence, the Government have been consistently following a policy under which those who might have been misled in the past and particularly impressionable youngmen who might have chosen a path of violence to achieve political objectives are always given opportunities and chances to break away from their past and begin a new healthy life with useful and constructive service for the people and the country.

On last occasion, Mr. Ghanakanta Gogoi, who is unfortunately not present to-day in the House, was supporting the independence movement of the Naga National Council. This sort of loose talk gives the Naga National Council encouragement.

Sir, I do not know if the Communist Party members know the language of the Naga Hills.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Sir, many of the Nagas understand the Assamese language.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Sir, the question is that after the visit of Mr. Bulganin there should be a truce in the Naga Hills.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Sir, even Mr. Bulganin's advice will not stop their anti-Indian attitude and their stand for independence.

The hon. Members will remember that I made a statement on the floor of this House that if any social worker without any political affiliation come forward to do social work he will be encouraged and given all assistance to establish contacts with common people of the Naga Hills through their welfare and constructive work. As a matter of fact organisations like the Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangha, Kasturbai Gandhi National Memorial Trust, the Sreemanta Sankar Mission, Hindustan Talimi Sangha have been encouraged to establish closer contacts with the common people by opening welfare centres. In the last debate I gave some idea how the Government along with being firm in dealing with these lawless elements, in order to protect the lives and properties of the innocent people of the Naga Hills district, are taking various measures designed to better the conditions of the people of that district. We are exercising great restraint in dealing with these violent people. Hon. Members may remember that in August last Zapu Phizo along with five others made a signed statement to the following effect—"The declared policy of the Naga National Council is of non-violence, and we the undersigned reiterate the same and condemn any violence that has been committed in different parts of the Naga Hills District by some miscreants. We assure the Government of Assam and of India and remind the Nagas that whoever indulges in any acts of violence, does so against the best interests of the Naga people, and we appeal to those who have resorted to violence to desist from use of violence and we also appeal to the people in general for preservation of law and order and to help the administration in restoring peace and order." Our policy is non-violence and as such we are following a most liberal policy towards these people in spite of the greatest provocations. Our aim is to win their hearts by service. Had Phizo committed such anti-State activities in any other country he would have been put under arrest and executed. Here so long as they were non-violent we allowed them to carry on these activities, but tried to show them the correct way. So in August last when I received a telegram from Shri Phizo asking me to allow him to come and state his viewpoints, I at once agreed to meet him and discuss with him. I wanted to pin him down to the statement and that signed statement was translated into different languages—I mean into the different dialects of the Naga Hills—and they were circulated among the people of the Naga Hills district. Obviously Phizo did not like this and he came to me and asked me why I had allowed them to be distributed to the people of the Naga Hills. I explained

to him that it was a translation of their signed statement ; so he had nothing to object.

Some time after a document came into possession and the contents of the whole thing cannot be disclosed. There it is found that he is trying to negotiate and conspire with some of his comrades to get arms and ammunition to fight against the established Government and in that letter it is stated that if he got sufficient arms and ammunition , it would not only be possible for him to "liberate" the Naga Hills district, but also to conquer Shillong. (*Laughter*)

In spite of our very best efforts to put down, by all possible means at our commad, these gangsters with a view to help maintain law and order in the Naga Hills. Is it possible at the present state of things to allow any and every political party to go to the Naga Hills and meddle with the affairs prevailing there in the manner advocated by my Friend ?

Now, when Shri Sakhrie and some other members of the Naga National Council came to know about this conspiracy to obtain arms and ammunition to fight against the established Government, he issued statement denouncing Phizo's leadership. As a result of this some of the persons who were active members of the Naga National Council dissociated themselves from this organisation. Two of the important members of the Naga National Council, Sakhrie and Jasokie, under the circumstances issued a public statement for the information of the public that the policy of non- co-operation followed by the Naga National Council must be abandoned forthwith and an alternative policy, a constructive and positive policy adopted, and every Naga is required to make a little practical thinking and realise the negative effect of the present policy. If the present Naga National Council regime persists in its negative approach, active non-co-operation would have to be launched against it, until it is purged of its less desirable forces or a positive approach adopted. There is the other policy, the moral policy of non-violence which Naga National Council has declared policy. Another notice was issued by an Ao leader, whose name I do not like to disclose at the moment, demanding an alternative leadership and declaring that the present leadership would never lead the Naga people to salvation, for it is only a product of frustration. The present leadership must go and the people must be courageous enough

to throw off this dictatorship of Phizo. These statements will clearly indicate that an alternative leadership is growing and it requires to be nurtured and developed for the best interests of the Nagas themselves. This was the result of the success of the developmental schemes together with the firm and systematic measures undertaken by the State Government for maintaining law and order and for protecting the lives and property of the loyal elements. In this connection I would like to refer to pages 11, 12 and 13 of the Governor's Address. I would draw the attention of the hon. Members to the 2nd paragraph at page 11 of the Governor's speech where he has stated: "The success of the development schemes together with the firm and systematic measures undertaken by the State Government for maintaining law and order and for protecting the lives and property of loyal elements contributed to the growth of a strong and well based movement" I am not reading out the whole paragraph for want of time, but would make references to very vital portions. Then again, "Important villages in the early part of January under the guidance of village Gaonburas and elders, started passing resolutions openly disowning the extremist leadership and directing the people not to associate themselves with any terrorist activities or to extend any help directly or indirectly to those, who, while professing faith in the creed of non-violence were actually trying to create chaos and disorder by resort to violent methods." As a matter of fact, Late Sakhrie came and met me on the 9th of December, 1955, and told me that he with the support and co-operation of many other Naga people was trying to rally public opinion against the suicidal policy followed by Phizo. "Due to this growth in the strength of the movement against the extremist leadership in the district and the failure of the campaign to deny co-operation to the Government followed by enormous increase in the people's co-operation and assistance to the administration, the subversive elements become extremely shaky and frantic. In a desperate bid to maintain their hold on the people and their influence, a terrorist campaign was started from about the middle of December." As a matter of fact these terrorists who were working under the guidance of Phizo "terrorised the loyal villagers" who co-operated with the Government, and armed gangsters visited different localities, collecting, by force contributions from the people in cash and kind and forcing youngmen to enlist as volunteers for work in the terrorist organisation." Here I would like to give the House a gist of a sample order issued by

the Naga National Council under the caption of "Naga Safe guard Party."

"Among the Nagas should any one co-operate with the Government and try to weaken the Naga stand and should any one serve as C. I. D. and punish our people, the Naga Safeguard Party would kill them. In case the relations or clan or *khel* or village try to take revenge on the members of Naga Safeguard Party or their families, the Naga Safeguard Party as a whole will take action against them."

"If any member of the Safeguard Party dies in the hands of the enemy or as a result of action of our people, all the members of Naga Safeguard Party will jointly take revenge."

"Should any one entertain or talk or walk together with our enemy or those who fight for co-operation or for C. I. D. men he would be punished. Beware wherever you go. Do not travel together with soldiers and Assam Police Battalion. Those who cherish a different idea in mind should change immediately, otherwise it would be too late for them."

Sir, this is the attitude of the people for whom our Communist Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, is advocating sympathy and understanding. I am sorry, Sir, I cannot see my way to accept the advice given by my Friend. Under the circumstances, Sir, we have got to take all possible action. It may not be known to my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, that the Criminal Procedure Code is not applicable to the Naga Hills. As soon as our armed police had approached the gangsters they ran away with their guns and took shelter in the jungles and this sort of tactics frustrated the very purpose of the steps taken by the police. Naturally, to tackle such a situation we had to give power to the police so that no person can be allowed to go with unlicensed arms. At the beginning the police could not contact the gangsters as they were avoiding such contact, but subsequently they contacted and recovered some arms and ammunition and arrested some of these gangsters. In the act of so doing, some of the members of the gangsters who fired at the police party had to be killed in self-defence. So, Sir, in such a disturbed area powers had to be given to the police so that the gangsters could be dealt with according to law and we had to appoint special magistrates to try the cases as speedily as possible.

These are the circumstances under which we had to promulgate the Ordinance and was subsequently passed into law by this House. I am quite sure that every Member of the House supports me in dealing with the gangsters in this manner. The situation continued to be under check till about the middle of January by which time the momentum gained by the movement sponsored by the Liberal Group of political leaders against the extremist section which was openly supported by the people of important villages which used to be strongholds of the extremist group in the past, made the position of the extremist group of leaders extremely critical. Under the lead of the villagers of Kohima village, a general assembly of the people of several other important villages was due to be held by the end of January to organise the movement against the extremist group on a wider scale and to declare openly the readiness of the people to co-operate with the Government and to assist the administration against any terrorisation by armed gangsters. The extremist armed terrorists finding themselves in a desperate position decided to launch a violent campaign against the administration and to force the people to lend support to their movement started intimidation, forcible collection of contribution, conscription of volunteers, etc., on a large scale. Haunted by the emergence of the Liberal Group of leaders and their failure to make the people refuse co-operation and assistance to Government, the terrorists in their bid to retain their hold on the organisation decided to do away with members of the Liberal Group by resort to heinous crimes including murder. One of the leaders of the Liberal Group, T. Sakhrie, was actually kidnapped at night from his home some distance from Kohima and murdered in a most brutal manner in order to terrorise the rest of the leaders into submission to the extremist group. A warrant of arrest has also been issued against A. Z. Phizo, the President of the Naga National Council, under sections 148/458/302/120B, I. P. C. For all this it is Phizo who is responsible and he has not been brought under the trial so far. It is upto him to come forward with his associates who are absconding, to surrender and to prove his innocence in court.

This is the situation under which action had to be taken..

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Why penal law had to be changed ?

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister) : If people commit crimes and run away.....

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: If he gets chance he can prove his innocence before the Court.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Yes, he can do so instead of running away like this. Let him face the trial for which he will be given all facility for his defence according to law. In this case we are following a right policy and we are trying to see that an alternative leadership is created in the Naga Hills. In such a situation no parties can be allowed to go there to fish in the troubled water

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: They should be allowed to contact the members of the Naga National Council to persuade them to discontinue their violence.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): It is not possible to contact those who are actually resorting to violence, because those who are actually perpetrating violence are hiding in the jungles with arms (*laughter*). So, there is no good going there at present.

Now I come to the economic condition of the country. The economic condition of the masses is not deteriorating ; the economy of Assam at present rather presents a picture of somewhat added strength and stability, which is satisfactory in itself and also augurs well for the future. Agricultural production which stood as low as 92 in 1950-51 was 101 last year and is expected to maintain the same level in the current year. Output of the principal minerals and industrial goods such as coal, crude oil, tea and petroleum products maintained a steady upward trend ; thus, production of coal was 5.48 lakh tons in 1955 against 4.94 lakh tons in 1952 ; crude oil production rose from 687 lakh imperial gallons in 1952 to 883 lakh gallons in 1955 ; production of tea was 358 million lbs. in 1955 against 344 million lbs. in the previous year. The prices of almost all commodities have fallen and the index number of whole-sale prices in December, 1955 was 368 having fallen from the abnormally high level in 1951-52 index of 435 and are now below the pre-Korean war level index of 937. This, together with relaxation of controls and restoration of free trade in the sphere of food grains and textiles, have benefited the consumers. The wage level of the industrial as well as agricultural labourers is now protected by Minimum Wages legislation. The agriculturists are also comparatively well off due to higher production now obtaining inspite of some fall in

the prices from the abnormally high prices in the days of food scarcity when many agriculturists had to buy rather than sell foodgrains. The inflationary pressures characterising the immediate post-war years and heightened by the Korean War boom, have practically disappeared ; at the same time any fear of sharp recession, which might affect adversely the production programme, has abated.

The cost of living of both the rural population and industrial workers shows a falling trend. The consumer price index for the rural population in the plains districts of Assam (base 1949-100) which stood at 155 in 1952 came down to 141 in 1955. The consumer price index number for industrial workers at Gauhati (base 1944-100) also fell from 142 in 1952 to 112 in 1955. The index number series for industrial workers at other centres show the same trend.

The general trend in economic development of the State may be judged from the State national income estimates prepared by the Department of Economics and Statistics. State national income has risen from Rs.212.8 crores in 1950-51 to Rs.238.9 crores in 1955-56, showing a rise of Rs.26.1 crores, *i.e.*, 12.3 per cent. in five years. The *per capita* real income in terms of goods and services rose from Rs.237 in 1950-51 to Rs.250 in 1955-56, *i.e.*, a rise of 5.5 per cent. in five years. Though this rise at the rate of 1 per cent. per year is not significant enough, it shows that with a lower consumer price level the standard of living of the people of Assam is improving.

From the above it will be clear that during the First Five Year Plan period the short range objectives of the State's plan which was to remove the stresses and strains in the State's economy resulting from the shortages and disequilibrium following the war and Partition, has been realised to a great extent. The development programme of the First Five Year Plan was conceived mainly with a view to fulfilling the short-term objectives, with high priorities given to increased agricultural production, setting up of essential institutions of higher technical and professional learning, developing communication in rural and inaccessible hill areas, upliftment of tribal and backward elements, extending elementary education and health services, etc. The working of the First Plan brought out clearly the need for stepping up the tempo in investment, training and mobilising man-power

for development projects, securing adequate supply of essential materials and equipment and making a more concerted effort in harnessing the very limited resources of the State. These considerations have been fully kept in view in formulating the Second Five-Year Plan and it is hoped that successful implementation of the plan will take us a long way towards attainment of the long-range goal of higher national income with a better distribution.

Sir, it has been alleged by Mr. Bhattacharyya that we have not tried to tax the capitalists. Sir, take the case of one industry, *viz.*, the Tea Industry. Let us see what measures of taxation we have imposed on them gradually. Before Independence, they held perpetual fee-simple land for the cultivation of tea. As soon as the Congress Government came to power, these lands were assessed to revenue and we are getting about 15 lakhs of rupees on this account. Then we are requisitioning surplus tea garden lands for distribution among landless, flood-affected displaced persons as well as refugees. Then we get about a crore of rupees from agricultural income-tax on tea. Besides that, from the tax on carriage of tea, we shall get about two crores of rupees, if not more. Then, Sir, under the Plantation Labour Act, they have got to pay for the comfort and education of the labourers; the housing scheme and the education scheme have got to be paid for by them. Then, under the Contributory Provident Fund Scheme, they have got to pay an amount of about half crore of rupees. Then, Sir, besides these compulsory contributions, we have been able by persuasion to make them agree to pay bonus to the workers for the boom-period of the industry and this will also cost them about 6 crores of rupees. Are we not, therefore, taxing them, Sir? Mr. Bhattacharyya wants discriminatory treatment between the British capital and Indian capital. We do not subscribe to that policy. We want foreigners to come and invest their capital on equal terms with the Indian Industrialists. With us, it is "বহুধেব কুটুম্বক্"; we want to be friendly with all. We do not want to isolate ourselves from the rest of the world. We cannot subscribe to Mr. Bhattacharyya's policy of discrimination towards foreign capital. As I have said, Sir, we are taxing the capitalist to a great extent and are utilising the money for welfare and developmental activities, in order to raise the standard of life of our people. Our policy is to tax industrialist to a reasonable limit and spend that money to bring up the standard of life of our people to a higher level, by utilising the money for welfare activities. That is our objective

and that is our method of bringing about a Socialistic pattern of society.

Sir, Mr. Bhattacharyya referred to the increase of freight charges by the Steamer Company. The Steamer Company is not doing any monopoly business. Nobody prevents him or any other person to organise another Steamer Company and carry goods at cheaper rates.

(A voice:—It is for Government).

Sir, these matters should be looked into from an all-India point of view. We are an economic unit of India as a whole. We cannot look to outside for help as citizens of free India. We do not want any help from outside if such help is subject to any conditions. We want to maintain our independent stand in international affairs and any aid from outside which is attached with strings is not acceptable to us. That is the *sine quanon* of our policy. We cannot be tied to any power block whether American or Russian. We want to understand every one's point of view and try to bring about an adjustment between the opposing view-points. This is the role which India is playing in world affairs. We must always act upto that ideal.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: সেই ভাৱ লগত পানীখোজাব কথাৰ নিচিনা।

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): As I was saying, Sir, we are taxing the capitalists to the fullest possible extent. If a man's income is more than a lakh of rupees, he is to pay super-tax and income-tax of about 14 annas in the rupee and we are getting a share of it.

But we will not allow the creation of an atmosphere of ill-feeling. Rich men must not be allowed to enjoy at the cost of poor. We will not allow anyone, irrespective of whether it is British or Indian concern, to get money at the cost of others.

As regards raising the rate of freight, I may say that at our suggestion a Committee was formed for going into this matter and the Report is not yet received by us but I have received information that the Report had been submitted. I have also got information that the Steamer Company has

increased the freight by one anna. We propose to bring the matter before the Brahmaputra and Ganges Commission. The plea is that the freight has been raised to meet the increased rate of emoluments of the labours and workers. The matter will be looked into.

As regards working of mineral resources, in the budget speech of the Finance Minister of last year, it was made clear that Companies will not be allowed to prospect oil in Assam, if they do not agree to float a rupee company in future and that they must give sufficient and substantial share to the India Government or State Government. They agreed to Indianise the whole technical and official staff in stages. In the meantime, they have been trying to Indianise the staff in the existing Company. The Government of India is negotiating terms and conditions regarding prospecting in Hoogrijan and other areas and will not only share in the capital but will take part in prospecting.

There was a proposal from the Burma Oil Company prospecting in Cachar at some time to send the crude oil to Pakistan in order to establish a refinery at the Chittagong Port. Such a proposal was rejected. Paper report indicate that Assam Oil Company has made a proposal for establishing a refinery outside Assam. But Government and the people are in favour for installation of the refinery in Assam and against shifting the refinery outside Assam, and if they try to do so they will not have sympathy of the people and the Government. This we have made amply clear.

I am glad that an Expert Committee is reported to be constituted for examining this question and for this purpose we have given them a suggestion that if for transport difficulties it is not possible to have the Refinery at Digboi, it can be established in or near Fakiragram. Refined product of one million tons of crude oil cannot be consumed in Calcutta alone, so there is no use of setting it up in Calcutta. If it is set up at Fakiragram as suggested by us, the oil can be distributed evenly throughout the country through the Railway.

We produced petrol but we pay the highest price. After a great deal of fight we got a reduction of annas 2 per gallon.

Now, it may be known to the hon. Members that for cottage industries, we have Rs.4 crores for the next Five-Year

Plan. We have to increase technical personnel and we have to open technical centres in different places. Japanese experts came and submitted various schemes, which are under consideration of Government. Out of this Rs.4 crores a sum of Rs.2 crores is going to be spent for Cottage Industries, on Sericulture Rs.1.5 crores and on Khadi and Village Industries, through an unofficial body, about Rs.50 lakhs. We are already considering to start two Technical Centres on the strength of the revised proposals submitted by the Japanese expert, with an estimated expenditure of Rs.43 lakhs and odd and another at Rs.19 lakhs and odd.

We are trying to develop cottage industries and similarly we are trying to develop major industries. The development of major industry has been retarded due to transport bottle-neck and other difficulties.

A private individual has placed order for establishing a cement factory at Cherrapunji. Experts have made a survey in Assam and had reported that enough raw material for making pulp is available in Assam and that the quantity which will be available here will be able to feed the mills in India. We are negotiating with a party for a pulp and paper mill. The Garo Hills traffic survey is complete and it is under the consideration of the Railway Board for taking up the construction of railway in Garo Hills. We are pressing all our demands for this Railway line. Geologists have come to survey the mineral resources in Garo Hills for which purpose we have constructed roads. I hope, Mr. Bhattacharyya will in future give us constructive suggestions instead of criticising us for the sake of criticism only without any suggestion.

I am sorry, for want of time, I could not reply to all the points, but it should be remembered that the Governor's speech can only lay down policies and indicate the steps taken to implement such policies but it is not meant for giving details of administration and budgetary position. These matters are left to the Finance Minister to indicate in his budget speech.

The entirest at ement of the Mover of the amendment does not indicate how Government have failed to implement this policy and whether the policy proposed to be followed in the next year is wrong. The Mover of the amendment has entirely failed to suggest any alternative policy and give any constructive suggestion. (Applause.)

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is, that at the end of the Motion moved by Shri Bimala Kanta Bora, the following be added: —

“But regret that there is no mention of any effective measure to be taken by the Government in order:—

- (1) to secure Assam's legitimate share in the Second Five-Year Plan ;
- (2) to immediately distribute land among the landless peasants and agricultural labourers ;
- (3) to establish key and basic industries ;
- (4) to harness the profits earned by British Capital in Assam for industrial development of the State ;
- (5) to check the deteriorating economic condition of the masses ;
- (6) to lower the cost and raise the standard of living of the masses ;
- (7) to lighten the burden of taxation on the common man ;
- (8) to end nepotism, favouritism and corruption in the Administration ;
- (9) to solve the problem of Displaced Persons ;
- (10) to solve the Naga problem ; and
- (11) to counter the move of grouping together of several States including Assam.”

(The Motion was negatived.)
(After a pause.)

Now I put the main Motion—

The question is that the Members of the Assam Legislative Assembly assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the Governor for the Address which he has been pleased to deliver to this House assembled on March 6th 1956.”

(The Motion was adopted.)

(Adjournment.)

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

(After Lunch)

Presentation of Budget for 1956-57 and Budget Speech by Finance Minister

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to present the Budget Estimates for 1956-57.

Report of the States Reorganisation Commission

One of the most important events of the year has been the submission of the report of the States Reorganisation Commission. The House will agree with me that we have, broadly speaking, no reason to be unhappy over the recommendations of the Commission in regard to our State and the North-Eastern Region. The recommendations have generally supported our stand that for the well-being of the people of the area, for the sake of national unity, for the preservation and consolidation of our precious freedom, and for the security of our motherland, we need a strong and integrated administration in the region to the north-east of East Pakistan. The recommendations have recognised that the hills and plains of Assam are interdependent components of a single economic unit, the prosperity and welfare of one being complementary to and indissolubly bound with the prosperity and welfare of the other. The Commission has rightly rejected the absurd and ill-advised demand for the inclusion of Goalpara in West Bengal, and all proposals for the disintegration of Assam by the creation of a number of fragment States. We welcome the inclusion of Tripura in Assam, if the people of Tripura willingly opt to cast their lot with us. We shall also be happy to welcome the people of Manipur, as equal partners in our joint endeavour for development, if they willingly decide to join us, and assure them, both the people of the hills and plains in Manipur, of our sympathy, help and assistance, for the promotion of their welfare.

The General Economic Situation

The First Five-Year Plan period ends with the last day of this month, with the physical and expenditure targets of the more important schemes substantially fulfilled. Economically, Assam at the end of the year 1955 presents a picture of added strength and improved stability. Agricultural production, more especially of paddy, jute and tea went up, in spite of the

devastating floods which swept across several districts during the year. The output of the principal minerals and industrial goods such as coal, crude oil, petroleum products and tea maintained a steady upward trend. Oil was struck at a few more places in the Naharkatia area where drilling had been undertaken. The prices of foodgrains had registered a further down-ward trend mainly due to increased production of food-grains, consequent on reclamation of large tracts, provision of increased irrigation facilities, and adoption of improved and scientific methods of cultivation, and at one stage even caused us some anxiety for the reduced price obtained by the hardworking peasant. Decontrol and the return to free trade, in food-grains and textiles, have brought appreciable benefit to the consumers. The general price-level of consumer goods, the supply position in regard to which was better during the year except during the Monsoon when the rail communications had broken down, has shown a decline, though the prevailing prices of essential consumer goods in our State are still much higher than those in other parts of the country. This disparity in price-levels springs from the circuitous communications linking us with the rest of the country and the high cost of transport. In comparison with the previous year, tea prices have gone down, mainly due to the improved stock position in overseas markets. This depression in tea prices did not, however, have any repercussions on the employment position. Our Jute could fetch higher prices at the beginning of the year, but has since shown a decline, as a result of increased production, reduced overseas demand, and competition following the devaluation of the Pak rupee. The trade in forest produce continued to be dull, barring limited demands to meet internal requirements. The employment position remained much the same as before, and the available figures show a slight increase in the number awaiting employment and a small decrease in the number of placements. The State National Income of Assam which is an index of the economic wealth of the State is estimated to have risen to Rs.2,38,90,00,000 in 1955-56 from the figure of Rs.2,12,80,00,000 in 1950-51, that is by 12·3 per cent during the first plan period against the Planning Commission's expectation of about 13·5 per cent increase for the Country as a whole.

The First Five-Year Plan—Assessment of the Results

As I said before, in a few days from now the First Five-Year Plan period will be over, and to-day we stand at the threshold

of the Second Five-Year Plan. It is appropriate, therefore, to take stock of the achievements in the developmental sphere as a result of the First Five-Year Plan and to indicate the objectives of the Second Five-Year Plan, and the hopes it has kindled.

In my Budget Speech last year, I stated that the size of the State Plan, then stood at Rs.23,70,00,000. That figure included certain schemes, like additional minor irrigation schemes, and an additional road programme which have since been classified by the Planning Commission as coming within the Central Sector. According to the revised classification by the Planning Commission, the outlay on Assam's First Five-Year Plan now stands at Rs.20,80,00,000. This figure, however, does not include a very large volume of development works on which expenditure is being incurred, either under the Central Sector Schemes, or from State revenues as non-plan schemes. A thorough assessment has now been made and it is possible to indicate that the total outlay on the development envisaged during the First Five-Year Plan period in Assam, is of the order of Rs.39,50,00,000 made up as follows—

| | | |
|--|--------|-----------------|
| 1. State Plan proper | | Rs.20,80,00,000 |
| 2. Central Sector Schemes being implemented in Assam. | | Rs.8,40,00,000 |
| 3. Non-plan developmental expenditure out of the State revenues. | | Rs.10,30,00,000 |

This total figure of Rs. 39,50,00,000 for Plan and Non-plan development during the First Plan period in Assam is exclusive of the normal developmental expenditure incurred on the continuance of the post-war development and other schemes completed up to the base year 1950-51.

I indicated last year that during 1954-55, a programme of expenditure of Rs.7,00,00,000 was under execution. Though the actual figure of expenditure for this period could not yet be ascertained, a reasonably correct estimate puts it at Rs.6,20,00,000. This shows a mounting tempo of expenditure when it is realised that during the first two years of the Plan period combined, a sum of Rs.3,35,00,000 only was actually spent and the expenditure in the third year was Rs.3,11,00,000 only. Assuming that the revised figure of expenditure of

Rs.6,20,00,000 for 1954-55 was actually spent, during 1955-56—the last year of the Plan—we would have to spend a sum of Rs.8,19,00,000 in order to achieve fully the financial targets of the First Five-Year Plan. This is a pretty big figure and with the earlier experience of inevitable shortfalls under certain heads, and with the approval of the Planning Commission, the total outlay, for certain Departments who have shown a good rate of expenditure, or for other Departments in whose case additional expenditure was found necessary, was substantially increased by enhanced allotment for schemes under implementation or for additional schemes. Thus, every effort has been made to achieve to the fullest possible extent, the financial targets of the First Five-Year Plan.

On earlier occasions a point was made about the insufficient receipt of Central assistance during the first two or three years of the Plan. For the overall State Plan of Rs.20,80,00,000, promised Central assistance has been worked out to Rs.18,10,00,000. Against this, the Central assistance received for the first two years of the Plan period was negligible being only Rs.79,40,000 as Grants and Rs.20,90,000 as loans, mainly under Article 275 and for G. M. F. Schemes. During the third year of the Plan, for the first time, the Planning Commission had made available an amount of Rs.1,25,00,000 as Central assistance from the Special Development Fund and this has been very largely utilised. Thereafter, at the instance of State Governments like Assam, which were largely dependent on Central assistance for implementation of their Plans, the Central Government assured that the remaining Central assistance for the Plan period would be made available during the last two years of the Plan roughly in half and half. It was thus that during 1954-55 a sum of Rs.5,15,00,000 was received by way of Central assistance. During the current year also, it is expected that the necessary Central assistance will be forthcoming. Already we have an intimation of Rs.8,30,00,000 as Central assistance for 1955-56 covering G. M. F. Schemes, Art. 275 Schemes, General Five-Year Plan Schemes and other miscellaneous schemes.

The First Five-Year Plan was undoubtedly inadequate from the point of view of the requirements of the State. Nevertheless, it has helped on the one hand to remove greatly the imbalance in the economy of the State which was there and which was further accentuated as a result of

Partition, and on the other hand it has helped to lay the foundation for a bigger and more balanced Second Five-Year Plan, commensurate with the overall needs of the State. We have, for instance, been able not only to wipe off the deficit in food production as a result of irrigation and embankment schemes, included in the First Plan, but also to make available sufficient quantity of surplus food-grains for consumption in other parts of the Country, where they are needed. Steady progress has been made in road building, more notably in the border areas of the Hill Districts, whose economy was disrupted as a result of the drying up of the age-old trade channels and the loss of markets for their produce, in the wake of Partition. It could be stated definitely that we are now well on the road to providing alternative lines of communication for the transport of the produce of the border areas, and consequently alternative markets for them. Another very notable achievement of the First-Five Year Plan has been the establishment of a large number of Training Institutions and expansion of existing ones. As the hon. Members are aware, Assam was till recently dependent, to a very great extent, on recruitment of technical and other trained personnel from outside the State for the implementation of development programmes. With larger programmes in the offing during the Second Five-Year Plan period, the establishment and expansion of Training Institutions during the First Plan period have laid a foundation for the supply of necessary trained personnel who will be required to man the ever expanding developmental projects.

Other important new schemes of developmental activity taken up during the First Five-Year Plan period are those relating to flood control, protection from erosion and power development. The embankment and drainage schemes originally included in the Plan, while assuring some measure of flood control, were in the main taken up from the point of view of increased agricultural production. No systematic attempt had been made before for taking a long term perspective of flood control planning in Assam—a province which has, from time immemorial, and more so since the Earthquake of 1950, been visited by distressing floods, year after year.

In surveying the achievements of the First Five-Year Plan period, the Community Development and National Extension Service Programme, the Local Development Works, the Rural Water Supply Schemes and the Social Welfare Projects which

have been gaining steady momentum during the Plan period and in which people's participation, both in the shape of financial contribution and voluntary labour, has been forthcoming in an increasing measure, deserve special mention. Under the regular social services coming under the head "Medical" and "Education", substantial progress has been made. The imbalance of the First Five-Year Plan programmes was felt especially in the spheres of cottage industries, large scale industries, animal husbandry and veterinary and fishery development. It is expected to make up this imbalance to a very considerable extent in the Second Plan period.

Administrative Reorganisation

The achievements of the First Five-Year Plan outlined above and the expectation of achieving larger targets during the Second Five-Year Plan period, are based upon considerable administrative reorganisation which has taken place during the First Five-Year Plan period and which will continue in the Second Five-Year Plan period. Mention has earlier been made of the foundation laid for large scale training programmes during the First Five-Year Plan. These are continuously being expanded, keeping in view the Second Five-Year Plan needs. Apart from the setting up of a Department to deal with planning and development in 1953, and the setting up of a special organisation to deal with Community Projects and National Extension Service Blocks which need intensified attention, considerable expansion has taken place in other Departments and new Departments have also been set up from time to time. The Public Works Department has almost doubled its strength in the last two years to cope with the developmental programmes in hand and further expansion is expected in the Second Five-Year Plan period. A new Department of Flood Control under a Chief Engineer has been set up to deal with the large programmes of flood control that are envisaged. A River Investigation Circle of the Central Water and Power Commission has been set up in Assam which is assisting in short term and long term collection of hydrological and other data, which will pave the way to the formulation and implementation, not only of flood control programmes, but also of schemes for river valley projects. A new Department of Town and Country Planning has been set up and a qualified town planner appointed. In every Department concerned with developmental activity the nucleus of a planning cell has been established for planning and "follow up" of implementation

of Plan schemes. The Department of Statistics is being reorganised, and statistical cells are being set up in the different Development Departments. The Finance Department has reorganised its set up with a number of Expenditure Control Branches having direct contact with different Development Departments to ensure speed and closer liaison. A beginning has been made towards the setting up of an Organisation and Methods Division, to review existing procedures, carry out experiments in administrative methods, arrange for training programmes and generally to overhaul the administrative machinery to meet the requirements of a Welfare State Administration. A Secretariat Training School has been set up for the training of recruits and those with insufficient experience in Secretariat procedures.

The Second Five-Year Plan

We may now deal briefly with the Second Five-Year Plan of Assam. An early start was made in the preparation of the Second Five-Year Plan for Assam, when, towards the end of 1953, the State Planning Board consisting of representatives of prominent sections of public opinion and Ministers-in-charge of Development Departments, set up a Sub-Committee of its own, with co-opted representatives from each Subdivision, to advise the State Government on the preparation of the Second Five-Year Plan. Extensive and intensive consultations with public opinion were made through Members of Parliament, Members of the State Legislative Assembly, non-official State-wide organisations like the Chamber of Commerce, Medical Association, the Mahila Samity and Local Organisations like the Subdivisional Development Boards and Panchayats. While an experiment for drawing up Subdivisional plans from the bottom in consultation with the people through meetings and discussions was made, Local Boards, Municipalities and Town Committees, were also encouraged to prepare plans for their areas. Even before the receipt of definite instructions from the Planning Commission, the State Government in consultation with the State Planning Advisory Board, drew up priorities for the Second Five-Year Plan and made tentative allocations. Consultations were specifically held with the Road Communication Board and Embankment and Drainage Advisory Board for preparation of road development and embankment and drainage programmes, respectively. The size of the Draft State Plan as it finally emerged from the series of consultations, was large indeed when compared with the First

Five-Year Plan of the State, but as has been explained in the Draft presented to the Planning Commission and circulated to the hon. Members of the Assembly, the Draft Plan was on the one hand, a comprehensive presentation of the needs of the State in an integrated manner, irrespective of whether some of the programmes might ultimately be included in the Central Sector, and on the other hand, it was the minimum considered necessary to achieve the minimum economic targets of *per capita* income and employment. Thus, the Draft Second Five-Year Plan of Rs. 2,90,70,00,000 was expected to provide a 22 per cent increase in State national income, against the 25 per cent increase in the national income, envisaged for All-India in the Draft Plan Frame earlier approved by the National Development Council. The Draft Plan laid the greatest emphasis on the provision of adequate communication and transport facilities, which are a crying need of this underdeveloped State. It provided for an expanded and diversified agricultural programme, more especially to make up shortfalls in production of certain essential commodities like pulses and oil seeds, etc., and for flood control measures to bring stability to agriculture which is the main base of the State's economy. Great emphasis was laid to laying the foundation of an industrial structure in Assam, so as to reduce the dependence of Assam's economy on a system of agriculture which despite the large programme of flood control, would take time to stabilise. Attention was also paid to the utilisation of the vast natural resources which the State possesses for industry and the need for providing, locally, certain consumer goods for which Assam is now dependent on other States and the supply of which is insufficient and irregular due to unsuitable and uncertain means of communications with the rest of the Country. A much larger programme for the tribal and other backward sections of the population was provided to bridge the gap obtaining between them and the rest of the population, in accordance with the objectives outlined in the Constitution. Considerable emphasis was also laid on the establishment and expansion of Training Institutions and Research Centres. A sizeable power development programme was envisaged not only as a basic amenity for the general population, but also as a handmaid for bringing about the necessary industrialisation of the State. Provision was made in the Plan for generation of 2,60,000 employment opportunities. This Draft Plan which received the general approval of all sections of public opinion, and more specifically of the State Planning Advisory Board, was presented to the Planning Commission and discussed

exhaustively both at general meetings of State Ministers and the Planning Commission and in individual Working Groups dealing with different subjects, in September 1955. The size of the Plan was reduced by the Planning Commission initially by deletion of maintenance expenditure of Rs.13,52,00,000 on the First Five-Year Plan Schemes as this would form part of the "committed expenditure" of the State, deduction of loan expenditure recoverable during the Second Five-Year Plan period as this would not involve a net additional outlay, deletion of a number of schemes on the ground that these would be considered in the Central Sector, and keeping over certain items like flood control, rehabilitation, tourism, etc., for consideration at a later stage as no definite conclusions about allocations for these subjects had yet been arrived at from an All-India angle, and making only tentative provisions in respect of schemes relating to backward classes, housing, Community Projects and N. E. S., etc., as the final allocations on an All-India basis for these subjects were yet to be worked out. After making the above reductions in the Plan, the Planning Commission proceeded to curtail the outlay in other sectors and initially suggested a paltry provision of Rs.46,60,00,000 for the State Plan as revised. The Chief Minister, the Planning Minister and I had further discussions with the Planning Commission and we emphatically and categorically pointed out the insufficiency of this provision not only from the point of view of the needs of the State in different developmental sectors, but also from that of the existing tempo of developmental expenditure which would not be materially increased in the Second Five-Year Plan period but which, on the contrary, in some cases may also have to be actually decreased if the Planning Commission's suggestions were to be accepted. After a good deal of discussion in the working groups and at different levels at which the State's point of view was again emphasised, the Planning Commission communicated a ceiling of Rs.59,39,00,000 for the State Plan. Since then a few additions have been made to the Plan including an expected contribution of Rs.70,00,000 from the Railways for the improvement of Road Transport, which has brought up the ceiling to Rs.60,12,00,000.

The details of the Revised Plan as approved by the Planning Commission have already been presented in the Revised Second Five-Year Plan of Assam—Part I, in a summary form, copies of which have been sent to all Members of the Assembly. From this it will be apparent that an increase of national income of only 15·8 per cent in Assam is possible against

the 25 per cent envisaged for All-India. In the sphere of employment, taking into account not only the ceiling for the State Plan proper but also the benefits likely to be achieved from the Central Sector Schemes, the additional employment opportunities that are likely to be generated are only 192,000 against the requirement of 277,000 to provide for the current unemployed and new entrants to the labour force.

A detailed analysis of the revised Second Five-Year Plan of Assam will, however, reveal that it will be possible to step up and diversify agricultural production and ensure greater outlay and results in the sphere of animal husbandry, veterinary and fishery schemes. Community Projects and N. E. S. Blocks will cover the entire State by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan period. Panchayats will come into being throughout the State within the first two years of the Second Plan. Under Co-operation a programme on the pattern laid down by the All-India Credit Survey Committee with modifications to suit local conditions will be implemented at a cost of Rs.1,12,00,000 over and above the loan assistance which may be available from the Reserve Bank of India. A sum of Rs.68,00,000 will be spent on investigation of irrigation and river valley schemes and setting up of a River Research Station and a Soil Testing Laboratory. An expanded power-programme involving a cost of Rs.4,00,00,000 to raise the *per capita* consumption of electricity from 0.91 Kw. at the end of 1955-56 to 5 Kw. at the end of 1960-61 and to provide for an additional installed capacity of 20,650 Kw. and electrification of nineteen new towns and fifty-seven villages, besides completion of the Umtru Hydro-Electric Project and other small town schemes already in hand has been envisaged. The power development programme will include four small hydro-electric projects, a steam plant in the Cherrapunjee area to generate 5,000 Kw. and setting up of larger diesel stations.

In the Cottage Industries sphere a programme costing Rs.4,00,00,000 for village and small scale industries, sericulture and weaving and schemes of the State Khadi and Village Industries Board is contemplated. The road programme and road transport programme, will entail an expenditure of Rs.8,80,00,000. The road programme envisages the construction of four hundred and fifty miles of new roads and improvement of six hundred and fifty miles of existing low standard roads. These figures do not include the provision of roads made for welfare of backward classes. Under the welfare of backward classes programme another five hundred miles of new roads are contemplated. In,

the sphere of transport, an additional eight hundred and thirty miles of improved roads and highways of the State will be taken up by the nationalised road transport system. The educational programme of Rs.7,52,00,000 visualises both intensive and extensive expansion of educational facilities in the State. Under health, the number of hospitals, dispensaries and beds are expected to be greatly increased and there will be increased turn out of medical personnel. A modest provision of Rs.1,30,00,000 is provided under the head 'housing' which will include low income group housing, slum clearance and sweepers' housing, plantation labour housing and rural housing. A total provision of Rs.10,00,00,000 for the promotion of the welfare of the hill tribes, plains tribes and scheduled castes is envisaged under different heads over and above the benefits they will derive from the normal developmental outlay. A provision of Rs.25,00,000 has been made for social welfare, providing grants-in-aid to welfare institutions, for training of social welfare workers and setting up of a Borstal Institute and more social welfare projects. A provision of Rs.50,00,000 for local bodies and Rs.24,00,000 for town planning have been made besides a provision of Rs.1,00,00,000 for reorganisation of the Public Works Department. The Publicity Department has got a share of Rs.25,00,000 to provide for adequate publicity facilities for the development programmes and the Department of Statistics has obtained Rs.20,60,000 for thorough reorganisation of the department. Labour has also got Rs.40,00,000 for labour welfare works. Besides these, the training programmes of personnel for different Departments are integrated in the overall Plan.

Although no provision for large scale industries in the State Plan proper was allowed, the Planning Commission have agreed and made provision in the Central Sector for a sum of Rs.1,40,00,000 for participation in projects for a spinning mill, a jute mill, a sugar factory and a spun-silk mill. Provision has also been made in the private sector for a cement factory, a paper mill and a rerolling mill-cum-cast iron foundry.

The bulk of the outlay of Rs.60,12,00,000 on the Second Five-Year Plan will be spent in the rural areas. The cost of the schemes for the benefit of the rural areas included in the Second Five-Year Plan amounts to about Rs.40,34,00,000. Out of the allocation of Rs.12,92,00,000 for the Second Five-Year Plan Schemes for the year 1956-57, the schemes exclusively for the rural areas are expected to cost Rs.7,78,00,000. In addition, the rural areas will derive appreciable benefit from many of the other schemes such as Basic Training, General,

Technical and University Education Schemes, and the major and medium irrigation projects and power schemes. A statement showing the details of the benefits that will accrue to the rural areas under the Second Five Year Plan has been separately circulated.

The revised State Plan while making for a relatively more balanced development of the State, will still leave many gaps in desired implementation activity. With a view to making up this gap, at least to a modest extent, a Supplementary Plan of about Rs.40,00,00,000 has been presented to the Planning Commission for further consideration. Copies of this Supplementary Plan have also been made available to the hon. Members of the Assembly. This Supplementary Plan provides for making up the omissions in the Revised Plan in most of the sectors of development, and I do not propose to take the time of the House by repeating them in full.

Amongst important omissions in the Revised Plan for the State which have been sought to be made up through the Supplementary Plan are, provision for a river valley project, provision of Rs.5,00,00,000 for village plans, provision for a bridge over the Brahmaputra, provision for a rope-way from Shella to Pandu and provision for town plans and specific provision for development of Gauhati town into a modern city. Discussions have been held with the Planning Commission on the Supplementary Plan and while no specific increases have yet been agreed to in the State Plan, the Planning Commission has agreed to consider about making provision for a river valley project after completion of detailed investigations if found warranted. Some expenditure on a bridge over the Brahmaputra has been provided for in the accepted plan of the Railways. The rope-way project is now under the examination of the Central experts on the basis of a detailed project report submitted by the State Government and may ultimately be accepted. Provision for flood control and tourism and rehabilitation will be forthcoming as a part of the all-India programmes. There is also a likelihood of a further increase in the provision of Rs.10,00,00,000 for welfare of Backward classes so far accepted by the Planning Commission, as a result of a review of allocations to be undertaken by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

In accordance with the earlier instructions issued by the Planning Commission, the provision for the Second Five-Year Plan expenditure in 1956-57 as shown in the budget, comes to about Rs.12,92,00,000. Since then, however,

the Planning Commission have indicated a revised ceiling of expenditure for 1956-57 which is slightly less than the figure included in the budget. The matter is still under discussion with the Planning Commission.

I shall now proceed to survey in broad terms the activities of Government during the current year, and the programme for the coming year, more especially the achievements during the First Five Year Plan period and the targets set for the Second Five Year Plan in the different developmental spheres.

Floods and Flood Relief

Assam was again the scene of devastating floods during the current year. The Brahmaputra and its tributaries were in high spate in July and the level of this flood exceeded the highest flood-level of the previous year by one foot in several places. Large stretches of the districts of, Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Darrang, Nowgong, Kamrup and Goalpara and a portion of Cachar, comprising about 5,400 square miles covering 168,725 families were affected. Floods and erosion took an appreciable toll of lands and other properties. The river Aic alone accounted for the washing away of about 400 bighas of paddy land, in addition to a Railway bridge and a portion of the Railway line. Nearly twenty lakhs maunds of paddy valued at Rs.1 63,48,977; 3,52,073 maunds of jute valued at Rs.76,13,510; other crops valued at Rs.6,96,307; 3,558 head of cattle valued at Rs.3,41,750 and other properties valued at Rs.25,41,134 were destroyed by the floods. The value of the properties lost due to erosion was about Rs.27,37,535. The damage caused to the roads and buildings, embankments, drainage canals and educational institutions maintained by the Government and Local Bodies amounted to Rs.1,31,25,480. The damage to National Highways was estimated at Rs.19,16,000. Rail communication between Assam and the rest of India remained suspended for a considerable period, and telegraph and telephone communications were also disrupted. The floods in the Barak in early November inundated a large area of the district of Cachar resulting in the loss of about 15 to 20 per cent of the paddy crop and 60 to 70 per cent of the Rabi crops, the loss totalling about Rs.25,03,269.

Relief was rendered to the people affected by flood promptly and in adequate measure. Boats were sanctioned for relief work. Rice was issued as gratuitous relief wherever needed.

The rehabilitation of the families uprooted by floods and erosion is presenting a serious problem because of non-availability of waste lands suitable for cultivation. The State Government, however, are taking every step for the permanent rehabilitation of the uprooted families on alternative sites.

The Government of India have now made more liberal provision for assisting the State Government in giving relief to the victims of natural calamities, for which we are thankful. For rendering relief to the flood victims, the State Government have during the current year sanctioned Rs.11,16,113 as gratuitous relief, Rs.12,26,777 as agricultural loans, Rs.2,48,000 for test relief works and Rs.12,79,537 for rehabilitation purposes. It is anticipated that a considerable amount on account of land revenue will have to be remitted to give relief to those who have lost their crops. The collection of land revenue during the current year has not been favourable for the same reason.

In this connection it is a pleasure for me to acknowledge the fine work done by the Local Congress Organisations and Relief Committees, particularly the Assam Relief Committee, the Marwari Relief Committee, the Ram Krishna Mission and the Red Cross Society, and many other public workers and organisations who unstintingly offered their services for the relief of the flood victims. We are particularly thankful to Shri Shriman Narayan, Secretary, All-India Congress Committee, for his visit to Assam at the time of floods. The Chairman of the Indian Peoples Famine Trust Fund allocated Rs.15,000 from the Trust Fund for flood relief and several organisations and agencies both from within and outside the State contributed liberally in cash and kind for flood relief.

Flood Control

I have earlier stated that the effective control of floods is essential for the economic prosperity of the State. In order that flood control measures may be planned and executed in a systematic and comprehensive manner, the pre-requisite is to have relevant data on all the rivers which contribute to flooding in different areas. Essential data in respect of sizeable rivers in Assam are thus being collected. These data consist of preparing up-to-date plans of the river system, longitudinal sections and cross sections of the river channels from the foothills to their outfalls, and spot-levels of the entire riverine tract measuring about 20,000 sq. miles.

The hydrological investigations comprise recording of rainfall, river gauges and discharges, and silt observations on the various rivers and their tributaries.

The Survey of India are getting aerial photographs taken of the entire valley and giving spot-levels on these photo-mosaics after carrying out necessary ground surveys. The Central Water and Power Commission through their Assam Investigation Circle, are collecting hydrological data in the State. The topographical surveys of the rivers are being carried out partly by the Central Water and Power Commission and partly by the State P. W. D. The progress already made in data collection is encouraging. Aerial photographs of more than 80 per cent of the area has been completed, and spot-levelling is well on the way. It is expected that by the 1956-57 working season, the essential data for most of the rivers in Assam shall have been collected including spot-heights of 40 per cent of the area.

Arrangements have been made to obtain information regarding rainfall and flood gauges or discharges from the neighbouring territories where most of our rivers have their sources. At our request, the Government of the People's Republic of China sent us during the last flood season, regular information over the wireless regarding flood discharges in the Brahmaputra known as Tsangpoh in their area. With the permission of the Maharaja of Bhutan, ten river gauge and rain gauge stations have been set up in Bhutan. Information from these stations is transmitted over the radio from wireless stations set up there for the purpose. In the North-East Frontier Agency, eight Flood Warning Stations have been established and these stations radioed very useful and timely information throughout the last flood season. Arrangements are being made to warn the people of impending floods by wireless.

To protect the riverine areas which are subject to annual flooding, construction of embankments has been in progress. Before the First Five Year Plan, there were only 163 miles of embankments in the State. During the four years of the Plan, 861 miles more were added, of which 514 miles were built during the last working season. Another 376 miles of embankments have been programmed for construction during the current working season. An expenditure of more than Rs.4,00,00,000 has been incurred during the Plan period on these embankments alone. The embankments completed before the last flood season gave protection to more than 3,00,000 acres which previously

used to get flooded. In the Second Five Year Plan, it is proposed to construct another 1,600 miles of embankments on the Brahmaputra and its tributaries and 420 miles on the Barak and its tributaries.

Protection against Erosion by Rivers

Besides flooding of vast areas, a number of towns have been threatened by erosion. Protective measures have been taken up for a dozen of these and works are being planned for another fourteen. Of the protective works, the protection of Dibrugarh stands as a monument to Government's determination to afford protection to the town. A scheme for the protection of Dibrugarh town was included in the original Five Year Plan of the State, but this scheme underwent considerable revision and increase in estimates as a result of experience of floods and more systematic planning for flood control as a whole. I am glad to say that the completion of the Dibrugarh Protection Works, carried out in the matter of a few months, as a result of unceasing vigil and unstinted devotion to duty of the personnel entrusted with the execution of the Project and the enthusiastic and willing co-operation and the generous Sramdan of the local people, which effectively protected the Town from erosion, notwithstanding an unprecedented flood which was experienced during the last flood season, is a landmark in developmental activity of which any country might legitimately be proud. The success of the stupendous undertaking inspires confidence in us for taking up large scale programmes for flood control in future. These works have further been strengthened and augmented since. Although saved from erosion, the town had got flooded last year. To prevent a recurrence, a six-mile long dyke is being completed along the river front, and the drainage of the town is being improved. The Dibrugarh Protection is estimated to cost Rs.2,60,00,000 including transportation of nearly 1,00,00,000 cft. of stones and 25,000 timber posts, besides an enormous quantity of other stores.

The Dibrugarh protection work however, was only one item in the overall programme of flood control taken up during the First Plan period. Other notable but perhaps less spectacular flood and erosion protection schemes including town protection schemes for Palasbari, Sualkuchi, etc., have also been taken up in respect of twelve towns.

The town of Palasbari was heavily eroded by the Brahmaputra in 1954 and the National Highway was threatened.

It was decided to carry out temporary protection measures to hold the town till alternative arrangements for a new township could be made. These measures gave effective protection during the last flood season.

In order to ensure that future flood control works in the State are carried out on the most scientific basis, a River Research Station is being set up in the State. A provision of Rs.20,00,000 has been made in the Second Five Year Plan for the purpose.

River Valley Projects

The State is very rich in water resources, and a beginning is now being made towards exploitation of these. The Government, after making a comparative study of the problems of the various river basins in the State, have decided to carry out detailed investigations of four river basins, namely the Kapili, the Barak, the Noa-dihing and the Subansiri, if the results of the preliminary investigations now in progress are encouraging. The preliminary and detailed investigations have been entrusted to the Central Water and Power Commission. A provision of a sum of Rs. 37,60,000 has been made in the State Second Five Year Plan for these investigations. If on detailed investigations, a project is found to be technically and otherwise acceptable, it is expected that the project might be taken up during the Second Five Year Plan period itself.

Development of Agriculture

As the House is aware one of the principal objectives of the First Five Year Plan was to step up food production with a view to make the country self-sufficient in food and do away with imports of foodgrains which were draining our limited resources in foreign exchange. It is, therefore, a matter of great pleasure for me to be able to say that despite the many natural calamities like floods, erosion, etc., we have become not merely self-sufficient in foodgrains, but been able to produce surplus quantities which are being made available to other parts of the country where they are needed. Our target of additional foodgrain production during the First Five Year Plan was 2,25,000 tons, but our actual production of additional foodgrains even during the first four years of the plan amounted to 3,31,200 tons. During the current year the increase in production is expected to be another 90,000 tons, thereby bringing the

actual achievement to double the target that had been aimed at. These encouraging results have been made possible by the adoption of an integrated programme, the main features of which were the concentration of work in compact areas, more particularly in the Community Development and National Extension Service Blocks, reclamation of waste lands through mechanized cultivation, implementation of minor irrigation projects, power pump irrigation for boro paddy cultivation, production and distribution of improved seeds and manures, improved cultural practices, crop protection measures, double cropping and the use of the Japanese method of cultivation on an extensive scale. The original allotment for Rs.3,45,00,000 had subsequently been reduced to Rs.3,24,95,000, when adjustments were made in the Plan in 1953-54. Out of this amount a sum of Rs.2,18,79,000 was spent up to the end of 1954-55 leaving a balance of Rs.1,05,80,000 for expenditure during the year. The Budget provision made during the current year amounted to Rs.71,73,000 and out of the shortfall of Rs.34,07,000, new schemes costing Rs.10,92,000 and expansion of the existing Grow More Food Schemes costing Rs.22,18,000 were sanctioned.

Horticulture has become increasingly popular in the State, and fruit plants and grafts propagated in the district nurseries have been in keen demand. The spring paddy which was hardly grown in the State before is now being grown over large stretches of lowlying areas with irrigated water from dongs and power pumps. Black pepper and cashew-nut both cash crops which are in great demand and which were introduced in Assam on any appreciable scale only a few years ago, have been taken up for cultivation on an increasing scale by the people, and arrangements have been made for distribution of cashew-nut seeds and Pepper Vines of good quality by the Agricultural Department.

In the Second Five Year Plan a number of new schemes have been included with a view to stepping up further the production of food-grains and cash crops. Among the more important schemes may be mentioned the deep tube well irrigation scheme to provide water for irrigation and drinking purposes in areas of scarcity during winter months, manufacture and distribution of improved agricultural implements, contour bunding and soil conservation measures, multiplication of spices by extending areas under black pepper, ginger, cardamom, cashew-nut, etc., multiplication of cash crops aimed at making the State self-sufficient in sugarcane, cotton, jute and other

cash crops, publicity and propaganda to make the results of agricultural research and improved agricultural practices known to cultivators, organization of agricultural exhibitions, a scheme for rehabilitation of middle class unemployed youth on economic holdings, a scheme for rehabilitation of landless agricultural labourers and flood-affected people, and an agricultural marketing scheme for disposal of surplus agricultural produce with reasonable profits for the growers by the organization of marketing societies, supply of marketing intelligence and adoption of specific grade standards for different agricultural produce. In addition to the above, the Second Five Year Plan provides for research schemes on pulses, sugarcane, pineapple, mustard, cotton, micology, entomology and weed control.

The Assam Agricultural College will be expanded with a view to increase the intake of students from 35 to 100 a year. During the Second Five Year Plan period the production of foodgrains is expected to be increased by 1,20,000 tons over the First Five Year Plan figure, and the existing deficits in the production of commodities like pulses, mustard, oil seeds, sugarcane, cotton, tobacco, jute, etc., made up to a large extent. The total outlay on the development of agriculture in the Second Five Year Plan is Rs.5,18,24,000. Further, schemes costing Rs.46,75,000 calculated to develop agriculture in the Autonomous districts and the Plains Tribal Areas have also been included in the Plan.

Animal Husbandry

The development of agriculture in our country is very closely linked with the development of our cattle wealth. The efforts of the State Government to improve the breed of cattle and the provision of better treatment facilities for them, have therefore continued with increased tempo during the current year. Five veterinary hospitals and fifteen veterinary dispensaries including three in the Plains tribal areas are being established during the current year, and another sixteen veterinary dispensaries have been planned for the next year. The Second Five Year Plan includes provision for provincialisation of all the Local Board Veterinary Dispensaries in the State and a beginning is expected to be made in this regard in the budget year. A new Veterinary laboratory was established at Silchar during the current year. The Assam Veterinary College will be shifted to a spacious site where the necessary buildings for accommodation of the College, and the hostels will be taken up for construction in the Budget year. Vaccines and Sera for inoculation and treatment of cattle and poultry not only

for our State but also to meet the requirements of Manipur, Tripura and the North-East Frontier Agency are being manufactured by the Department at Gauhati. With a view to remove the scarcity of pure milk in the State the Live-stock Department has taken up schemes for supply of pure milk for family consumption at Gauhati, Barpeta, Dibrugarh and Silchar. A similar scheme will be brought into operation at Nowgong during the Budget year. Schemes for mass production of poultry at Khanapara and mass production of ducks at Barpeta have been taken up by the Department during the current year. A Gosadan Centre for the care of the useless and unproductive cattle is being established in the State. Improvement of the stock of cattle in the hilly and heavy rainfall areas of the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills district by cross breeding is receiving attention. Substantial progress has been achieved in regard to the training of tribal candidates as Veterinary doctors and field assistants, and in the establishment of Veterinary Dispensaries *cum* Live-stock Breeding Centres, Key Village Centres, Poultry farms, Vaccination and First-Aid Centres in the Autonomous districts. The anticipated expenditure on Veterinary development and live-stock improvement schemes during the current year is Rs.16,30,000.

Development of Fisheries

Government have attached great importance to improving the fish wealth of the State. Survey of Fish Breeding Centres is in progress and so far seven Fish Farms and seven Seed Collecting Centres have been established. A programme of training of personnel in Pisciculture has been taken up, and arrangements made for making technical advice available to private parties engaged in Pisciculture, who are also helped with loans for the improvement of their fisheries. Old and ancient tanks are being renovated and being brought under Pisciculture. Natural fisheries both in forests and elsewhere are also being improved. In the Second Five Year Plan, Schemes for the development of fisheries in the reservoirs of Hydro-Electric Projects, development of hill fisheries, organization of Fishermen's Co-operative societies, and schemes for the transport and marketing of fish have been included. Up to the year 1954-55 a water area of two hundred acres was developed by the departmental fish farms. During the current year seven hundred acres of water area is proposed to be developed, and the supply of fish seed and the grant of loans to private parties for developing their water areas will be undertaken on a liberal scale.

Forests

The Schemes for the development of forests which are under execution include construction and improvement of roads to facilitate extraction of forest produce, cultivation of economic and medicinal plants, improvement and extension of forests by creating new plantations and raising of Matchwood plantations, settlement of flood-affected and landless people in forest reserves, and schemes calculated to improve the condition of forest villagers by provision of medical facilities, schools and drinking water in forest villages. The expenditure on these schemes has shown a rapid increase during the last three years. Survey work for establishment of a paper mill in Assam is in progress. Good progress has been achieved in the implementation of the scheme for Scientific Control of shifting cultivation, which has been extended to more districts, where a number of new demonstration centres have been set up. Better amenities have been provided to tourists visiting the game sanctuaries in the State. Among the important development schemes included in the Second Five Year Plan are reclamation of zamindari forests, roadside tree planting on highways, antimalarial measures in forest villages, improvement of forest fisheries, survey of raw materials, establishment of a Botanical Garden cum Zoo, the setting up of a timber treatment and preservation plant, and schemes for soil conservation, lac cultivation and extension of the Goalpara Tramway. The budget makes a total provision of Rs. 37,95,109 for the new forest development schemes to be taken up in 1956-57.

During the current year, negotiations were completed for the sustained supply at agreed prices of the maximum number of sleepers to the Railways.

Medical and Public Health

I will now briefly refer to our activities in the Medical and Public Health spheres. Substantial progress has been made in the provision of improved medical facilities during the First Five Year Plan period. In the current year eleven more hospitals and dispensaries were established and a sum of Rs.4,85,916 provided for the establishment of hospitals and dispensaries in the Autonomous districts. T. B. Wards attached to the existing hospitals are under construction. A sum of Rs.52,500 was sanctioned as grant-in-aid to Leprosy Treatment Centres in the Autonomous districts during the First Five Year Plan period till the end of 1954-55. The Local Board

hospitals and dispensaries received appreciable grants during the year out of a total amount of Rs.4,75,000 for purchase of medicine and equipment.

The Assam Homoeopathic Medicine Act, 1955 has been passed and it has come into effect in the State from 1st October 1955. The Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi Memorial T. B. Hospital and Sanatorium, Gauhati, for which Government have sanctioned a grant of Rs.1,25,000 during the current year, was recently opened by the Union Health Minister Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. From the savings expected out of the First Five Year Plan Schemes, provincialisation of eight Sub-divisional Headquarter Hospitals, improvement of five hospitals earlier provincialised and the scheme for the shifting of the Ayurvedic College to Maj-Jalukbari were sanctioned. The hundred-bedded Ward attached to the Reid Chest Hospital, Shillong, is expected to be ready for use by the middle of the year. The total expenditure incurred on the improvement of medical facilities under the First Five Year Plan till the end of 1954-55 was Rs.1,16,63,000 and it is expected that a further amount of Rs.59,96,000 will be spent on such schemes during the current year.

The Second Five Year Plan aims at integrated health services by establishing health units in rural areas to which will be attached medical and public health personnel. Provision has been made for the establishment of several new institutions, and development and expansion of some of the existing institutions, with a view to provide better medical facilities to the people of the State. Among the more important schemes included in the Second Five Year Plan, mention may be made of the expansion of the Assam Medical College and Hospital to provide for an increased bed strength of seven hundred, training facilities to Post Graduate students, Sanitary Inspectors, Health Visitors, etc., and establishment of a Research Department for Research in indigenous medicines. The District Headquarter hospitals, where increasing congestion is experienced every year will be expanded and provided with T. B. Wards. The Shillong and Jorhat Civil Hospitals will be shifted to better sites where there will be adequate room for expansion. Bed strengths will be increased in eight Subdivisional Headquarter Hospitals provincialised during the current year and facilities provided therein for in-door treatment of T. B. cases. An Anti-T. B. Demonstration and Training Centre and a Central V. D. Clinic for training of T. B. and V. D. workers will be established and V. D. Clinics will be set up in five District Headquarter

Hospitals. Fifty existing dispensaries will be converted into Primary Health Units and thirty more such Health Units set up during the first two years of the Plan.

Under the National Malaria Control Programme, five Anti-Malaria Units are now functioning in different areas of the State. Seven Maternity and Child Welfare Centres were opened during the current year, and steps are under way for opening another ten Centres. A survey of Leprosy patients in the Plains districts will shortly be undertaken. In addition to the schemes for the development of the Plains Tribal Areas already under implementation, eight more Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, and a Public Health dispensary at Hahim will shortly come into being under the Plains Tribal Areas Development Programme. Of the five T. B. Clinics sanctioned under the First Five Year Plan, three have started functioning at Tezpur, Nowgong and Silchar, and the Clinics at Barpeta and North Lakhimpur will begin to function before the close of the financial year. Priority has been given to the provision of improved Water Supply in the rural areas and the Second Five Year Plan includes a provision of Rs.1,00,00,000 for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Schemes.

Education

In regard to education, the First Five Year Plan period was mainly one of improvement and consolidation, rather than of expansion. Grants were sanctioned to aided colleges for improvement of their buildings, strengthening their teaching staff and for equipping their libraries and laboratories better. Self-help grants were sanctioned to the colleges for improvement of their buildings at the rates of Rs. 5,000 to each college. Arrangements were made for training high school teachers in classes specially conducted for the purpose by the University. Further progress was made in the training of Hindi Teachers and the introduction of Hindi in Middle and Secondary Schools. One hundred and thirty aided Secondary Schools are being sanctioned Hindi grants this year, and provision is being made to extend the grant to a further one hundred and thirty such schools during the budget year. Building grants at the rate of Rs. 2,500 to each school have been sanctioned to twenty aided High Schools on a self-help basis, and Rs.1,00,000 was sanctioned by way of grants in aid to aided Girls' High Schools for construction of hostel buildings on the same basis. Financial assistance was also extended to private schools and organisations for the establishment of hostels. One

hundred Primary Schools were sanctioned grants of Rs.150 each for improvement of the school houses and two hundred Primary Schools were sanctioned furniture grants of Rs.100 each. The Prince of Wales Institute of Engineering and Technology, and the Assam Civil Engineering Institute, were improved and expanded to provide for greater intake of trainees. The Junior Technical School at Nowgong was better equipped, and another Junior Technical School has been established at Silchar. The Inspecting organisation was strengthened by the creation of a new Inspectorate and an increased number of scholarships were sanctioned at all stages, during the year.

In the hill areas special attention was paid to improve the quality of instruction in the Middle English Schools. One Middle English School in the Jowai Subdivision and another in the Naga Hills were provincialised during the year. Though the principal aim of the Department was consolidation and improvement of the existing institutions, rather than of rapid increase, two hundred and seventy more Primary Schools, one hundred more Junior Basic Schools, ninety-three more Middle English Schools and thirteen more High Schools came into being in the State during the current year. The rapid strides being made in education in recent years could be judged by the increasing expenditure incurred thereon. In 1954-55, the expenditure on Education totalled Rs. 2,92,01,553 whereas during the current year the expenditure likely to be incurred on Education is expected to be Rs.3,76,31,922.

In preparing the Second Five Year Plan, all the important aspects of the major fields of education have received due attention. The Second Five Year Plan envisages expansion of the educational facilities for the age-group 6-11 by 25 per cent and for the age-group 11-14 by 30 per cent. Gradual conversion of the Primary and Middle Vernacular Schools to the Basic pattern has been provided for and it is estimated that one hundred Senior Basic and seven hundred Junior Basic Schools will be established during the plan period. For the age-group 14-18, 20 per cent increase of educational facilities is envisaged. The Plan provides for re-organising Secondary Education in the light of the recommendations of the Secondary Education Commission and forty-five existing High Schools will be upgraded into Higher Secondary Schools of which fifteen will be multi-purpose schools. This will be in addition to the fifteen multi-purpose schools taken up under the First Five Year Plan. Besides this, one hundred

more High Schools are proposed to be improved in respect of equipment and teaching personnel with a view to their ultimate upgrading. Subsidies will be granted for providing boarding accommodation to about three thousand pupils, special consideration being given to backward areas in this regard. Better facilities for training of teachers, and the improvement of their conditions of service, have received particular attention. The training institutes will be expanded to provide for training of eight thousand teachers in general subjects, and six hundred and fifty teachers in crafts during the plan period. A scheme for social education provides for supervisory staff, a publication programme and five audio-visual units. Other schemes relate to improvement of text-books, publication of teachers' handbooks, education of the physically handicapped, educational administration and inspection, teaching of Hindi in schools and extra curricular activities.

The existing technical institutions will be expanded and a few of them will be upgraded. Steps are proposed to be taken to put the Engineering College, which has already been started, on a sound footing.

A sum of Rs. 43,00,000 was provided under the First Five Year Plan for the construction of the permanent buildings of the University. The programme of building construction has been making good progress, and the entire provision is expected to be expended by the end of the First Five Year Plan period. A provision of Rs. 20,00,000 has been made in the Second Five Year Plan for the construction of additional buildings for the University. It is proposed to establish Post-Graduate departments in more subjects, *viz.*, English, Physics, Chemistry, Geology, Anthropology, etc., at an estimated cost of over Rs. 25,00,000 in the Second Five Year Plan period and to expand the existing Post-Graduate departments in Statistics, Commerce, Botany and Economics at an estimated cost of nearly Rs. 5,00,000. The total outlay on the schemes under Education in the Second Five Year Plan will amount to over Rs. 7,52,00,000.

Cottage Industries

To an under-employed people subsisting mainly on Agriculture, Cottage Industries offer a gainful means of supplementing income. The potentialities for the development of cottage industries in Assam with a view to provide gainful employment to

the un-employed and under-employed people in the rural areas are great. The Cottage Industries Training programme taken up by Government lays emphasis on training in crafts and the use of modern tools and equipments. During the current year, a Cottage Industries Training Institute at Srikona in the Cachar Community Project Area and another Training Institute for the training of semi-skilled artisans in blacksmithy and carpentry at Barpeta were established. Fifteen new Wardha Ghani units were set up during the current year. Stipends have been awarded to a large number of students for training in Cottage Industries both inside and outside the State at an estimated cost of over Rs.1,13,000 and grants totalling Rs.20,000 were sanctioned to non-Government industrial schools.

The Shellac Factory at Chaparmukh has been working satisfactorily. A number of co-operative societies of lac growers have been organised in the Mikir Hills, to enable them to obtain a reasonable return for their produce without being exploited by middle men and to maintain a steady flow of raw materials to the factory. The schemes in regard to training in hand-made paper making, bee-keeping, furniture-making and umbrella-handle making are continuing. Grants-in-aid amounting to Rs.40,000 have been sanctioned to private individuals engaged in crafts and industry, especially in the Tribal Areas.

The State Khadi and Village Industries Board received recognition from the Central Board during the current year. The State Board which was hitherto being helped exclusively by loans and grants by the State Government, has now begun to receive financial assistance from the Central Board. The Central Board has so far sanctioned Rs.1,25,000 as loans and Rs.73,280 as grants for the hand-pounding, ghani oil, bee-keeping, palm-gur making and other schemes. The Board proposes to take up fifteen more khadi production centres in the near future, at an estimated cost of Rs.11,67,000, for which schemes have been submitted to the All-India Board.

A team of Japanese experts has completed a survey of the possibilities of developing cottage industries in the State with wood, bamboo and cane as raw materials. On the basis of the recommendations of this team, it is proposed to start a small unit of bamboo, cane, wood-craft and saw mills at a total estimated cost of about Rs.20,00,000. Another team of Japanese experts has prepared schemes for the development of the Cottage Industries Training Institute and for a small paper mill and

a spun-silk mill. The Central Silk Board has sanctioned the scheme for the establishment of a spun-silk mill in Assam.

A tentative allotment of Rs.4,00,00,000 has been made for the development of cottage industries including sericulture and weaving and khadi village industries in Assam in the Second Five Year Plan period. The expansion of the existing Cottage Industries Training Institute, the establishment of a workshop at Gauhati and a central store and emporium for marketing of cottage industries products and supply of raw materials to artisans, establishment of thirteen training-cum-production institutes in all the districts, intensified development of cottage industries in thirty villages, grant of loans and subsidies to individuals for cottage industries are among the more important schemes which find a place in the Second Five Year Plan. Upto December, 1955 loans amounting to Rs. 3,71,950 have been issued to the promoters of cottage and small scale industries as against a total amount of Rs. 2,96,938 issued as loans in the year 1954-55. The Aid to Industry Bill which was passed during the current year provides for sanction of loans to promoters of cottage industries at an interest of 3 per cent per annum, and co-operatives of actual artisans at 2½ per cent per annum. To help small artisans most of whom have no security to offer, provision has been made for issue of loans to them upto Rs.1,000 on personal security and surety only. To others loans to the extent of 75 per cent of the value of the security offered will be issued.

Sericulture and Weaving are among the most important cottage industries in the State. The schemes undertaken so far for the development of the sericulture industry comprise of the supply of disease-free-seed and mulberry cuttings, provision of training facilities in improved techniques, demonstrations in improved processes of sericulture, grant of subsidies to mulberry growers and schemes generally calculated to develop the silk industry in the State. Preliminary work for establishment of a spun-silk mill with three thousand spindles has been completed. A Japanese expert has been appointed to set up the mill and bring it to working order. The targets for the Second Five Year Plan is to double the present production of silk in the State. The schemes for the encouragement and development of weaving industry include demonstrations in improved processes of weaving, training in improved techniques, up-grading of the Weaving Institute at Gauhati to a textile technological institute, establishment of emporia and

participation in exhibitions and fairs for marketing and popularising the products of the handloom industry, and the provision of industrial loans and subsidies to weaving societies for the establishment of their factories. To boost up the sale of handloom products, rebates are allowed on all purchases worth more than Rs.2 from Government depots and co-operative weaving societies. Industrial loans and subsidies are being granted liberally to the weavers and looms are supplied at 50 per cent cost price to the weavers to set up their own factories.

Co-operation

During the year the co-operative movement in the State gained fresh momentum as a result of rehabilitation of the credit societies, and organisation of a large number of weavers' and artisans' societies. Short-term loans amounting to Rs.18,00,000 have been issued in addition to Rs.2,00,000 issued as medium, and special medium and long-term loans to Co-operative Societies. The buildings of the Co-operative Training Institute, the godowns at Nowgong, Goalpara, Gauhati, Dhubri, Barpeta and Phulbari, and the Cotton Ginning Mill at Phulbari have been completed. Machinery is being installed in the Ginning Mill and the factory will start work during the next season. Interest free loans amounting to Rs.1,40,000 have been advanced to co-operative societies in Garo Hills and Mikir Hills for dealing in local produce such as cotton and lac.

In the Second Five Year Plan provision has been made for expansion of co-operative credit facilities to cover 50 per cent of the rural indebtedness, expansion of the training institute, issue of long-terms loans through land mortgage banks, and organisation of three hundred large sized credit societies, sixty primary marketing societies and one apex marketing society. Four jute bailing factories and one cotton ginning mill will come into being during the Second Five Year Plan period. Another one hundred godowns for storage of agricultural produce will be constructed. The new societies will be assisted by grants, loans and subsidies.

Ninety-nine weaving societies have been organised during the current year bringing the total number of such societies in the State to five hundred and ninety eight. An apex weavers' society has been organised and this society will take up the distribution of yarn, etc., to the weavers. Industrial co-operative

societies have been organised and assisted with loans and grants during the current year. One consumer co-operative society in Barpeta which was sanctioned a loan of Rs.1,00,000 has taken up an electrification project. The co-operative activities are expected to be intensified by organising primary multi-purpose co-operative societies affiliated to central multi-purpose societies. The activities of these societies will cover a wide field. For dealing in credit, apex societies have been organised. The central multi-purpose societies will use the godowns for storage of agricultural produce provided by the Community Projects. A loan of Rs.20,00,000 has been received from the Government of India for medium and long term loans to rural credit societies, and 50 per cent of this sum will be utilized in the Community Projects and Panchayat areas.

A co-operative sugar mill was organised in March, 1955 with an authorised capital of Rs.2 crores. Shares worth Rs.13,00,000 have already been sold, and the State Government has agreed to participate in the venture by purchasing shares for Rs.10,00,000. The necessary machinery has been ordered and installation is expected to be completed by October, 1957. It is proposed to set up a second ginning mill at Diphu in the Mikir Hills. A co-operative tile factory has been started at Gauhati for manufacturing roofing tiles. Milk societies have been established at Gauhati and Jorhat to provide pure pasteurised milk to the people.

Rural Panchayats

Government have decided to cover the entire State with Rural Panchayats by the end of the Budget year, and accordingly the targets in respect of constitution of Rural Panchayats are one hundred and sixty-six for the current year and one hundred and sixty-five for the budget year. When the entire State is covered by Panchayats, the existing Local Boards will be replaced by Union Panchayats.

The Provision made in the First Five Year Plan for the constitution and development of Panchayats was Rs.98,00,000 and it is expected that the entire provision would have been expended by the end of the current year. An amount of Rs. 4,26,000 has been expended in the shape of self-help grants during the current year, in addition to a sum of Rs.3,60,131 for the same purpose out of grants received from the Government of India under Article 275 of the Constitution. The self-help grants have helped to stimulate the enthusiasm

of the people for the development of the State through contributions in the shape of labour and in kind. The Second Five Year Plan has made provision for the construction of permanent buildings for the Joysagar Training Centre, and two thousand, three hundred and fifty-one Panchayat officials are expected to be trained in this institute during the Second Five Year Plan period.

Other Local Bodies

Elections to Local Boards on adult franchise were held for the first time in April and May last. The need to provide necessary funds to Local Boards to enable them to take up development projects has been appreciated, and a provision of Rs.50,00,000 has been made in the Second Five Year Plan for aid to Local Bodies. This amount will be spent mainly on improvement of markets and a sum of Rs.10,00,000 has been provided for this purpose in the Budget for 1956-57.

Four new Town Committees at Sarthebari, Hojai, Rangiya and Kamakhya have been constituted during the year. A proposal for the conversion of the Mangaldai Town Committee into a Municipal Board with the inclusion of some new areas under its jurisdiction, has been accepted. Sizeable grants have been made both by the Government of India and the State Government to the Local Bodies for the repair and re-construction of their roads, bridges, culverts, etc., damaged by floods. This restoration of damage caused to the properties of the Local Boards, Municipal Boards and Town Committees and Rural Panchayats by floods is expected to cost Rs.24,00,000, Rs.8,00,000 and Rs.3,00,000 respectively, which will be shared by the Government of India, the State Government and the Local Bodies concerned in the proportion of $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent and 25 per cent respectively. Further works costing about Rs.5,00,000 have been taken up by the Rural Panchayats as test relief work on existing roads damaged by floods, which amount will be shared by the Government of India, the State Government and the Panchayats in the proportion of 50 per cent, $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent and $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent respectively. The financial position of the Local Bodies continues to be unsatisfactory. The recommendations of the Taxation Enquiry Commission for augmentation of the resources of the Local Bodies, are under examination. A comprehensive Bill to replace the existing Assam Municipal Act to bring its provisions in line with those in other States, will be introduced in the current Session.

Community Projects and National Extension Service Programme

No programme has probably contributed more to the awakening and development of rural India than the Community Projects and National Extension Service Programme.

The target laid down for the Community Development Programme during the First Five Year Plan was to cover approximately one-fourth of the rural population of the State by the 31st March, 1956. An area of 9,703 sq. miles covering a population of 18,24,469 souls living in 5,955 villages has been brought under the programme by the end of 1955. This accounts for about 20 per cent of the area, 20 per cent of the population and about 24 per cent of the villages in our State. Four more National Extension Service Blocks have been allotted to the State during 1956, in which preliminary work has just been started.

During the First Plan period it had been decided by the Central Government that 50 per cent of the National Extension Service Blocks taken up in any year would be converted into Community Development Blocks depending on the all-round progress achieved and the people's participation in the work of the Blocks. On this basis, six out of the twelve National Extension Service Blocks of the 1953-54 series were due for conversion. However, in recognition of the fact that the performance in Assam in the field of Community Development was very much higher than the average for India as a whole, eight such Blocks were allowed to be converted into Community Development Blocks with effect from 1st April, 1955. The house will be glad to know that we have recently received information that in recognition of the good work done in Assam in the National Extension Service Blocks, it has been decided that all the remaining 1953-54 National Extension Service Blocks and two of the 1954-55 Blocks are to be converted to Community Development Blocks in the very near future.

By the 30th September, 1955, three full years of the Programme have been completed. The total governmental expenditure during this period comes to about Rs.1,69,00,000 of which a sum of Rs.1,56,00,000 was from the Project Budget and Rs.13,00,000 from the budgets of the various Development Departments. As against this, the contribution from the people during the same period is estimated at Rs.72,00,000. Rs.16,00,000 out of this has been in cash and in materials and the balance is

the estimated monetary equivalent of voluntary labour donated by the people.

Voluntary labour has been donated mostly in the field of communications. Over two thousand, three hundred and fifty miles of village roads have been newly constructed and over one thousand, four hundred and thirty miles of existing village roads extensively repaired by the voluntary effort of the people. On a modest computation, the volume of earth work done by the people comes to nine hundred and thirty-five lakhs cubic feet. Over one thousand five hundred and eighty bridges and culverts, equivalent to cover 14,700 rft. have been constructed from Project Funds.

Achievements in other fields have also been substantial. Over 48,800 acres of land have been newly reclaimed. Considerable progress has been achieved in popularising the Japanese method of paddy cultivation, vegetable and fruit growing and the manufacture as well as use of compost manure. As many as nine hundred and seventy-two minor irrigation works have been completed which are estimated to bring an additional 1,88,300 acres under cultivation.

In the field of Veterinary aid and Animal Husbandry, over seven lakhs of animals have been treated or inoculated. Eleven key village centres and seventy-nine poultry centres have been newly started. Improved varieties of pigs are being reared. Fodder cultivation is on the increase.

Public Health has received special attention. The people have built over thirteen thousand borehole and pit latrines; the cheap type of sanitary latrine newly introduced three years ago is becoming increasingly popular. Over one thousand and six hundred new drinking water wells or reservoirs have been constructed and over eighteen thousand and three hundred existing wells renovated by the people.

Four hundred and ninety-five new schools have been started, nine hundred and ninety-nine existing schools given substantial aid and one hundred and eighty-five existing schools have been converted into basic type. Other directions in which activities have been progressing satisfactorily are establishment of adult literacy centres, youth clubs, village libraries and mahila samities.

Some progress has been achieved in the field of industries. A fruit preservation unit on modern scientific lines and a Cottage

Industries Training Centre have been newly opened in the Cachar Project. Sericulture has been widely taken up in the Project areas ; modern and efficient reeling units of mulberry silk have been installed in the Golaghat Community Development Block and elsewhere which is expected to give a great fillip to this industry. Agriculture or some craft has been introduced in most of the schools.

The Extension Training Centre at Jorhat has been expanded to take one hundred trainees per batch in place of fifty. A new Home Economics Wing to train twenty Gram Sevikas at a time has been started here. Sanction has also been received for starting at this Extension Training Centre carpentry and black-smithy sections.

The Agricultural Training School at Upper Shillong has been expanded to take one hundred trainees per batch. A second Extension Training Centre has also been started here for the training of Gram Sevaks for hill areas.

The State Government have taken full advantage of the various training facilities initiated by the Community Projects Administration and the different Ministries of the Government of India. With the proposed expansion of the Community Development Programme under the Second Five Year Plan further expansion in the training programme is also contemplated.

Local Development Works and Rural Water Supply

The increasing role of peoples' contribution to the successful implementation of development projects, in the shape of Shramdan, materials and cash is nowhere more manifest than in the local development works and rural water supply programmes.

During the current year a programme of local development works and rural water supply costing Rs.9,00,000 and Rs.20,00,000 respectively were undertaken with the active co-operation and contribution of the local people in the shape of free labour or supply of materials or cash. A similar provision has also been made in the next year's Budget. Besides these schemes, a sum of Rs.7,50,000 has been sanctioned during the current year for improvement of rural

water supply in areas where there is acute scarcity of drinking water and also in areas affected by floods and epidemics. This scheme will be continued in the budget year also for which a similar provision has been made. As earlier stated, the Second Five Year Plan contemplates a large scale programme of rural water supply and sanitation at a cost of about Rs.1,00,00,000.

Low-Income Group Housing Plan

In connection with the Low-income Group Housing Plan, schemes for the development of building sites in and around the principal towns of the State are under preparation. Lands in and around Gauhati, Silchar, Dibrugarh and other towns are now under survey and it is proposed to take up development of these sites during the budget year. A scheme for advancing loans to local bodies for construction of tenements for their sweepers and other low-paid staff has been finalised, and applications from Local Bodies are now being considered. Loans amounting to Rs. 3,64,000 and Rs.1,12,000 have already been sanctioned to the Gauhati and Tinsukia Municipal Boards for this purpose. Loans to individuals amounting to Rs. 4,51,200 have been sanctioned till 31st December, 1955 for construction or improvement of their houses. The amount required for the Housing Scheme is advanced by the Government of India as a loan. During the Second Five Year Plan period these Schemes will be continued, and in addition a subsidised industrial housing scheme, a plantation labour housing scheme and a scheme for slum clearance and sweepers' housing will be taken up.

Town Planning

Following the floods of 1954 which caused considerable damage and washed away a portion of Palasbari town, the construction of a new township for rehabilitating the affected people was decided upon. The work was entrusted to the Public Works Department and a qualified town planner was appointed to advise the Public Works Department in the matter. A plan for the new township of Palasbari since drawn up by the town planner has been approved by Government. A master plan for Gauhati Town is also to be drawn up by the town planner, for which the necessary data is being collected. The town planner has further been helpful in the preparation of the general lay out plans for Diphu and Chapakhowa towns and some important buildings.

Medium and Major Industries

Assam has the raw materials necessary for several important industries, the products of which are in great demand in the State and which at present are being imported at considerable transport and handling costs, contributing to the high cost of living in the State. *Ad-hoc* enquiries have shown that there are good prospects for cement, jute products, paper, sugar, textiles, coal carbonisation and tar distillation, fruit preservation and processing, spun-silk, fertilizer, briquettes, glass, plastic and celluloid industries in the State.

With a view to promote the industrialisation of the State and make it self-sufficient in regard to some of the essential consumer goods Government have decided to help the sponsors of industries with reasonable communication facilities, lands, wherever available, power facilities to the extent possible and to render financial assistance wherever appropriate either by way of loans, purchase of shares or by standing guarantee to cover instalments of the prices of machinery supplied by manufacturers on deferred payment basis. In the light of these decisions and of the available data regarding raw materials and local demands for manufactured goods, the State Government have selected parties for the establishment of a Cement Factory at Cherrapunji, a Fruit Preservation Factory and a Jute Mill at Gauhati. Reference has already been made to the proposal for the establishment of a co-operative Sugar Mill and a Spun-silk Mill. The State Government have issued a policy statement indicating the nature and extent of State support that would be available to private industrialists prepared to establish industries in Assam and have invited proposals regarding establishment of paper, re-rolling mill, iron foundry, cotton textiles, glass, plastic and celluloid, phosphatic fertilizer, low-temperature coal carbonisation and tar distillation, cold storage and briquette industries and also a sugar mill in Cachar. The response so far received is encouraging, and it would seem that some parties with considerable previous experience are prepared to come into the field.

The Assam Financial Corporation

The Assam Financial Corporation which was set up to provide financial assistance in the shape of loans generally for the development of medium and major industries, has received fifty-five applications for loans totalling Rs.1,12,89,000 during

the current year. A total amount of Rs.48,85,000 has been sanctioned to twenty-two of these applicants so far. The applications received so far have been mostly from tea gardens, electric supply companies, saw mills, ply wood factories and flour and oil mills. It is to be expected that the activities of the Corporation will expand considerably during the Second Five Year Plan period as the prospects of new industries being set up in the State seem bright.

Mines and Minerals

Two more Prospecting Licenses covering 280 sq. miles and 165.80 sq. miles in the Hugrijan and Moran areas of the Lakhimpur and Sibsagar districts, valid for a period of three years have been granted to the Assam Oil Company to explore further, the oil possibilities of the Brahmaputra Valley. The licenses have incorporated conditions requiring the licensee to form a Rupee Company, allowing association of Indian Capital in the enterprise upto a minimum of one-third of the share capital, to employ Indian Nationals in preference to non-Indians at all levels whenever they have the requisite qualifications and experience, to arrange for the training of Indian Nationals in oil industry technique both within the country and abroad, and to have two Indian Directors to be nominated by the Government of India and the Government of Assam on the Board of Directors. The State Government have taken up with the Government of India the question of establishing a second oil refinery in the vicinity of the oil fields in the State.

Improvement of Road Communications

A large scale programme of road construction, covering the plains and hill areas of the State, has been under execution for some years. With the completion of the various road development programmes now under execution, the State will have six thousand and eight hundred miles of roads, which is just over half of what the State should have according to the Star and Grid formula accepted at the Conference of the Chief Engineers held at Nagpur in 1943. During the Second Five Year Plan period, nine hundred miles of roads which were taken up during the First Five Year Plan period (exclusive of the roads taken up under Art. 275 Grants and Special Funds), but could not be completed, will be completed, four hundred and fifty miles of new roads will be constructed and six hundred and fifty miles of existing low standard roads improved. In addition another five hundred miles of new roads will be

constructed in the hill districts and the plains tribal areas out of Art. 275 Grants.

The incomplete items of road projects taken up during 1954-55 under a Rs 38,00,000 programme, further improvement of twenty-five roads formerly improved from Cess Procurement Fund, at an estimated cost of Rs.22,05,000, the programme of black-topping some roads in municipal and thickly populated areas taken up at a total estimated cost of Rs.5,00,000 flood damage restoration works, and the reconstruction of the Ranganadi Bridge are all expected to be completed by the end of the current year. The improvements and repairs of the National Highway between Numaligarh and Khowang will similarly be completed this year. The State Government have submitted a programme costing Rs.2,60,00,000 for the expansion and improvement of National Highways in the State during the Second Five Year Plan period and also a proposal for the widening of the Shillong-Gauhati road.

Both in the hills and the plains, the emphasis during the current year was more on the completion of projects already in hand rather than on taking up new projects. This being the last year of the Plan period, road schemes taken up under various heads have been vigorously pushed through and it is hoped that the expenditure target of Rs.2,65,00,000 may be reached by the end of March, 1956. All the major bridge projects included in the Plan could not be started till last year, but I am glad to say that the preparation of estimates and the acceptance of tenders have now been completed in all cases excepting the Bhoroli Bridge. The programme of road schemes taken up under the Central Road Fund is also expected to be completed by the end of the current year. Sixteen road projects at an estimated cost of Rs.3,42,02,000 are under execution in the Autonomous districts under Art.275 (I) of which 300 miles of road would have been completed upto the end of the current year, the total expenditure being Rs.1,81,00,000.

Under the Second Five Year Plan, it is proposed to take up a road programme of Rs.7,00,00,000 under the General Plan and Rs.4,82,84,000 under the Art. 275 Plan. These provisions are inclusive of requirements for completion of the projects taken up during the First Five Year Plan period. Priority will be given to the improvement of that portion of North Trunk Road which is not covered by the Railway and also to make the road to Lungleh motorable throughout the

year. A further programme costing Rs.7,00,00,000 is being drawn up in consultation with the Assam Roads Communication Board.

In the Second Five Year Plan provision exists for completion of the bridges taken up under the First Five Year Plan and for construction of ten new bridges. The completion of the incomplete bridges and construction of new bridges will, in all, cover a bridge length of 7,500 rft. In addition to this, the re-construction or improvement of existing weak bridges on the Public Works Department roads totalling a length of 4,000 rft. has also been programmed. The ferry services over the Brahmaputra will be improved, and during the Second Five Year Plan period steam vessels will be purchased for the purpose.

Road Transport—Operation of State Transport Services

The State Motor Transport Services at present cover routes totalling a mileage of six hundred and ten miles. During the Second Five Year Plan period another eight hundred and twenty miles of important routes covering the North Trunk Road from Dhubri border to North Lakhimpur, the Hill route from Shillong to Badarpur and thence to the border of Tripura State will be nationalised, of which three hundred and fifty-four miles including the Shillong-Jowai-Khliehriat route, the Kamargaon-Golaghat-Mariani-Jorhat route, the North Gauhati-Tezpur route, and the Tezpur-North Lakhimpur route will be taken over in the Budget year. A well equipped Central Workshop will be established at Gauhati. The strength of the existing fleet of vehicles in use in the nationalised routes is three hundred and eight. One of the direct results of nationalisation has been the improvement in travelling facilities. The State Transport is now handling an average passenger traffic of 9,000 persons, and an average of goods, parcels and luggage traffic of 7,000 maunds, daily. The maundage of goods traffic on the Gauhati-Shillong route alone averages 6,000 maunds every day. The State Transport Services also convey postal mails throughout the system.

The State Transport is a commercial enterprise, the profits of which are being utilised for public benefit. The financial results of this operation have been encouraging. The State Transport Organization provides employment to one thousand and five hundred persons in different categories of services, at emoluments and service conditions almost equivalent to those admissible to similar services under the State Government. The

nationalisation of routes contemplated during the Budget Year is expected to provide employment to eight hundred more persons.

To gear up the administration of the Motor Vehicles Department, a whole time Transport Commissioner has been appointed and an enforcement squad sanctioned. It is expected that this squad will help in stepping up the collection of taxes and bringing the tax dodgers to book. The collection of motor vehicles taxes and fees is steadily on the increase.

The Assam State Transport (Amendment) Act, 1955 was enacted to provide for nationalisation of road transport services in the State. The Assam Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Act, 1955 was passed to provide for prompt realisation of motor vehicles taxes and for enhancement of the revenues of the State.

The plan for development of tourist traffic in the State consists of improvement of forty seven Tourist Centres at a total expenditure of Rs. 95,00,000. This programme is a part of an All-India Programme taken up by the Government of India on the advice of the Planning Commission.

Rail Communications

As the House is aware, transport facilities between Assam and the rest of India are at present far from satisfactory. The capacity of the Rail link which is limited in view of steep gradients and inadequate rolling stock was further restricted due to the breaches on the track resulting in hold-up of goods at Calcutta and Amingaon. During monsoon the several rivers and streams which cross the Rail Track are in spate resulting in extensive breaches lasting for months. There has been some improvement in the flow of goods into Assam following the restoration of direct goods traffic between Assam and the rest of India through East Pakistan. The freight rates by this route are, however, higher than by the all rail routes through the Indian Union. The restoration of this service, welcome though it is, is no permanent solution of our difficulties, and cannot be regarded as a substitute for improvement of the Rail communications by the All-India route.

The internal Rail communications within the State continue to be unsatisfactory and inadequate. It is known to the hon. Members that Government have repeatedly been impressing on the Government of India the importance and urgency

of a Rail link to the Garo Hills, to facilitate the exploitation of the rich and vast natural resources of that area for industrial development, and the construction of a Railway line linking Rangapara with North Lakhimpur, which is the key to the economic development of the vast areas to the North of the Brahmaputra. The importance of a bridge over the Brahmaputra for the acceleration and general improvement of Rail transport in the State, has been stressed and explained by us on several occasions.

Inland Water Transport

The Ganga Brahmaputra Water Transport Board has secured the approval of the Planning Commission to an expenditure of Rs.25,00,000 being incurred in Assam for the development of Inland Water Transport. A pilot ferry service across the Brahmaputra at Gauhati has been sanctioned by the Board. The Steamer Companies have under consideration the establishment of a repairing workshop during the Second Five Year Plan period. Government have to observe with regret that no effective steps appear to have been taken by the Steamer Companies so far to replace Pakistani crews by Indian nationals and generally to Indianise their staff. The freight rates charged by the Steamer Companies are so high that it is considered detrimental to the economic development of the State, and to the interests of the consumers. Progressive nationalisation of Inland Water Transport Services, appears to be the only answer to improve the present position.

Ropeway Project

Reference has earlier been made to the comprehensive Road Construction Programme which is in progress in the Hill areas to provide transport to the produce of these areas to alternative markets. Motor Transport over long and winding Hill roads is, however, costly and goods carried over these roads cannot compete with other goods in the competitive markets in the plains. A project for the construction of a Ropeway from Shella to Pandu to provide cheap transport facilities between the Plains and the interior and border areas of the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills has been surveyed by two Czechoslovakian experts. The survey report shows that the scheme is sound and will be remunerative. The State Government have sought the concurrence of the Planning Commission to the inclusion of this project

in the Second Five Year Plan. The Ropeway Scheme, if it materialises, will give a fillip to the development of the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills in the Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial fields.

Building Programme

A large scale development programme necessarily entails a heavy building programme. Among the important buildings which have been under construction during the current year are those for the Assam Civil Engineering Institute costing over Rs.7,00,000 and the Technical School buildings at Tezpur and Nowgong, and the Mokokchung High School buildings estimated to cost Rs.2,33,000. Work on a large number of Public Health Dispensary buildings in the rural areas is in progress. The Agricultural College buildings at Jorhat have been completed and arrangements are being made for the installation of gas and water supplies. The Assam High Court building is coming up and is expected to be completed before the middle of the Budget year. Work on the Central State Library Building at Shillong estimated to cost about Rs.10,00,000 has begun, and buildings to house libraries at Gauhati, Nowgong, Silchar and Tezpur, each costing about Rs.4,00,000, will be taken up in the near future. The District Jail at Goalpara is under construction, and a new Sub-Jail at Barpeta has been started. Work on a large number of buildings for the State Transport expected to cost, in all, Rs.18,00,000, spread over different routes on which the State Transport is operating, is in progress. A sum of Rs.34,00,000 was spent upto the end of 1954 on the Medical College buildings programme, and a programme costing about Rs.36,00,000 is now under execution of which about Rs.17,00,000 is expected to be spent during the current financial year. Work on the buildings for the Jowai Hospital, the Diphu Hospital, the Mizo High School, the Boys' High School at Jowai, the Basic Education Institute at Tura and the Basic Education Centres at Manack and Deotha, which were taken up sometime ago, will continue in the Second Five Year Plan period. Other important buildings taken up for construction are those of the Basic Training College at Titabar, Veterinary Hospitals at Hajo, Nalbari, Jorhat and Kokrajhar, the Assam Engineering College at Jhalukbari, additional buildings for the Reid Chest Hospital at Shillong and Co-operative Godowns at different places. Several Circuit Houses and Dak Bungalows have been improved and extended. A large scale building programme has

been taken up with a view to provide extra accommodation to the Armed Police Battalions at Dergaon, Reserve Police at Gauhati and for the personnel of the Police force generally. New buildings for the Lanka, Mokokchung and Bokajan Police Stations including some staff quarters were taken up during the current year. Work on the construction of a Court building and staff quarters at Kokrajhar, houses for Extra Assistant Commissioners, hutments for officers, the Court and Treasury buildings and the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow at Diphu have also been taken up during the current year. The Budget for the year 1956-57 provides for the construction of buildings at Gauhati, Nowgong, Jorhat, Golaghat and Silchar for the better accommodation of the Courts and other Government offices at an estimated cost of Rs.30,00,000.

Welfare of Backward Classes—Development of the Tribal Areas

In my last year's budget speech, I have referred to the various measures taken up by the Government to relieve the distress of the people living in the border areas of the Garo Hills, United Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Mizo District. Realising that the rehabilitation of the economy of the people of the border areas depends on the diversion of their agricultural produce to alternative markets, Government had taken up a comprehensive road programme to link the principal producing centres in the border areas with important markets, or with existing roads. This ambitious road programme which was taken up as part of the First Five Year programme has made good progress. A scheme for rehabilitation of the people of the border areas of the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills, affected by the partition has been under implementation and about five hundred families have since been rehabilitated in the Bhoi area. As a short term measure a scheme of subsidising the cost of transport of the rice supplied to the people of the border areas of Garo Hills and United Khasi and Jaintia Hills from the nearest road heads to the actual centres of distribution, and the cost of transport of essential commodities to Lungleh so as to enable the people of Lungleh Subdivision to purchase these essential commodities at the same prices as at Aijal, had been in operation since 1953-54. The scheme in respect of the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills was discontinued from 1954-55 on the advice of the Members of the Legislature from this district and the amount earmarked for the purpose was utilized in constructing village roads and other measures for the permanent benefit of the

affected people. The scheme in respect of the other two districts is being continued and necessary provision has been made for the purpose in the next year's budget. Till the end of the current year, the total expenditure in implementing this scheme in all the three Autonomous Districts comes to Rs.20,44,770. During the current year due to acute scarcity of rice in the Lungleh Subdivision before the harvesting of the winter crop, Government had to undertake air dropping of 1,500 maunds of rice for distribution to the affected people at a total expenditure of Rs.35,000. Reference had also been made in my last budget speech to the measures being taken for combating scarcity conditions in the Southern region of United Khasi and Jaintia Hills and in some parts of Naga Hills through construction of roads to provide relief, and reclamation of waste land for wet paddy cultivation, etc., costing in all Rs.44,00,000. The scheme for Naga Hills consisted of construction of two major roads namely the Kohima-Zunheboto and Kukidolong-Birema roads. The total estimated cost of these two roads in Naga Hills comes to Rs.29,00,000 of which till last year a total expenditure of Rs.3,42,500 was incurred. The anticipated expenditure during the current year is Rs.13,13,324 and it is hoped that both the roads will be completed during the budget year and will provide great relief to the people.

In pursuance of the resolution moved by my Friend, Shri Emonsing Sangma in the last Budget Session of the Assembly, Government have arranged for free distribution of cloths of such designs and textures as are approved by local tribal representatives, among the poorer sections of the Garos and Mikirs at a total cost of Rs. 1,00,000 during the current financial year. This scheme is expected to encourage the Mikirs and Garos to give better attention to clothing and to take to improved methods of spinning and weaving, for which training centres are also being set up in the interior areas of these districts.

The ceiling of expenditure for the development of the Tribal areas in the hills and the plains to be financed out of the grants sanctioned by the Government of India under Art. 275 of the Constitution had been fixed by the Planning Commission at Rs.4,07,00,000 for the first Five Year Plan period. Upto the end of last year the total expenditure on these development schemes was Rs. 2,30,65,740. During the current year Government of India have sanctioned a total grant of Rs.2,70,00,000 under Art. 275 of which Rs.1,39,58,022 is earmarked for Autonomous Districts and Rs. 66,41,978 for the

plains tribal areas and it is expected that these grants will be utilised to the full.

The expenditure incurred by the State Government from their own resources in the Autonomous Districts, outside the State Five Year Plan on nation building schemes through the different development departments is estimated to cost Rs. 2,65,07,000 during the First Five Year Plan period, exclusive of the expenditure on the headquarters establishments and common institutions maintained for the benefit of the whole State. In addition, the cost of the schemes undertaken for the welfare of the Tribal people of the hills and the plains in the State's General Five Year Plan outside the Art. 275 Grants is expected to be Rs. 2,04,00,000 during the First Five Year Plan period. During the current year greater emphasis has been laid on completing the various schemes initiated in previous years than in undertaking new schemes. Details of these schemes, which are making good progress, were furnished in my previous budget speeches and it is therefore, not necessary to repeat them here.

In the light of the encouraging results obtained from the Pilot Scheme for scientific control of shifting cultivation in the Garo Hills, the scheme has been extended to other districts, and six demonstration centres have been set up in the Mikir Hills, North Cachar Hills and Mizo Districts. Government are also continuing to maintain the developmental institutions such as Lower Primary Schools, and medical and public health dispensaries, which had been established by them, and expanding them wherever necessary, though strictly under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution such institutions are now to be maintained by the District Councils. Government have accordingly been maintaining the Government Lower Primary Schools in the different Autonomous Districts, and also sanctioning liberal grants to the District Councils for the expansion of Primary Education. Grants-in-aid have been sanctioned for a large number of Middle and Secondary Schools, and as referred to earlier, two Middle English Schools, one in Jowai and other in the Naga Hills were provincialized during the year. To pave the way for the establishment of a large number of Basic Schools in the hill areas, Basic Training Centres are being started in all the hill districts. Four multi-purpose schools have been allotted to the hill areas, and facilities provided for improved teaching of crafts. With the financial assistance granted by Government, it has so far been possible for thirty-five schools to provide hostel facilities. With the opening of the

Aijal-Lungleh jeep road, the economic condition of the interior areas of Lungleh Subdivision has improved. The people of these areas are now able to transport their surplus rice, and other agricultural produce like ginger, turmeric, vegetables, etc., to areas where they are in demand. They are also able to procure salt, kerosene oil and other articles essential for daily life at a cheaper rate.

Earlier in my speech I have referred to the policy of Government to promote better understanding between the people of the hills and the people of the plains by encouraging the study of hill languages in the plains and the study of Assamese and Hindi by the students of the hills on a purely voluntary basis. Language being the vehicle of thought, study of hill languages by the plains people, and of Assamese and Hindi by the hill people will help in cementing better understanding and developing more intimate contacts between the hills and the plains, and in the promotion of trade, commerce and employment opportunities. So far, provision has been made for the study of Khasi, Garo and Naga languages in selected schools in the plains. Steps have been taken to prepare suitable text books in the hill languages, and generally to enrich them and their literature. The Khasi language is already recognised by the University upto the Degree standard and has been included as one of the subjects in the syllabus for the competitive examinations for recruitment to the State Civil and Police Services. It is hoped that other tribal languages will attain the same position and be given the same importance in due time.

The ceiling fixed by the Planning Commission for welfare of Backward Classes in Assam under the Second Five Year Plan is Rs.10,00,00,000. Welfare schemes have accordingly been drawn up at a total estimated cost of Rs.7,40,00,000 for the hill areas and Rs.2,10,00,000 for the plains tribal areas. Schemes for the promotion of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes have also been drawn up at a total cost of Rs.50,00,000. These allocations are however considered inadequate keeping in mind the constitutional objective of bringing the Tribal Areas to the same level as the rest of the areas of the State within the next few years. The Government of India have, therefore, been moved to raise the ceiling for welfare of these backward classes by another Rs.2,00,00,000 and schemes for the purpose have been submitted. I would add that in addition to the development schemes to be financed out of the Article 275 Grants, the Tribal Areas will benefit considerably by the general development

schemes taken up for the whole State and the schemes in the Central sector such as establishment of Intensive Development Blocks in the tribal areas, setting up of a Tribal Research Institute, etc., for which a block grant of Rs.32,00,00,000 has been provided for the country.

For the information of the hon. Members, I would like to give the headwise distribution of the total expenditure of Rs.9,50,00,000 for the development of the Tribal areas and Rs.50,00,000 for the promotion of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes : The details are as follows :—

| Heads | Hills Tribal | Plains Tribal | Scheduled Castes | Total |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1. Education ... | 89,26,000 | 47,97,000 | 13,28,000 | 50,51,000 |
| 2. Medical .. | 30,49,000 | 18,35,000 | 73,000 | 49,57,000 |
| 3. Public Health ... | 13,27,000 | 16,56,000 | 8,60,000 | 38,43,000 |
| 4. Agriculture ... | 28,61,000 | 4,57,000 | ... | 33,18,000 |
| 5. Forest ... | 93,43,000 | 4,62,000 | ... | 98,05,000 |
| 6. Cottage Industry | 5,53,000 | 4,28,000 | 1,30,000 | 11,11,000 |
| 7. Sericulture and Weaving. | 21,06,000 | 5,01,000 | 80,000 | 26,87,000 |
| 8. Co-operation .. | 6,61,000 | ... | 1,65,000 | 8,26,000 |
| 9. Veterinary .. | 15,41,000 | 9,30,000 | .. | 24,71,000 |
| 10. Public Works ... | 3,97,22,000 | 85,84,000 | .. | 4,83,06,000 |
| 11. Miscellaneous ... | 36,68,000 | 13,50,000 | ... | 50,18,000 |
| 12. Publicity ... | 2,43,000 | ... | 5,04,000 | 7,47,000 |
| 13. Aid to Voluntary Agencies. | ... | ... | 6,10,000 | 6,10,000 |
| 14. Fisheries ... | ... | ... | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| 15. Housing ... | ... | ... | 12,00,000 | 12,00,000 |

As in the First Five Year Plan, topmost priority has been accorded to the improvement of Communications in Hill areas, in the Second Five Year Plan also. The development of education in the different stages in the Tribal areas will receive increasing attention in the Second Five Year Plan. The Central and State Governments have been awarding scholarships on a

liberal scale to the students belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, but due to financial limitations it has not been possible to award scholarships to every student belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Government have under consideration a proposal to make education free to the children belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at all stages. As the proposal has considerable financial implications, it is not possible to implement the scheme in its entirety immediately. To make a beginning in this regard a provision of Rs. 20,000 for Scheduled Castes, Rs. 25,000 for Plains tribals and Rs. 30,000 for Scheduled Tribes of the hills has been made in the next year's budget. These provisions are intended to supplement similar provisions made under Art. 275 Grants. In the Second Five Year Plan provision has also been made for award of scholarships to the deserving tribal students for advanced studies in India and abroad on subjects like Medicine, Engineering, Technology, etc. Other schemes under Education include establishment of Lower Primary Schools, strengthening of teaching staff in the existing schools, provision of hostel facilities, increased grants-in-aid to non-Government schools, improvement of school buildings, introduction of crafts and trades in schools, etc.

District Councils

The District Councils and the Pawi Lakher Regional Council have taken over most of the administrative functions vesting in them under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. The District Councils and the Regional Council have, as in previous years, been complaining of dearth of necessary finances for the discharge of their administrative functions, and for undertaking schemes for the development of their areas. A proper assessment of the financial requirements of the Councils is only possible after they have tapped all the taxes and revenues already allotted to them, and enforced strict economy in their establishments and administration, as repeatedly advised by Government from time to time. Further loans were granted to some Councils to enable them to tide over their immediate difficulties, and in a number of cases, extension of time was allowed for payment of instalments of loans which fell due, during the year. Steps are under way for the assessment and payment of compensation to the Mizo Chiefs for the acquisition of their rights. About Rs. 6,50,000 will have to be borne by the State as their half share for the payment of this compensation, the other half being met by the Government of India. A provision of Rs. 13,00,000 has been made in the budget for this purpose.

Removal of Untouchability

Till last year no separate schemes had been undertaken for the benefit of Scheduled Caste people. Untouchability is a social evil and has no place in a democratic society. Although untouchability is non-existent in Assam in the sense it exists in other parts of India, there is no denying the fact that the Scheduled Castes in Assam suffer from some disabilities. To remove these disabilities, special attention is being paid to the economic and educational uplift of the Scheduled Castes, and concerted propaganda through meetings, melas, bhawanas, kirtans, dramas, intercaste dining, etc., has been undertaken to tone up the morale of the Scheduled Caste people, and educate the masses against the evil of any discriminatory treatment towards the Scheduled Castes. During the current year it is estimated that a sum of Rs. 4,00,000 would have been expended on these schemes. The provision for the same purpose in the Second Five Year Plan is, as earlier stated, Rs. 50,00,000, which will be equally shared by the State and Central Governments.

Social Welfare

Last year on the advice of the Central Social Welfare Board a State Social Welfare Board was set up. This Board has so far taken up fourteen Social Welfare Extension Projects of which ten are in the plains and four in the hills. The object of these projects is the promotion of the Welfare of women and children. The expenditure on these projects is shared by the Central Government, the State Government and the Local people in agreed proportions. I am glad to note that satisfactory results have been obtained in these projects.

Labour Welfare

Assam is the first State in India to introduce the Provident Fund Scheme for Tea Plantation Labour, and this is the biggest Provident Fund Scheme for any single industry in the country. The Scheme was put into operation on 12th September, 1955, and covers about 4,00,000 workers, the annual contributions totalling over Rs. 2,25,00,000. The Provident Fund may apart from being a source of relief to the workers in their old age, also be a source of finance by way of loans for our development projects. Grants-in-aid totalling Rs. 72,700 have been paid to the Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Trust, the Hindusthan Mazdoor Sevak Sangha and the Assam Sevak Samaj, for welfare work among the labourers during 1955-56. Steps are under way to establish the Female Welfare Training Centre

at Mazenga and to improve the Rowria Labour Welfare Training Centre. Construction of eight blacksmith shops forming part of a vocational scheme for labourers is in progress. The Second Five Year Plan provides for the establishment of some Model Welfare Centres and Community Centres. The total provision made for labour welfare in the Second Five Year Plan is Rs.50,00,000, and it will be utilised for housing of plantation labour and subsidising industrial housing. It is hoped that the tea industry on which the responsibility for the provision of welfare facilities to tea garden labourers vests will play the part expected of it and take up a comprehensive programme for the improvement of the conditions of labour.

Prohibition

With the extension of the Assam Liquor Prohibition Act, 1952, to the South Bank of the Gauhati Subdivision from 26th January, 1956, Liquor Prohibition is now in force throughout Kamrup district. For effective enforcement of prohibition the Excise staff has been strengthened. Public co-operation has been enlisted, and Liquor Prohibition Committees with both official and non-official members set up for the success of the programme. To divert the minds of the addicts from liquor, Government are setting up temporary club houses, and arranging cinema shows, free supply of tea and milk and other facilities. Extensive propaganda on the evil effects of drink has been undertaken through dramas, cinemas and posters. To pave the way for the introduction of prohibition in stages throughout the State, certain restrictions have been imposed in regard to consumption of liquor in the non-prohibition areas, which have resulted in an estimated annual loss of Rs.27,00,000 by way of excise revenue. Total prohibition of opium has already been in force in the State for some years, and the treatment of opium addicts in nine different treatment centres continues.

Rehabilitation of Displaced Persons

The influx of displaced persons into the State from across the border continues unabated, and has in fact increased in recent months. The sense of insecurity prevailing in the minds of Hindus in East Pakistan, and the economic and political discrimination practised against them are mainly responsible for this influx. The Conference of Rehabilitation Ministers held at Darjeeling towards the end of last year had suggested the

adoption of a number of measures to restore confidence in the minds of the Hindus in East Pakistan, and thus to check the exodus. The response of the Pak Authorities to these suggestions has however, been far from encouraging, with the result that there has hardly been any improvement in the position.

To ascertain the scope and magnitude of the problem of rehabilitation of displaced persons in the State and to formulate adequate schemes for the purpose, a statistical survey of the displaced persons in the State is now in progress. Gratuitous relief and relief in the shape of grants for marriages, sradhhs, etc., were granted in deserving cases during the year as in the past. The rules for granting stipends, free studentships, cash-grants, etc., to displaced students have been liberalized, and the benefits are, therefore, available to a greater number of students now. Temporary relief was also given to new migrants out of funds provided by the Government of India for the purpose.

Comprehensive inquiries were undertaken with a view to ascertain the extent to which the displaced persons in the Indian Tea Association colonies in Cachar, had been rehabilitated and to determine the further steps required to be taken for their rehabilitation. These inquiries have been completed, and on their basis schemes have been formulated for the development of these colonies, to provide additional lands for the colonists, wherever necessary and possible, and to shift the inmates of some of the colonies elsewhere where better rehabilitation facilities could be found for them. Development work in the Government sponsored and other colonies of the displaced persons continued. The ceilings of loans of the different categories payable to displaced persons were raised during the current year. During the period from March 1955 to December 1955 an amount of Rs.95,95,219 was disbursed as loans to displaced persons. Schemes costing Rs.11,73,68,000 for the rehabilitation of displaced persons in Assam during the Second Five Year Plan period have been submitted to the Government of India. These schemes are now under scrutiny. For the expeditious formulation and implementation of rehabilitation schemes Engineering and other technical staff have been appointed.

Efforts to find more land for the rehabilitation of displaced persons continued. The Central Tractor Organisation has recently concluded a survey of lands in existing colonies in the Cachar district which could be reclaimed through tractors. Following this survey, it is expected that the Central Tractor Organisation will shortly commence operations in these colonies for the reclamation of low tilla lands.

Since the land position in the State is difficult, it is generally recognised that it would not be possible to find lands for all the displaced agriculturist families. For the rehabilitation of the surplus agriculturist families who cannot be given land and the displaced non-agriculturist families, alternative employments in various industries and trades have to be found. It has accordingly been decided that training-cum-production centres should be set up early in areas having heavy concentration of displaced persons, to train them as craftsman and skilled workers, the selection of the items of training and manufacture in the centres being decided with due regard to local demands. Three such production-cum-training centres in Cachar district and another centre in Goalpara district have recently been sanctioned. Schemes for a number of cottage and small scale industries have been and are being formulated. Emporia would be set up in the important towns in the State to popularise handicrafts and the products of cottage and small scale industries of the displaced persons. The scope for starting medium industries under the Industrial Scheme of the Ministry of Rehabilitation for providing employment to displaced persons and local people is being examined by the State Government. About 150 displaced students are now receiving vocational and technical training in the various technical schools in the State and the Assam Civil Engineering Institute, Gauhati. The question of setting up new technical schools and of up-grading or enlarging the scope of some of the existing institutions is under examination. In the spacious buildings constructed at Gauhati with the intention of setting up a refugee market, which have remained unused for some time for various reasons, it is proposed to establish a poly-technic institution capable of training artisans, craftsmen, and technically qualified personnel who would find ready employment in the schemes to be implemented under the Second Five Year Plan. The training facilities in the training-cum-production centres, technical schools, poly-technic, etc., would be availed of by the State Government for training local candidates also.

The State Government have been assured that the Government of India would be prepared to consider making suitable grants for the expansion of the educational, technical and professional institutions, T. B. hospitals, hospitals and maternity and child-welfare centres in the State for accommodating displaced persons. Specific proposals in this regard have been and are being submitted to the Government of India.

A large number of displaced students have been receiving training in useful trades and vocations in private and Government institutions. Schemes for training of women and girls as

dhais and midwives and in gainful vocations like weaving are under implementation. Displaced candidates are also receiving training at the Udarbund Basic Training Centre and the Silchar Normal School. A few selected candidates have been deputed for training in the manufacture of matches on a cottage industry basis at the Sodepur Asram and in improved methods of lac cultivation at Ranchi.

A number of housing schemes in and around the towns, big and small, are being taken up. The construction of most of the refugee markets taken up in the various towns during last year, has been completed. A scheme for a permanent home at Nowgong for unattached women and their dependents with necessary educational and vocational training facilities has been sanctioned at a cost of Rs.4,84,000 and construction of the necessary buildings would start soon. The establishment of a similar home at Silchar to accommodate a thousand inmates and estimated to cost over Rs.8,00,000 is expected to be sanctioned in the near future. Boys' homes would be set up in suitable places for displaced boys who are either dependents of unattached women, or have none to look after them, till they complete their studies.

Jail Reform

In consonance with the modern ideas of Jail Administration, namely, the need to reform prisoners into good citizens and to train them in useful vocations, so that they may find little difficulty in getting themselves rehabilitated in society after their release, Government have taken up schemes for the training of prisoners and for the improvement of jail industries. A Special Officer has been appointed in the Jorhat Jail to improve jail industries. Prisoners are employed on payment of wages in these industries and are thus trained in useful vocations. Spinning has been introduced as one of the vocations in six district jails in the State and steps taken to improve the quality and patterns of weaving. Jail officials are being deputed for training in institutions outside the State to equip them better for the task of reformation of the prisoners. To relieve congestion, extra accommodation has been provided in the Shillong, Tura and Aijal jails. Provision has been made in the Second Five Year Plan for the establishment of a Borstal School in Assam and the construction of separate enclosures for Juvenile prisoners in the Shillong, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Tezpur, Silchar, Dhubri and Nowgong jails. A Jail Reforms Committee has been set up to consider ways and means for improvement of the Jail Administration and the report of the Committee is awaited.

Land Reforms

Five of the big Zamindari Estates in the State, *viz.*, Bijni, Parbatjoar, Karaibari, Chapar and Srigrām could not be taken over during the year because of a stay order obtained by the proprietors from the Supreme Court. Other Estates covering a total area of 92,36,800 acres were taken over on 15th April, 1955. It has been decided to prepare Records-of-Rights in respect of the Estates in Karimganj Subdivision, without which it is not possible to acquire them. The preparation of Records-of-Rights of the Goalpara Estates is making satisfactory progress.

The Assam Adhiars Protection and Regulation Act, 1948, was amended during the year with a view to provide for a reduction of the share of crop payable to landlords by Adhiars. Adhi Conciliation Boards are being set up under the Act for speedy disposal of differences arising between Adhiars and Landlords. The Assam non-Agricultural Urban Areas Tenancy Act, 1955, has come into force. The Assam Urban Areas Rent Control Act, 1955, has been passed to provide for control of rents and for the protection of tenants against ejection.

The Assam Fixation of Ceiling on Land Holdings Bill, 1955, was introduced in the last Session of the Assembly. This Bill which was referred to the Select Committee provides for fixation of ceiling on land holdings at 150 bighas per family. The lands in excess of the ceiling will be acquired and settled with occupant tenants, landless persons, etc. A Land Reforms Board to advise Government on land reforms has been provided for in the Bill.

Land Revenue Administration

To ensure better efficiency in collection of land revenue new Mauzas have been created by the splitting up of large and unwieldy Mauzas.

To cope with the increased demand for surveyors, training facilities in the Assam Survey School have been expanded. Resettlement of the immature areas of Kamrup and Darrang

districts will shortly be over. Resettlement operations are in progress in the immature areas and town lands of Nowgong, Dibrugarh and Panitola towns and Buridehing and Tirap mauzas of Lakhimpur district, and the temporarily settled portions of Goalpara district. Preliminary arrangements are underway for the resettlement of Sibsagar, Kamrup and Nowgong districts and the temporarily settled areas of Karimganj Subdivision.

Government have withdrawn the temporary ban on the conversion of annual land into periodic. Orders have been issued to local officers to allow conversion of annual pattas into periodic, provided the land is found fit to be made periodic under the relevant rules, and after realising a premium of Rs.5 per bigha. The House will be interested to learn that during the period from 1949-54 Government have provided 1,03,000 land-less and flood and erosion affected families with 8,22,930 bighas at the average rate of roughly about 8 bighas per family.

Supply Position

The general food position in the State during 1955 was good, notwithstanding the unprecedented floods. Cement was in short supply, and difficulties of transport further aggravated the shortage. The position in respect of iron and steel materials was also unsatisfactory as producers could not cope with the indents. The Government of India have re-imposed control on the distribution of iron rods, etc., with effect from 15th November 1955. Except when communications by the Rail Link were disrupted, the supply position in respect of essential commodities like salt, sugar, wheat, wheat-products, etc., continued to be satisfactory. The removal of the restrictions by the Government of India on these commodities has not relieved the State Government of the responsibility to make these essential foodstuffs available to the consumers at reasonable prices, as Assam depends largely on imports for them. The Government of India have opened a sales depot at Gauhati for sugar. This arrangement has helped to keep the price steady specially when rail communications were disrupted due to breaches on the rail link. With regard to salt, the nominee system under which half the State's requirement used to be obtained by affording wagon facilities to three parties for sale at certain maximum price, has been done away with since 1st September, 1955. While the

import and distribution have been made free from restrictions, the sponsoring of wagons to all *bona fide* traders who are regular importers of salt into Assam continues to be done by the Trade Adviser to the Government of Assam, Calcutta keeping in view the needs of particular areas from time to time.

Law and Order

The law and order situation in the State, excepting for a brief spell in Goalpara district on the eve of the visit of the States Reorganisation Commission, and the terrorist activities of armed gangs in the Naga Hills, continued to be normal during the year. The unfortunate incidents in Goalpara had their origin in the demand made in some quarters for the incorporation of Goalpara district in West Bengal. The situation was, however, promptly brought under control by firm and timely action. There was no loss of life, and the offences were mostly against property. The police had on one occasion to fire on a riotous mob which attacked a police party and the thana in the Lumding Railway colony resulting in the death of two persons and injuries to some others. A judicial enquiry was held in regard to this incident and the firing was found justified.

Certain misguided elements in the Naga Hills have in recent months been indulging in subversive activities, including arson, violence and murder in an attempt to disrupt the administration and terrorize the law abiding people and coerce them to follow the leadership of the former. The situation thus created has necessitated large scale operations on the part of the Police to restore law and order. It is unnecessary for me to dwell on the situation in the Naga Hills at any great length, as this has been covered in great detail in the Governor's Address. I would only say, that as a result of the timely and firm measures taken by Government, miscreants are now on the run, and the morale of the people and their confidence in the Administration have been greatly restored. Units of the regular army have been called out for station duties, and to provide reserves in the event of emergency.

The general crime situation recorded an improvement during the year, and under most heads serious crime diminished appreciably. Three hundred more village defence parties are being sanctioned thus bringing the total number of parties to two thousand. They have been undertaking night patrols by themselves, and at times jointly with the police in their respective

areas. These parties have been doing useful work and have become popular with the people. The Criminal Law Amendment Act, which has provided for important changes in the procedure for, and greater expedition in the trial of criminal cases, has been brought into force with effect from 1st January, 1956.

For the better administration of the State some police stations and out-posts were made permanent and a few police, stations and out-posts were newly opened. The River Police Force has come into being, and it has been equipped with swift steam vessels for patrol purposes. The Police Department took charge of the Fire Brigades at Shillong and Silchar during the current year.

Indo-Pak Affairs

Excepting for some minor incidents, the situation on the Indo-Pak Border was quiet. Occasional attempts made by the Pak Authorities to claim a portion of the river Surma were firmly resisted. The Indo-Pak Trade Agreement of September, 1955 has enabled the limited revival of trade across the border in certain commodities, much to the relief of the people in both the countries living in the border region. The demarcation of the Indo-Pak Border is in progress. It has been decided to reopen 16 inter-dominion ferries on the Cachar-Sylhet Border which had remained closed since after the Partition.

Judiciary

Further steps towards the separation of the Judiciary from the Executive were taken during the year, and the Judicial Service (Junior), has come into being. A separate Judgeship for the district of Cachar was created in September, 1955, and an Additional District and Sessions Judge was posted to Dibrugarh. For the convenience of the public of North Lakhimpur a circuit court has been established at North Lakhimpur.

The Services

I am glad to be able to inform the House that as a result of the persistent efforts of the State Government, the Union Public Service Commission agreed to open a centre at Shillong for holding the I. A. S. and other Central Services Examinations for the benefit of the candidates from Assam with effect from the current year. As many as five Union Public Service Commission Examinations including the I.A.S. Examination, have since been held in Shillong. It is hoped

that the opening of the centre at Shillong will be taken advantage of by Assam's promising youth.

There is still acute shortage of technical staff, especially qualified engineering and medical staff, in the State, despite the best efforts being made to recruit suitable persons from outside. It is, however, hoped that the position will improve in the next Five Year period, when the Assam Medical College, the Assam Civil Engineering Institute, Gauhati and the Assam Engineering College begin to turn out appreciable numbers of qualified technical personnel. In the meantime short courses in survey training, refresher courses, etc., are being organised, to tide over the present situation.

The Pay Committee which was set up in July last in pursuance of a Resolution adopted by the House to enquire into the present scales of pay and allowances in all branches of Government service and to make recommendations for their revision, is continuing its deliberations. It is expected that the Committee may be able to submit its recommendations in the near future.

Resources for the Second Five Year Plan—Taxation Measures

It has been recognised that a plan for the development of the country must be based mainly on domestic resources, and that with each succeeding plan the measure of domestic effort must be increased. The State Government are, therefore, determined to put in the maximum effort to raise domestic resources for the successful implementation of the plan, and have been exploring all possible avenues of augmenting their revenues. An assessment of the resources of the State Government has accordingly been made. After making provision for expenditure on normal administration and for "committed expenditure" on development, which includes expenditure on maintenance of the level of development achieved at the end of the First Five Year Plan, it has been estimated that the State Government may be able to contribute Rs.6,80,00,000 on the basis of existing rates of taxation for the financing of the plan. Under Small Savings, the State Government expect to obtain, by way of loan from the Centre,

about Rs.1,20,00,000 on account of "above the target" collections in Assam. The State Government have in consultation with the Government of India and the Planning Commission set Rs.4,30,00,000 (excluding betterment levies) as the target to be raised by additional taxation during the Second Five Year Plan period. Thus the total contribution of the State Government towards the financing of the Second Five Year Plan is likely to be of the order of Rs.11,10,00,000. This compares very favourably with the contribution of the State for the First Five Year Plan which was assessed at Rs.2,50,00,000 for the original First Five Year Plan of Rs.17,50,00,000 and Rs.2,74,00,000 for the ultimate First Five Year Plan of Rs.20,80,00,000. While there is no doubt that the State Government will put in the maximum effort to raise the utmost possible resources for financing the Second Five Year Plan, the assessment of resources already made may have to be revised, as during the discussions with the Planning Commission certain schemes as a whole or certain items of expenditure in other schemes, were deleted on the ground that they form a part of the "committed expenditure". An overall review will, therefore, have to be undertaken to ensure that for schemes thus deleted, provision is made in the "committed expenditure" and only the resulting surplus and the receipts from additional taxation and Small Savings are made available as resources for the Plan. The State Government may also have to make provision for certain other schemes like expansion of the Land Revenue Agency, provision in respect of which was deleted by the Planning Commission on the ground that this forms an item of normal expenditure.

The recommendations of the Taxation Enquiry Commission have been carefully examined by Government. Bearing in mind the necessity to augment our revenues for financing the Second Five Year Plan and taking local conditions into account, the Government have reached certain decisions on the recommendations of the Commission. I shall now briefly refer to these decisions, to implement which, action has already been taken or is under way, and their bearing on revenue receipts.

The rate of Sales Tax on Bidi and finished tobacco used in the manufacture of Bidi has been increased from six pies to one anna in the rupee with effect from 1st January 1956. This is expected to bring in an additional revenue of Rs. 2,00,000 annually. Sugar and matches which had hitherto remained on the exempted list are being brought under taxation under the Assam Sales Tax Act with effect from 1st April 1956. This

is expected to bring an additional revenue of Rs.11,00,000 per annum. A Bill providing for the repeal of the Assam Sales of Motor Spirit and Lubricants Taxation Act, 1939 and for imposing tax on the sales of petroleum and petroleum products was passed in the last session of the Assembly and is now awaiting the assent of the President. Under this Bill the rates of Sales Tax on motor spirit, lubricants and diesel oil have been proposed to be enhanced, and these enhanced rates are expected to bring an additional revenue of Rs.19,00,000 annually. Due to high prices of tea in 1954 and better realisation of outstanding dues, the collection of Agricultural Income-tax during the current year may go upto Rs.1,30,53,000. Tea prices now having fallen, the estimated revenue under this head during the Budget year is not likely to be more than Rs.1,00,00,000. At present the agricultural income of companies is being taxed in three slabs. The Assam Finance Bill, 1956 which will provide for taxing the agricultural income of companies in two slabs, at the rate of five annas in the rupee for incomes upto Rs. 1,00,000 and at the rate of six annas in the rupee for incomes exceeding Rs. 1,00,000 will be brought before the House for approval. This measure is expected to bring an additional revenue of about Rs.2,00,000 annually. The State Government have agreed that the ceiling limit in respect of the Professions, Trades, Callings and Employment Tax may be raised from Rs.250 to Rs.500 per annum, the existing slabs being left undisturbed. The question of amending the relevant Article of the Constitution to provide for this revision of ceiling is being examined by the Government of India. The constitution of a common divisible pool to which the receipts from the Professions Tax and Motor Vehicles Tax will be credited, with a view to share the proceeds with the Local Bodies according to need and their performance, in an agreed ratio, is under consideration. The State Government have decided to exempt from Stamp Duties documents executed by the victims of fire, flood and other natural calamities, besides the refugees. A proposal for exempting from Stamp Duties documents executed by or in favour of the Assam Financial Corporation is under consideration. An increase in the present scale of Registration Fees has also been decided upon to augment our resources further. The recent increase in the schedule of taxation in respect of motor vehicles, is expected to bring in an additional revenue of about Rs.10,50,000 per annum.

Under the Assam Taxation (on Goods carried by Roads or Inland Water-ways) Act, 1954, the rate of tax was originally

one pice per pound in respect of tea and annas eight per maund in respect of jute. The rate of tax on tea was enhanced from one pice per pound to one anna per pound with effect from 1st July, 1955. The probable yield during 1955-56 and 1956-57 from this tax may be estimated at Rs.1,72,00,000 and Rs.1,75,00,000 respectively.

The recommendations of the Taxation Enquiry Commission are still being further examined, with a view to ascertaining what other steps are required to be taken in respect of them. Avenues of taxation are being further explored, so as to raise additional resources to the extent earlier indicated. The House will remember that an Act providing for betterment levies was passed sometime back. Action is being taken to bring the provisions of the Act into operation early.

Several cases of evasion of Sales Tax have been detected during the current year by collecting import and other figures from the carrier companies. The assessments and also realisation of arrears of taxes have been improved, and it is expected that the collection during the current year will record a substantial increase. But despite our best efforts to guard against evasion of taxes, and to augment our revenues to the utmost, the House will see that in view of the growing tempo of development expenditures we are still left with a revenue deficit of Rs.3,65,09,000 in the budget for the coming year.

Actuals for 1954-55

I shall now place before the House the financial figures relating to the actuals of 1954-55, the revised estimates for the current year and the budget estimates for 1955-56.

The following statement summarises the accounts for the year 1954-55—

| | Revised | Actuals |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Rs. | Rs. |
| Opening Balance | 3,02,43,000 | 3,02,43,000 |
| I. Consolidated Fund— | | |
| (a) Revenue heads— | | |
| (i) Receipts | 17,43,11,000 | 16,23,19,000 |
| (ii) Expenditure | 19,39,13,000 | 19,21,63,000 |
| | (—) 1,96,02,000 | (—) 2,98,44,000 |
| (b) Capital expenditure | 2,66,02,000 | 30,54,000 |
| (c) Net receipts from Public funds. (—) | 1,57,79,000 | (—) 1,74,89,000 |
| (d) Other debt and deposit heads (net). | 5,70,20,000 | 5,86,24,000 |
| II. Contingency Fund | | |
| | 20,00,000 | 95,00,000 |
| III. Public Account (net) | | |
| | 77,95,000 | 26,40,000 |
| Net result of the transactions in the year. | 48,32,000 | 2,03,77,000 |
| Closing Balance | 3,50,75,000 | 5,06,20,000 |

From the above statement it will be seen that our revised estimate of receipts under Revenue heads fell by Rs.1,19,92,000. This fall is mainly attributable to lesser receipts under the heads indicated hereinafter. Receipts under Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax fell by Rs.42,15,000 due to lesser collection and non-adjustment of the collections made outside the State within the year, under Land Revenue by Rs.39,75,000 due to less collection and remission of land revenue owing to floods, under Receipts from Road Transport by Rs.16,95,000 due to adjustment of Rs.24,43,000 by credit to the Depreciation Renewal Reserve Fund which was lying unadjusted till March, 1953, and under Extraordinary receipts due to non-adjustment of Government of India's contributions for the Dibrugarh protection works amounting to Rs.50,00,000 and for flood damage repairs amounting to Rs.53,09,000.

The fall under the above heads was to some extent counter-balanced by the slight increase in receipts under the following heads: The receipts under Forests increased by Rs.7,49,000, under Other taxes and duties by Rs.14,35,000, receipts under Civil Administration by Rs.6,57,000 and under Civil Works by Rs.26,10,000. There were also slight increases under some other heads.

The actuals of revenue expenditure for the year are quite close to our revised estimates and call for no comment. The net result of the variations was an increase in the deficit on the revenue account by nearly Rs.1,00,00,000 than what was anticipated in the revised estimates. Capital expenditure fell appreciably. The actual closing balance at the end of the year was Rs.5,06,20,000.

Revised Estimates for 1955-56

I shall now turn to the Revised Estimates for the current year. When presenting the Budget Estimates for the current year I had anticipated a Revenue deficit of Rs.2,72,06,000. These estimates have now been revised in the light of the actuals so far available, and the anticipated revenues and expenditure for the rest of the year. The following statement

summarises the Revised Estimates of the current year (1955-56)—

| | Original | Revised |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Rs. | Rs. |
| Opening Balance | 3,50,75,000 | 5,06,20,000 |
| I. Consolidated Fund— | | |
| (a) Revenue Heads— | | |
| (i) Receipts | 19,05,22,000 | 21,43,86,000 |
| (ii) Expenditure | 21,47,28,000 | 22,41,89,000 |
| (b) Capital Expenditure | (—) 2,42,06,000 6,86,72,000 | (—) 98,03,000 7,06,06,000 |
| (c) Net Receipts from Public Loans. | (—)11,59,92,000 | (—) 3,38,93,000 |
| (d) Other Debt and Deposit Heads (Net). | 16,60,81,000 | 10,27,59,000 |
| II. Contingency Fund | ... | 20,00,000 |
| III. Public Account (Net) | 35,76,000 | 57,29,000 |
| Net results of all the trans- actions. | (—) 3,92,13,000 | (—) 38,14,000 |
| Closing Balance | (—) 41,38,000 | 4,68,06,000 |

An increase of Rs.2,38,64,000 has been estimated under Revenue receipts over the earlier budget estimate. The increase may be attributed mainly to increased receipts anticipated under Share of Income-tax assigned to States by Rs.8,79,000, under State Excise Duties by Rs.9,98,000, under Forests by Rs.7,16,000, under Other Taxes and Duties by Rs.1,21,62,000, under Miscellaneous by Rs.74,54,000 and under Contribution and Miscellaneous by Rs.40,58,000. These estimated increases are likely to be counter-balanced to some extent by lesser receipts under Land Revenue by Rs. 4,79,000, under Civil Administration by Rs. 10,37,000 and under Civil Works by Rs.10,01,000. The anticipated expenditure under Revenue heads has gone up by Rs.94,61,000 only over the budget estimate. For these reasons the original estimated Revenue deficit of Rs.2,42,06,000 is expected to be

reduced to Rs. 98,03,000. The year is expected to close with a Closing Balance of Rs. 4,68,06,000.

Budget Estimates for 1956-57

I shall now proceed to the Budget Estimates for the coming year. The estimates are summarised in the following table :—

| | Rs. |
|--|-----------------|
| Opening Balance | 4,68,06,000 |
| <hr/> | |
| I. Consolidated Fund— | |
| (a) Revenue Heads— | |
| (i) Receipts | 21,89,85,000 |
| (ii) Expenditure | 25,54,94,000 |
| | <hr/> |
| | (—) 3,65,09,000 |
| (b) Capital Expenditure | 11,47,33,000 |
| (c) Net Receipts from Public Loans | (—) 6,39,76,000 |
| (d) Other Debt and Deposit heads (Net) | 18,10,51,000 |
| | <hr/> |
| II. Contingency Fund (Net) | (—) 95,00,000 |
| III. Public Account (Net) | 47,37,000 |
| | <hr/> |
| Net result of all the transactions in the year | (—) 3,89,30,000 |
| Closing Balance | 78,76,000 |
| | <hr/> |

In the next year the Revenue receipts are estimated at Rs.21,89,85,000. The slight increase in the Budget Estimates over the current year's Revised Estimates is mainly due to anticipated increased receipts under Land Revenue by Rs. 16,93,000 on account of fees for conversion of annual lands into periodic, under Motor Vehicles Taxation by Rs. 7,05,000, under Other taxes and duties by Rs. 25,06,000 mainly from the new Sales Taxes on Sugar

and Matches and from increased rates of Sales Taxes on Motor Spirit and Lubricants, which will come into force from the next financial year, under Civil Administration by Rs.48,21,000 due to inclusion of grants-in-aid for Central Schemes, Grow More Food Schemes, etc. under the respective Receipt heads and under Miscellaneous by Rs.23,50,000. These estimated increases will be counter-balanced to some extent by fall in receipts under Extraordinary Receipts due to inclusion of grants for Central schemes under the respective Receipt heads and lesser receipts under a few other items.

Our Revenue Receipts have been estimated at Rs.21,89,85,000 and Expenditure on Revenue Account at Rs.25,54,94,000 leaving a deficit of Rs.3,65,09,000, which I have decided to leave uncovered for the time being as I see no immediate prospects of any other fresh taxation. This deficit would have been still more, but for the steps recently taken and proposed to be taken by us to augment our revenues. The estimated increase in revenue and capital expenditure is due to committed expenditure on the First Five Year Plan Schemes, and the large scale development programme that will be taken up under the Second Five Year Plan. The deficit on the capital account has been estimated at Rs.24,21,000. There will thus be an overall deficit of Rs.3,89,30,000. Our accounts for 1954-55, as earlier stated, were closed with a balance of Rs 5,06,20,000. According to the Revised estimates for the current year, the balance at the end of the year will be Rs.4,68,06,000. If the anticipated deficit on Revenue and Capital Accounts for the coming year materialises, our balance will fall considerably, leaving only a small Closing Balance of Rs.78,76,000 at the end of the Budget year.

During the Budget year the expenditure under the Second Five Year Plan including Community Development Schemes, Central Sector Schemes and schemes under Article 275 is estimated at Rs.18,96,50,000. It is expected that out of this expenditure, the burden on the State may be about Rs.3,38,03,000. The balance, it is expected, will be available as loans and grants from the Government of India. Further, the State Government will have to bear the entire "committed expenditure" on account of the maintenance of the completed schemes under the First Five Year Plan, in the State and Central Sectors, and the Article 275 programme. This will involve approximately an expenditure of about Rs.3,00,00,000 from the State Exchequer. It will thus be seen that we are making substantial contributions out of

our own limited resources for the maintenance and implementation of our development programmes, on which the welfare of our people hinges.

From the moment our country achieved independence it has been our constant endeavour to accelerate orderly development in all the sectors of our State's economy by carefully planned and properly co-ordinated developmental and administrative measures. In the Budgets which have been presented to this august House year after year since the advent of freedom, Government have made consistent efforts to provide for utilisation of our available resources in a manner best calculated to raise the standard of living of our people. Our achievements during the last few years encourage us to face the future with hope and confidence, though greater efforts are required of the Government and the people, if we are to reach the goal of the Welfare State with a socialistic pattern of society, which we have set before ourselves. I am happy to say that the people of Assam have risen equal to the occasion and played their role in the implementation of the various development projects taken in hand from time to time, magnificently. A nation's fate is decided by the degree of co-operation which its Government can secure from the people. I, therefore, take this opportunity of once again thanking the hon. Members of this House, who are the elected representatives of the people, and through them the people of Assam for the willing and generous help and co-operation, which they have always extended to Government in the task of carrying our State forward on the path of progress and prosperity.

The officers and staff of the Finance Department have given me ungrudging assistance and help in the preparation of the budget estimates. The Accountant General, Assam and his staff have also given me valuable advice and assistance throughout the year, especially in regard to the preparation of the Budget. The Superintendent of the Government Press and his staff have worked hard in getting the budget estimates and connected papers printed in time. To one and all of them my thanks are due.

Sir, with these words, I have pleasure in introducing the budget estimates for the year 1956-57 for the approval of the House.

JAI HIND

244 ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER TO SUBMIT [12TH MAR.
WRITTEN SPEECH BY THOSE MEMBERS WHO CANNOT
TAKE PART IN THE GENERAL DISCUSSION
ON THE BUDGET

**Announcement by the Speaker to submit written speech
by those Members who cannot take part in the
general discussion on the Budget
due to paucity of time**

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Members have come to know that 13th, 15th, 16th and 17th March have been fixed for the general discussion of the Budget. I should like to ask your permission or rather your approval if it will be possible for the Members, who will not be able to deliver lectures, to submit two written copies of their speeches, limiting it to two printed pages of the Gazette. That system will be valid for this Session only. The reply to the written speeches will be given by the Finance Minister. It will give an opportunity to the Member to be careful in writing than to try to find thought while on his leg. If you approve, I shall make this valid for this Session.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: My suggestion is that those Members who will not be due to paucity of time, allowed to speak by their leaders, may be allowed to give their speeches in writing, but so far as other speakers are concerned, my suggestion is that not the whole speech but the main points of the speech may be given in writing.

Mr. SPEAKER: The points will not help. Two written pages will be allowed. So far as I know, this system prevails elsewhere. If you all approve, this will enable 105 Members to take part in the discussion, and for the next election, it will be very convenient to them (*laughter*).

Now those who are allowed by the Leaders of the Parties they will be allowed to speak, but those who are not allowed to do so, they will have the chance to take part in the discussion in the way I suggested before. Their speeches will be also replied to by the Finance Minister or the Ministers concerned. That means 105 Members will have the chance to say their say. It will be printed in the proceedings and it may be circulated in their respective constituencies (*laughter*). Do you all approve of it? If you all approve, this will be valid for this Session only and not for all time. Is that all right ?

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: Let us see, Sir, how we proceed tomorrow.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): That was, in fact, the procedure that was followed in connection with the State Re-organisation Commission's recommendations. Those who could not take part in the discussions were allowed to submit their written speeches.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, that was the procedure followed then. This is, in fact, also the practice followed in the House of Commons. But I do not have any reference here. In case, however, it is the desire of the House, this rule can also be incorporated in our Assembly Rules for conducting our proceedings in future. Now, is it the desire of the House that this rule be incorporated in the Assembly Rules ?

(After a pause.)

Then I think this has the approval of the House.

Then there is another matter. In the absence of a list of speakers going to take part in the Budget debate, it will be difficult for me to allot time, etc., to different speakers. I therefore, request the leader of the House as well as the Opposition leader to submit to me as early as possible lists of speakers taking part in the debate.

(Adjournment)

The Assembly was then adjourned till 10 A.M. on Tuesday the 13th March, 1956.

Shillong,

The 2nd November, 1956.

R. N. BARUA,

Secretary, Legislative Assembly,
Assam.

AGENTS IN INDIA

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 3. Messrs. S. K. Lahiri & Co., Calcutta.
 4. Messrs. R. Cambray & Co., 6 and 8/2, Hastings Street, Calcutta.
 5. Messrs. D. B. Taraporevala Sons and Co., 103, Meadow Street, Fort, Post Box No.187, Bombay.
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 8. The Director, The Book Company, Limited, Book Sellers and Stationers, 4/4A, College Square, Calcutta.
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 14. Messrs. Low Book Society, 65/3, Harrison Road, Calcutta.
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