

Proceedings of the Second Session of the first Assam Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 11 a.m., on Tuesday, the 10th August 1937

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

Grazing Reserves and method of counting buffaloes and cattle

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA asked :

*70. (a) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge be pleased to state the method of counting buffaloes and cattle by the Grazing Superintendents for assessment ?

(b) Is it a fact that the prevalent practice of counting buffaloes and cattle by the Grazing Superintendents, is to count the buffaloes and cattle at dead of night in the absence of the graziers and "goalas" ?

(c) Is it a fact that when buffaloes and cattle are not found in the "Khuti" or "Bathan" the number of such buffaloes and cattle is ascertained by counting the ropes and pegs found in the *Khuti* or *Bathan* ?

(d) Do Government consider the above method of counting to be a sound and right method of counting assessable cattle and buffaloes ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

70.—(a) The hon. member is referred to rules 5 and 6 of Appendix II at pages 218-221 of the Assam Land Revenue Manual, where the method of assessment is prescribed.

(b) & (c)—The Grazing Superintendent is the assessing officer, who is only required to check the numbers of cattle reported by the graziers on whom notices have been served by the Mauzadar or Mohsirdar concerned. Government have no information what methods are adopted by the different Superintendents. If, as is alleged, the cattle are checked at night when they may all be expected to be tied up, the presence of unoccupied pegs and ropes might be regarded as suspicious.

(d)—This is a matter of opinion.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA : Did the Hon'ble Minister in charge preside over a meeting of the graziers ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : Does that question arise, Sir ?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : With reference to which question is this supplementary question put ?

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA : With regard to (c) I am asking if the Hon'ble Minister presided over a meeting of the graziers and if he knows their demands ?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : Then the supplementary question arises on account of the fact that the Hon'ble Minister presided

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : I do not remember when I actually presided. Will the hon. member please give me some details as to which year, and where ?

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA: It was last year in the Curzon Hall.

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Last year at Bamundi the hon. the Leader of the Opposition presided.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA: At the Curzon Hall?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I am sorry I do not remember. I may have presided over many meetings, but I do not remember this particular meeting the hon. member refers to. As far as I remember I did not preside last year.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA: Did he press the demand of the graziers before the last Council?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: The reduction of the grazing tax or the amendment of the grazing rules?

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA: The amendment of the grazing rules and all matters in that connection?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I want notice of that, Sir.

KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI MUDDABIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: The Hon'ble Minister has said that Government are not aware of the method of counting of buffaloes and cattle. Is he prepared to make enquiries about that?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Though no definite rule is prescribed for checking—and different Superintendents adopt different methods of checking—that is all a matter of convenience according to the circumstances prevailing in each district. Therefore, I do not consider, unless there is any allegation of adoption of questionable methods, any enquiry necessary.

KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI MUDDABIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: In the question, Sir, there are allegations about this method of counting. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to enquire?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: If the hon. member would give me details as to the district in which this took place and at what time, I may make the enquiry.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA: In the district of Kamrup in Masalpur area in Tihu Circle?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I shall enquire about the fact whether checking was done at midnight. As regards other allegations I may say that it is certainly desirable to check at a time when the cattle are expected in the cow-shed or in the *khuti*. Therefore they generally go after night-fall, because during the day the cattle are away in the fields. Therefore, so far as checking done after night-fall is concerned, there is no ground for objection.

SRIJUT RAJENDRA NATH BARUA: What about Ahatguri mauza? Will the Hon'ble Minister enquire?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I shall take a note of that.

BABU KRISHNA NATH SARMAH: May I point out the case of Majuli also?

SRIJUT MAHADEV SARMA: Who disposes of petitions of complaints in this matter?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I think the hon. member knows that the procedure laid down is this: A notice is issued and the owners of cattle are required to submit a return showing the number of cattle they possess. A preliminary enumeration is also done by the Mohsir-dar or the Mauzadar, and after that a general checking is done by the Grazing Superintendent.

SRIJUT SARVESWAR BARUA : When there are objection petitions, who disposes of them ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : It is the Extra Assistant Commissioner who is in charge of the grazing. He takes evidence and passes orders. And an appeal against that order lies with the Deputy Commissioner.

SRIJUT SARVESWAR BARUA : Is it a fact that these enquiries are to be made as judicial enquiries ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : Enquiries are made according to the rules on the subject.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA asked :

*71. Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge be pleased to state.—

(a) How the age of a calf is ascertained by the Moh-Sardars or the Grazing Superintendents ?

(b) Whether the Grazing Superintendent determines the age of a calf by guess ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

71. (a) & (b)—Government have no information. Those who are familiar with this work can probably arrive at a fairly close estimate by the appearance and by the teeth of the animals. In some cases statements made by neighbours and disinterested persons may also help in coming to a conclusion about approximate age.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA : Does it require expert knowledge ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : I think the village folks have a fair idea of the approximate age of cattle and they cannot do so by counting the teeth.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA : Do village folks determine the age of cattle or the Grazing Superintendent or the officers ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : I am not sure, Sir, that every calf or heifer is examined in that way, *i.e.*, by opinion of villagers only.

SRIJUT MAHADEV SARMA : Is it a fact, Sir, that a calf is also liable to be assessed ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : I cannot answer that, Sir, unless I know the age of a calf.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA asked :

*72. Do Government propose to take steps to frame rules to ensure satisfactory method of counting buffaloes and cattle and find out means to determine the correct age of a calf ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

72.—The rules prescribe that the graziers report their cattle and take out permits and the Superintendent must check the numbers, exempting those under 2 years of age. It does not seem practicable to further particularise as conditions differ in different districts and there is no birth register of buffaloes.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA : If there is any dispute regarding the age of a calf, how the correct age of a calf is determined ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : The age which is arrived at is only fairly approximate. It cannot be absolutely correct.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA : Will the Hon'ble Minister issue instructions that in doubtful cases the benefit should go to the owner ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I am not prepared to lay down any such rule, Sir. But I think where there is a reasonable doubt the benefit may be given to the owner of the cattle.

SRIJUT MAHADEV SARMA: Are these objection petitions dealt with by Grazing Superintendents only?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: That is not the rule. If during the checking a Grazing Superintendent receives a petition, he duly considers it at the time. But the final order is to be passed by the Extra Assistant Commissioner in charge, subject to appeal.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA asked:

*73. Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge aware of the fact that many of the Grazing reserves in "char" areas are not sufficient nor suitable for the purpose and contain much less area than are reported?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied:

73.—Government have no information: If the hon. member will give specific instances enquiries may be made.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA asked:

*74. Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge propose to take necessary steps to increase the number of reserves or extend the existing grazing reserves in *chars* and riparian areas?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied:

74.—Government are always prepared to listen to complaints of inadequacy of grazing grounds if brought forward by graziers. In the first place, however, they should approach the district officers who have full powers to reserve additional areas for grazing if they are satisfied of the necessity and of the availability of land for the purpose.

Rate of commission to mauzadars and number of land sale cases

SRIJUT JOGESH CHANDRA GOHAIN asked:

*75.(a) Will Government be pleased to state, the year from which the current rate of commission of the mauzadars is prevalent?

(b) Is it a fact that most of the present mauzadars are deprived of the privilege of collection of land revenue from tea garden lands held by the tea garden owners?

(c) Do Government admit the fact that collection of land revenue from tea garden lands and also from lands held by the tea garden owners is much easier and less costly than collections from the ordinary rayats?

(d) Do Government admit the fact that collections of land revenue in recent years have become more expensive, laborious and troublesome?

(e) In consideration of the above, do Government propose to enhance the rate of commission to the Mauzadars? If so, when do they propose to enhance? If not, why not?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied:

75. (a)—Since 1920. Some modification has been made this year.

(b)—The hon. member is referred to the answers given to question No.318(c) asked by Mr. Naba Kumar Datta at this session of the Assembly.

(c)—Yes.

(d)—Government admit that of late years the difficulties of Mauzadars have increased but not to the extent indicated by their poor collections: this is proved by the success of Tahsildars in areas where the Mauzadari system has broken down as the former have invariably realised a great deal more than the Mauzadars.

(e)—In view of the reply given, Government see no justification for a general and permanent increase of commission rates. During the last year, however, as an incentive to better collections they have raised the limit on which commission at 10 per cent. is paid from Rs.10,000 to Rs.15,000. The question of the continuance of this concession is under consideration.

KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI MUDDABIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: May I know what is the rate of commission in terms of percentage?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Hitherto the rate was Rs.10 per hundred for the first 10,000 and Rs.5 for sums above. But this year we have made some modification and the Government allowed a commission of 10 per cent. up to Rs.15,000.

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Is it a fact that this enhanced rate of commission is granted to those Mauzadars only who have been able to pay up the revenue to the Government Treasury before the end of May?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Yes, that is so.

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: May I know what is the idea in making a rule like this?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: As hon. members are perhaps aware that the last day of payment of Government demand is 31st May, and Government has seen that some mauzadars are actually able to pay before 31st May. So in order to reward those mauzadars and for giving some incentive to other mauzadars Government has introduced a new system of allowing 15 per cent. commission on the first Rs. 10,000.

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Does it not encourage the mauzadars to take coercive measures to realise revenue at an early date?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Then the whole recommendation contained in the question of the hon. questioner falls to the ground if it is intended to convey that the increased rate of commission only means increased harassment to the raiyats; Government will have to reject any idea of increasing the rate of commission to mauzadars.

SRIJUT LAKHESVAR BOROOAH: Can it not be done without fixing the time?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: That would bring the work of collection to a stand-still and the Government demand will not be paid in time.

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Are not some mauzadars unable to pay the revenue in time because of the economic condition of the people?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Government does not take any coercive measures against those mauzadars who are unable to pay on account of the economic condition of the people and their time is generally extended.

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Do not those mauzadars who cannot realise revenue in time for the inability of the raiyats to pay deserve consideration as regards commission?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: They are shown all possible considerations.

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: As regards enhanced commission?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: This is an additional concession which is given to those mauzadars who pay up their dues before the 31st of May.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Are we to understand that this additional commission is given to mauzadars on account of good work?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Yes.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: What is the basis on which good work is calculated?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Those mauzadars are considered to be doing good work who realise revenue in time without unnecessary pressure on the people.

SRIJUT SARVESWAR BARUA: If they do bring unduly hard pressure on the people, what action Government takes against such mauzadars?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: So long the mauzadars act within the rule no action is taken.

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Is it not a fact that several capitalist mauzadars pay up their revenue before the time from their own coffers?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Government has no such information.

SRIJUT MAHADEV SARMA: Is it not a fact that Police help has been taken in certain mauzas of the district of Darrang so as to realise revenue before time?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I have no such information. I do not think any such step has been taken in recent times. Does the hon. member say this from his experience?

SRIJUT MAHADEV SARMA: Yes.

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: In what mauzas?

SRIJUT MAHADEV SARMA: In Darrang, particularly in the Kalangpur mauza.

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: If the hon. member can give the facts of particular cases I shall have an enquiry made.

SRIJUT GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Is it a fact that most of the mauzadars pay revenue by borrowing?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Government has no information.

SRIJUT GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Will Government make an enquiry into that?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Government have no reason to enquire into the private financial affairs of a mauzadar.

SRIJUT GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Most of the mauzadars pay their demands by borrowing. If that be the case, will Government be pleased to enquire into that matter?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I do not think there is any reason to make an inquiry into that because according to the terms of contract between the mauzadars and the Government, mauzadars are to pay the money whether it is by means of borrowing or by realisation from the raiyats or from their own pockets.

SRIJUT KRISHNA NATH SARMAH : Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that there are petitions from all over the province from the raiyats for the extension of time for payment of revenue?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : Does that question arise?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : It does not arise. The hon. member is going beyond the question.

SRIJUT SARVESWAR BARUA : The Revenue Minister said that in cases where mauzadars have realised revenue without applying unduly hard coercive measures against the raiyats, the mauzadars are entitled to the enhanced rate of commission. My question is what steps do Government take against those mauzadars who have been found to take unduly hard coercive measures against the raiyats in order to pay up their demands before 31st May?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : By unduly hard measures I mean measures which are not prescribed by law and which the mauzadars are not authorised to use.

SRIJUT SARVESWAR BARUA : Are those mauzadars entitled to higher rate of commission who realise revenue by remaining within the rule but by issuing large number of distress warrants—larger than what they used to issue before?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : This is a purely hypothetical question. So far as our information goes we know that mauzadars have not issued large number of attachments. As a matter of fact I asked that question to one of the hon. members on the floor of this House but he could not give any definite information.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : Does the Hon'ble Minister realise that allotment of the preferential commission to certain mauzadars is a temptation to those mauzadars to bring about undue pressure on the raiyats?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : That depends on the mentality of the particular mauzadar.

SRIJUT JOGESH CHANDRA GOHAIN asked :

*76. Will Government please state—

(a) The total number of Land Sale cases, Subdivision by Sub-division, in Assam Valley Division for the last 5 years ?

(b) The total number of Annulment cases, Subdivision by Sub-division in Assam Valley Division, during the same period ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

76. (a)—The hon. member is referred to column 10 of Appendix VI of the Land Revenue Administration Annual Reports where the figures for districts are given.

(b)—The figures are not available and the information would take too much time and trouble to collect. The same reason operates against giving the figures for subdivisions in reply to question 76(a).

SRIJUT JOGESH CHANDRA GOHAIN asked :

*77. Will Government be pleased to state the time taken to get refund of the sale proceeds in Land Sale Cases and also refund payment in Annulment Cases by the Mauzadars ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

77.—The time necessarily varies in every case and Government cannot state what is the average length of the time taken.

SRIJUT LAKHESVAR BOROOAH: Are the mauzadars required to pay the revenue involved in land sale and annulment cases from their coffers?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I think the hon. member is correct.

SRIJUT LAKHESVAR BOROOAH: Does the Hon'ble Minister propose to give a direction that revenue involved in land sale and annulment cases should be paid after deduction from their total demand payable to Government?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: If the hon. member so desires, I shall ask the Commissioner to see that these refunds are made as quickly as possible.

SRIJUT JOGESH CHANDRA GOHAIN asked :

*78. Is it a fact that there are cases of unusual delay in refunding sale proceeds in land sale cases and also making refund payments in annulment cases? If so, do Government propose to make a sifting enquiry into the matter?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

78.—Government are not prepared to deny that cases of delay may occur; but as no representations have been received either from individual Mauzadars or their Association, they are not prepared to make any enquiry on the lines suggested. Mauzadars who are aggrieved can put their own cases before District Officers.

Area of unsettled waste lands fit for cultivation

SRIJUT JOGENDRA NATH BARUA† asked :

*79. (a) Will Government be pleased to state the area of unsettled Government waste lands fit for cultivation in each subdivision of the Assam Valley?

(b) Will Government state what area of waste lands constitutes grazing, fuel and village reserves in each subdivision?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state how many applications for grazing, fuel and village reserves are still pending in each of the subdivisions of the Assam Valley and for what area in each subdivision?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

79. (a)—The hon. member is referred to the reply given to Srijut Siddhi Nath Sarma at this session of the Assembly. Figures for each subdivision are not available and the figures there given are only of the uncultivated lands. It cannot be said whether they are fit for cultivation or not.

(b)—The hon. member is referred to paragraph 39 of the Land Revenue Administration Report for 1935-36, Assam Valley Division. Figures for subdivisions are not available.

(c)—The information is not available and would take too much time and trouble to collect.

SRIJUT JOGENDRA NATH BARUA† asked :

*80. Will Government be pleased to state if there has been a gradual increase of population in each subdivision of Assam Valley during the last ten years?

*81. Will Government be pleased to state if there has been further and gradual reclamation of waste lands in each subdivision of the Assam Valley during the last ten years?

† Put through Srijut Omeo Kumar Das.

*82. (a) Will Government be pleased to state if Government has any definite proposal for reserving sufficient quantity of waste lands for the development of the Province as a whole and for the use of the children of the soil of the present and future generations ?

[If the answer to 82(a) be in the negative or to the effect that there is no definite proposal on the subject.]

(b) Does Government see the desirability of reserving the rest of the lands in each subdivision for the development of the Province and legitimate expansion of the children of the soil ?

*83. Does Government consider this subject of settlement of waste lands to be a very important one ? If so, will Government adopt a well considered policy on the subject ? Does Government see the necessity of appointing a committee consisting some of the members of this House ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

80.—Government are prepared to assume that this is correct: no figures are available since the last Census.

81.—Yes.

82. (a)—No.

(b) The matter is under consideration.

83.—Yes. Government are considering the question of appointment of such a Committee

Annual expenditure of Secretariat Establishment in Shillong

SRIJUT KRISHNA NATH SARMAH asked :

*84. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Annual cost of Secretariat Establishment in Shillong during the regime of the Chief Commissioners ?

(b) During the period of Mont-ford Reforms ?

(c) Present costs ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

84. (a)—4 lakhs 51 thousand.

(b)—5 lakhs 76 thousand.

(c)—5 lakhs 98 thousand.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

UNSTARRED SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS

Hunger Strike in Andamans Cellular Jail

MR. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA asked :

1. Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Jails please state if he is aware of a hunger strike resorted to by political prisoners in a body in the Andamans Cellular Jail ?

2. Is it a fact that two political prisoners from this province have also joined the strike ?

3. Does he propose to make enquiries by wire and place the information before the House ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

1.—Yes.

MR. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: Is the Government prepared to repatriate them?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: The matter is engaging consideration.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied:

2.—Yes.

MR. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: May we get an idea how long this consideration will take, Sir?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: We are in correspondence with the Central Government. It is too early to say definitely what line of action the Ministry will take.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: What is the view of the provincial Government? Has the provincial Government expressed any view on the matter?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Not yet. We are asking for details. There is not merely one, but two strikes. I think it will be better if I lay all the facts before the House.

Four convicts from this province have joined the hunger strike and two, the work strike. We have not yet received the information as to who joined the hunger strike—the ordinary convicts or the political prisoners. Beyond the fact that these people have joined the strike—four in the hunger strike and two in the work strike, we have not been able to get any further information from the Central Government. We are enquiring as to what is the condition of these people. In reply to a question put by Mr. Satyamurti, in the Central Legislature, the Home Member replied that relatives of the strikers will be informed of their condition if any danger is apprehended.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Who takes the responsibility for these prisoners in the Andamans?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: It is the Central Government.

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: May we know the names of the prisoners?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I have not got that information handy.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: May we know whether the prisoners were requested by this Government to give up hunger strike?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: No, Sir.

SRIJUT SARVESWAR BARUA: Were not two political prisoners sent to Andamans by this Government in 1935?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Yes, Sir.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: Is Government prepared to request the prisoners by wire to give up hunger strike?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: If the House so desire, I am prepared to wire.

MR. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: Has the Hon'ble Minister satisfied himself about the nature of the facilities that is being afforded to these prisoners and which led them to go on hunger strike?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: We have not received any direct information on the point. Our information is only the Press extracts of demands by the strikers.

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA : Was any enquiry made from the Superintendent of the Andamans Jail ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : No, Sir.

BABU HARENDRA NARAYAN CHAUDHURI : May I know, Sir, whether the correspondence is by wire or by post ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : We have sent a wire, and we are awaiting a reply.

BABU HARENDRA NARAYAN CHAUDHURI : Has the Hon'ble Minister enquired about the condition of the political prisoners ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Sir, the difficulty is that we have got but meagre details from the Central Government.

MR. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA : Will Government be pleased to let the House have details from day to day about the condition of these people ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : I will try, Sir.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI : Is there anything to prevent the Provincial Government from having any direct correspondence with the Superintendent of Jail there ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : No, Sir.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI : Will Government consider this question ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : I have already ordered for asking details from the Chief Commissioner of the Andamans by wire. I am not sure if there is any Superintendent of Jails.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI : Will Government be pleased to lay the reports before the House ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : The information from the Andamans will be submitted to the House. The reports from Government of India are confidential and I am not prepared to lay them before the House.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI : Is the right to withdraw them from the Andamans a confidential subject ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : The correspondence is confidential now.

MR. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA : Is the Hon'ble Minister prepared to sever connection of this Government with the Andamans as a penal settlement ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : This is a big question, Sir. I will take that suggestion into consideration.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

3.—Does not arise.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Local Self-Government Policy of Government

MAULAVI NAZIRUDDIN AHMED asked :

149. Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether Government propose to revise the Local Self-Government Act before the next General Election of Local Boards ?

- (b) If so, do Government propose to issue any communiqué declaring the Local Self-Government Policy of the Government?

THE HON'BLE REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

149. (a)—The whole question is at present under the consideration of Government.

(b)—Full publicity will be given in due course to the policy of Government in this matter.

Maulvibazar Town Girls' School

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI asked :

150. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The present status of the Maulvibazar Town Girls' School?

(b) Whether the Ministry of Education proposes to raise the status of the said school to a properly-recognised Girls' High School and whether Government propose to increase the Government grant to the said institution for the aforesaid purpose?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED replied :

150. (a)—It is a Middle English School for girls. High School classes up to Class IX have been opened.

(b)—It is already in the process of development into a High School.

An increase in the grant-in-aid is proposed.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: Is the Hon'ble Minister of Education aware that two private girl students passed the Matriculation Examination this year from this school?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: I have no information, Sir.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: Do Government consider the desirability of recommending to the University the affiliation of the school up to matriculation standard?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: If the question for the affiliation of the school up to matriculation standard comes up before Government we shall consider it.

MAULAVI ABDUR RAHMAN: Is it a fact that the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Agriculture and Industry has contributed Rs.4,000 for the improvement of the Maulvibazar Girls' Middle English School?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: I have no information, Sir.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: With regard to (b), is it a fact that the Director of Public Instruction promised an increased grant of Rs.200 to the Maulvibazar Middle English School for girls during his last visit?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: It might be. I have no information.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: Am I to understand that the Director of Public Instruction had no authority to do so?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: The Director of Public Instruction had no authority from me.

Damage done by floods to crops for the last ten years and its effect on land revenue

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI asked :

151. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The value of the annual loss of different classes of crops in cultivation owing to floods, subdivision by subdivision, for the last ten years ?
- (b) The indirect loss of Government revenue due to deterioration of cultivable land, extent of the difficulty in realising the agricultural loans and the area of abandoned cultivable lands on account of floods ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

151. (a) and (b)—It is quite impossible to supply even an estimate of the information asked for. No statistics are kept of the extent of damage caused by floods either directly or indirectly and it is no more possible to estimate this than to guess at the indirect benefits of floods in silting up low-lying areas and gradually making them cultivable.

Inquiries are being made as to the practicability of keeping such statistics in future.

BABU KARUNA SINDHU ROY : Will the Hon'ble Minister please state why no statistics are kept about the damages caused to the crops by the floods ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : Statistics about the extent of damages caused by the floods to the crops have not been kept so far but I am making enquiries whether it is practicable to keep such statistics in future.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI : Has the Hon'ble Minister come to any conclusion as regards the practicability of keeping statistics in future ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : We have not yet arrived at any conclusion.

Rate of annual income per bigha in the colonization area

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI asked :

152. Will Government be pleased to state the average annual income per 'bigha' (বিঘা) of land in the Assam Valley Districts opened out for colonization ?

153. Will Government be pleased to state in acres and 'bighas' the area of land reserved for colonization ?

154. Will Government be pleased to state whether there is any land reserved for colonization ?

155. If the answer to question No. 154 be in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state the area in different districts ?

156. Will Government be pleased to state whether emigrants from Surma Valley are treated as "Immigrants" in the Assam Valley ?

157. Are they liable to the same restrictions in regard to the grant of land and payment of rent as the immigrants from outside Assam ?

158. What is the rate of "Nazarana" (নজরান) and rent per bigha for the Assam Valley people and that for the emigrants from the Surma Valley ?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

152.—The information is not available and no statistics have been collected for these areas in particular. During the Nowgong settlement the Settlement Officer worked out figures of income per *bigha* which varied between Rs.4 and Rs.40 according to the nature of the crop and the class of the land.

153.—It is not clear exactly what information is required. Colonization in the technical sense covered by special rules is confined to the areas referred to in the answer to question 155 and the rest of the Province may be said to be reserved for colonization.

154.—Yes.

155.—Darrang—approximately 80,948 *bighas*.

Nowgong—approximately 1,59,839 *bighas*.

MR. NABA KUMAR DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether all the land reserved for colonisation has been actually settled with the immigrants? and if so, what is the area?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I do not know whether all lands reserved for colonisation has been actually settled. I may supply this information later.

MR. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: May I know how many *bighas* out of those land reserved for colonisation have been actually settled?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I have no information, Sir. I require notice of that question.

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied :

156 and 157.—Yes. This policy was adopted in 1931 as a result of the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee; it should be remembered, however, that the restrictions apply only to the grant of *pattas* for land newly opened; there is no bar to the transfer anywhere in the plains districts of periodically settled land to either immigrants from outside the province or new-comers from the Surma Valley. The policy as a whole is now under reconsideration by the present Government who are anxious to obtain the views of all parties.

158.—It is presumed that by "Nazarana" premium is meant. The rates of premium and rent vary in the two colonization areas, but in both the same rule applies that both Assam Valley inhabitants and immigrants should pay at the same rates for land in the colonization area.

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUD URI: May I know, Sir, what is the rate of "Nazarana" and rent per *bigha* for the Assam Valley people and that for the immigrants from the Surma Valley?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Sir, the answer is already there. So far as the rates of premium and rent in the colonization areas are concerned, the same rule applies to both the Assamese as well as to the Surma Valley people.

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the rate of rent charged per *bigha*?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: The original rate of rent per *bigha* was Rs.25, but it has been reduced.

KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Is it a fact that "Nazarana" is only levied on the immigrants of the Surma Valley?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: No Sir. So far as the colonisation area is concerned "nazarana" is charged both from the Assamese inhabitants as well as the Surma Valley immigrants.

MAULAVI MUNAWWARALI: May I know what is the state of things beyond the colonization area—whether "nazarana" is levied only on the immigrants?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: This question does not arise, Sir. I am dealing only with the colonisation area.

Damages done to crops in Sunamganj

BABU KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked:

159. (a) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Agriculture lay on the table a statement as to the extent of damages done to *Aman* and *Boro* crop areas in different parts of Sunamganj, for the last ten years?

(b) Is it a fact that the damages are of almost annual occurrence in one or other part of the subdivision due to floods?

(c) Do Government propose to take action to check the re-occurrence of floods in future?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied:

159. (a)—The member is referred to the reply given to question No. 151 asked by Babu Dakshina Ranjan Gupta Chaudhuri at this session of the Assembly.

(b)—Government are not prepared to deny that in this, as in all other subdivisions of Sylhet district, the crops are damaged by floods in some localities.

(c)—It is not, unfortunately, within the power of this Government or any other to regulate the rainfall which is the primary cause of all floods.

Government is ready to take any steps which the engineering experts may advise provided requisite funds are available for the purpose.

Agricultural Demonstrators

MAULAVI ABDUR RAHMAN asked:

160. (a) Is it a fact that Maulavi Mizanar Rahman raised some questions in 1929, regarding the increase of the pay and the grant of cycle allowance to Agricultural Demonstrators?

(b) If the answer is in the affirmative, do Government propose to take any action in this direction?

161. Will Government be pleased to state whether Agricultural Demonstrators are entitled to have their pay increased and to get the cycle allowance?

162. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The future prospects of Agricultural Demonstrators?

(b) Whether any one has been promoted?

163. (a) Is it a fact that Agricultural Demonstrators receive fixed travelling allowance which does not cover their actual travelling expenses?

(b) If so, do Government propose to increase their travelling allowance or to grant them regular travelling allowance as was the procedure?

164. Do Government propose to provide the Agricultural Demonstrators with residential houses and fix the rent to 20 per cent. of their pay as is the case with the officers of the Postal Department?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied :

160. (a)—Yes—in respect of the grant of a cycle allowance.

(b)—No.

SRIJUT PURANDAR SARMA : May I know what is the present scale of pay of the Agricultural Demonstrators ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN : I do not remember exactly what is their present scale of pay.

SRIJUT MAHI CHANDRA BORA : Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the people have lost their complete confidence in the Agricultural Department ? (*laughter*).

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN : That might be from the view point of the hon. member.

SRIJUT MAHI CHANDRA BORA : Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that resolutions passed in several meetings were forwarded to Government for placing breeding bulls in the places of Agricultural Demonstrators ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN : This question does not arise, Sir.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied :

161.—The present scale of pay of Agricultural Demonstrators is considered suitable and no change is proposed.

162. (a)—Men of exceptional merit may expect promotion to the grade of Assistant Farm Managers and Botanical Field Assistants.

(b)—Yes. Five of them are officiating in such posts at present.

163. (a)—They get a fixed travelling allowance of Rs.10 per mensem which is considered adequate.

(b)—No.

164.—The reply is in the negative.

Representation of the backward tribal people of the plains in the Assam Secretariat Office

SRIJUT RUPNATH BRAHMA asked :

165. (a) Will Government be pleased to state if there is any one from the backward tribal people of the plains of the Assam Valley now serving in the Assam Secretariat Office, Shillong ?

(b) If so, what is his name and home district ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

165. (a)—Yes, in the Public Works Department Secretariat.

(b)—Srijut Dharma Ram Bardolai, a Lalung from Nowgong district.

MAULAVI GHYASUDDIN AHMED : Will Government be pleased to state whether they will consider the claims of the candidates from the backward tribes of the Dhubri subdivision whenever there will be any vacancy in future ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : I have already answered that question twice on the floor of this House. The proportionate share of appointments for the candidates from the backward tribes are kept reserved and when any suitable candidate is available, his claims receive the first consideration.

SRIJUT RABI CHANDRA KACHARI : May I know, Sir, whether there was any other candidate last year from any other backward tribes for appointment in the Assam Secretariat ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Sir, I am not aware whether there was any other candidate from the backward tribes for appointment in the Secretariat last year. If my hon. friend wants that information I can give that later.

Revenues derived from excluded and partially excluded areas for the last three years

BABU HARENDRA NARAYAN CHAUDHURI asked :

166. Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Finance please state the revenues derived from the "excluded areas and partially excluded areas" during the last three years and the expenditure for those areas for the same period with and without overhead charges as approximately as can be ascertained ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

166.—The hon. member is referred to the reply given to questions Nos. 37 and 38 asked by Srijut Rajendra Nath Barua at the current session of the Legislative Assembly. Government cannot contemplate undertaking the enormous amount of work which would be necessary to extract figures for the excluded and partially excluded areas as desired by the hon. member and consider that the results would be incommensurate with the labour and expense of their extraction. On the basis however of figures obtained some years ago and which were placed before Sir Otto Niemeyer it was estimated that the excluded areas cost Government 8 lakhs a year while the partially excluded areas just paid for themselves. These figures were exclusive of the "overhead charges" of administration in Shillong.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: On a point of information, Sir. The reply to question No. 166 does not cover the question. In the reply it is stated that reply is given with regard to questions Nos. 37 and 38 and if we look at questions Nos. 37 and 38, we find that these questions were asked with regard to receipts from the Surma Valley and not from the excluded areas and partially excluded areas.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am referring the hon. member to questions Nos. 37 and 38 only for the reasons advanced therein. I said there "It took nearly four months to compile those figures and special staff had to be engaged. Government therefore cannot contemplate undertaking the enormous amount of work which would be necessary to extract figures for all the plains districts of the Province as desired by the hon. member, and consider that the results would be incommensurate with the labour and expense of their extraction."

In this reply I am only referring to that reasoning and evidently the figure which is wanted is practically there. I said it was estimated at the time of Sir Otto Neimeyer Committee that the partially excluded areas just paid for themselves, while the totally excluded areas cost Government 8 lakhs a year.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: According to his own admission, Sir, Government has got the figures from which they said before Sir Otto Niemeyer that the Government of Assam had to incur a cost of 8 lakhs of rupees for the excluded areas. On what basis were those figures arrived at ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Those figures were compiled by a special staff under a Special Officer. In order to bring those figures up-to-date we shall have to engage another special staff. It was only in 1935 that those figures were collected.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: What objection the Hon'ble Minister has got to place those figures before the House. After all they are not so old.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: If my friend wants those figures, I am ready to supply them.

Principal of Jorhat Technical School

BABU SHIBENDRA CHANDRA BISWAS asked :

167. Will Government be pleased to state when the post of the Principal, Jorhat Technical School, was advertised and whether the post has since been filled up ?

168. If the answer to the latter part of the above question be in the negative, will Government please state the reason for such undue delay ?

169. Will Government please state—

(a) the reason of selecting a lien Principal ?

(b) whether this is the usual procedure of filling up vacancies ?

170. Has the attention of Government been drawn to the various comments on the subject, published in "Sylhet Chronicle", "Amrita Bazar Patrika" and "Shillong Mail", and specially the editorial comments made in the "Sylhet Chronicle" of the 12th October 1936 ?

171. (i) Did the Director of Industries inform the applicants that the Selection Board would assemble in September 1936 ?

(ii) If the answer is in the affirmative, will Government state why the Board did not assemble ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied :

167.—The post was advertised as a temporary post by the Director of Industries in the *Assam Gazette* of the 11th December 1935. It has again been advertised by the Public Service Commission in the *Assam Gazette* of the 7th July 1937 and it is possible that the post may be filled before this answer is given in the Assembly.

BABU SHIBENDRA CHANDRA BISWAS : Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge say if the post has been filled up by this time ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN : Sir, the matter is with the Public Service Commission and it has been referred to them. We do not know whether it has been filled up by this time.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA : Why was the post advertised in 1935 ? Was it just to take a census of unemployment ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN : The post probably fell vacant then.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA : Then it was not thought necessary to fill up even now ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN : The hon. member will find the answer in the reply to question No. 168.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied :

168.—Mr. Phatakwalla, the permanent Principal obtained a post in another Province but as that post was on probation he was given a lien on his permanent post for a year, which was extended by four months up to the 17th March 1937. The post, therefore, could not be permanently filled up before that date and it was decided—in view of the changes introduced by the Government of India Act—not to fill up the post before the 1st April 1937 on the advice of a Selection Board but to await the appointment of the Public Service Commission and to utilize that body for recruiting the new Principal.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : When did Mr. Phatakwalla obtain a post in another Province and from which date was he given a lien on his permanent post ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN : The answer to question 168 will cover, I think.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: No, Sir. It does not cover, in this connection I want to know when did Mr. Phatakwalla obtain his service in another province and when the period of lien commence and when did it terminate?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: I want notice, Sir; he had his lien here till 17th March 1937.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Are we to understand that Government had decided not to fill up this post till the lien given to Mr. Phatakwalla had terminated?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: Yes, Sir.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: When did Government come to such a decision?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: It was a decision of the previous Government.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: May we know when did the previous Government come to such a decision?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: I want notice.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Is there no principal now?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: There is an officiating Principal.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Who is he, Sir?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: I do not remember his full name.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Are we to understand that even though Mr. Phatakwalla was given lien this post was advertised?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: Yes, it was advertised.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Did not Government incur extra expenditure by advertising the post even though they decided to give the lien to Mr. Phatakwalla?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, are we to be held responsible for all that was done by the previous Government?

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Are we to understand that the mischief done by the previous Government will be allowed to continue under the present Government?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Well, Sir, the mischief has not been continued by this Government. This Government has requested the Public Service Commission to select a Principal. They have already advertised the post and I do not know when they will meet and interview the candidates.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: On a point of order, Sir. We find in some portions of some questions which do not concern him, the Hon'ble Chief Minister chooses to answer them. May I know the reason? Is it not better that he alone answers all the questions and save us and his Colleagues all the troubles?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Now, Sir, when I find that the time of the House is taken up by interpellations, the replies to which are already given, it is my duty as the Leader of the House to intervene and save the time and trouble of the House.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Are not the other Ministers competent?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAYYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Everybody is competent. But both as the head of the Government and as the Leader of the House I have some duty to perform and I am performing that duty.

KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI MAHMUD ALI: Is not the Chief Minister responsible for the works of other Ministers?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAYYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Well, Sir, we have joint responsibility.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: What is the name of the Acting Principal?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAYYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I will supply the information, Sir. His name is Mr. Purna Chandra Chaudhury; he was a lecturer of that school.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied:

169.—This question is not understood.

170.—Government have seen the comments in some of these papers.

171. (i)—Yes.

(ii)—Please see the reply to question 168 above.

Introduction of Urdu as Second Language in all High English Schools

MAULAVI DEWAN MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY asked:

172. Is it a fact that Urdu is recognised by the Calcutta University as a second language in the High English Schools?

173. If so, do Government propose to encourage Urdu being adopted as a second language in the High English Schools of this province by providing effective means of teaching the subjects and allowing free scope for its continuance in our Colleges?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED replied:

172.—Yes.

173.—In the absence of any great demand for Urdu as a second language throughout the province Government do not propose at present to introduce its teaching as such.

MAULAVI DEWAN MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Education aware of the fact that Urdu has already been introduced in some of the high schools in Sylhet?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: I am not aware of that.

KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Will the Hon'ble Minister make any enquiry as to the facts stated in this question?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: I am ready to make an enquiry and to consider the question if real demand exists.

MAULAVI ABDUR RAHMAN: Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge ready to introduce Urdu language in some of the schools?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: I have already answered, Sir.

KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI MUFIZUR RAHMAN: It was introduced in Mangalchandi High English School and it was stopped by the authority. I can say on my authority as the President of the Managing Committee.

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: I am not aware of that.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : Sir, on what facts the Hon'ble Minister is inclined to think that there is no demand for Urdu as second language in the schools ?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED : As far as my knowledge goes, there is no great demand for Urdu and I think in the Sylhet Government High School there is no provision for Urdu as a second language.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that Urdu is a common language for Muhammadans and Muhammadans form a powerful community in this Province ?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED : But Urdu is not the vernacular of the Province.

KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI KERAMAT ALI : Has any representation been received from any quarter to introduce Urdu in any high school in Assam ?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED : I am not aware of any such representation.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE BUDGET

MR. F. W. HOCKENHULL : Sir, after years of recurring gloom in which we discussed deficit budgets it is pleasant to be translated to a brighter atmosphere with the prospect of a balanced budget. Whatever may be the views regarding the present Government and the budget which they are presenting, it is at least only fair to recognise that they took office at an important and critical time in the history of this province and that they have presented to us a balanced budget—indeed a surplus budget. If it is argued that they have been over-cautious, we can at least reply that sound finance is the corner-stone of the foundation on which Provincial autonomy is to stand, and I would like to take this opportunity of assuring Government of our appreciation of their effort.

We look upon the discussion of the budget as an opportunity of being able to express some of our views regarding the needs of the province, and from a responsible and, I hope, a responsive Government. I can hope that they will be able to take some action if these ideas are found practicable.

As a business man the Hon'ble Finance Minister at the time of compiling his budget has had to take into consideration his various assets. There are certain assets what I shall call "moral" assets, viz., assistance from the Government of India which we still think is due to us, and if the Finance Minister is making further representations he will have the support of the whole House. His second asset is what I would term "indirect asset", which he hopes to ascertain by means of a Resources and Retrenchment Committee. In parenthesis I would say that we ourselves would have suggested this had he not done so. May I suggest to him that he will not confine the personnel of such a committee solely to the members of this House. There are business men in the province who might bring fruitful ideas forward for his consideration.

Then we come to his positive assets, and it is here that I disagree with the conclusions arrived at. The one outstanding asset which this province has always had, and, so far as we can see, always will have, is Agriculture. What is the matter with our Agriculture ? We have a wonderful soil and a most suitable climate. Why can we not develop our agriculture to a point where it will be not only profitable to the province but also an increased source of wealth to the agriculturist. Let me here digress for a moment

to enter a caveat to those opinions so frequently expressed that "industry," and by that I mean non-agricultural industry, is ever going to be of great value to this province. A responsible member of the Government of India recently expressed the view that if we continue for a hundred years at the present rate of absorption of unemployed into non-agricultural industry, it will not scratch the surface of this problem. If that be true of India with its large industries such as Cotton, Jute and Coal, already firmly established, how much more true is it of this province. If then agriculture is the mainstay of the province, I maintain that the allotment of 3 per cent. of the total expenditure in this budget to Agriculture, Livestock and Veterinary Services, is far too low. In criticising the present Government in this matter, I can say that they are no worse than their predecessors, and indeed in the long list of 509 printed resolutions I find hardly any reference to this important subject at all. It seems, therefore, to be taken for granted on all sides that no improvement is necessary.

The first thing, therefore, that we are faced with in our Agricultural Industry is the employment of better methods of agriculture, and this can only be done by a better personnel in the establishment, for such improvement can only be obtained by demonstration on the spot. It has been urged that until primary education is established no improvement can be found in agricultural methods. This is not our experience on tea gardens. Tea Garden labourers have been found to be quite efficient cultivators within a reasonable period of their arrival, and this not achieved except by instruction in the field. Further, when tea-garden labourers leave the garden and take up plots of land of their own, they are quite capable of raising crops all the year round, in contrast with the general practice of confining the efforts to a single crop. The result is better housing, improvement of cattle and a higher standard of life in general. It is, therefore, not such a tremendous problem but one which can be solved from day to day, and if tackled with vigour, would make a tremendous difference in the course of a few years. Agricultural methods have not improved in the last fifty years. We would teach the value of intensive cultivation. More scientific methods are necessary, and by this I do not refer to the introduction of machinery or any other aids which the cultivator cannot afford. Then, there is the question of improved seed, the rotation of crops, and marketing which is closely bound up with the problem of village communications. If I were to preach the doctrine of rotation of crops in a village and state that by dividing a given area into three parts, one for paddy, one for grazing and one for leguminous crops and state that under this scheme the same weight of paddy could be raised as previously was obtained from the whole area, I should be laughed at. Yet in such a progressive country as Italy such a practice has metamorphosed the whole agricultural outlook. We want heavier crops we want better crops, better prices and a better margin of profits to the agriculturist. With a population of 80 lakhs the addition of Rs.10 per head of annual income will go far to solve many of the problems which are now facing us, among which rural indebtedness is by no means the least. Let me emphasize the very important fact that we are still importing foodstuffs into this province. But apart from the financial improvement of the agriculturist there will immediately follow material and moral improvement in his outlook. It is the common practice in this House to speak of remission of land revenue, reduction of rent, reduction of tolls and such like. These are only palliatives, for in every case it places the raiyat under an obligation to someone. What we should like to see would be the independent, self-reliant, self-respecting agriculturist who, having worked

hard, gets full value for his labour. He will then have money in his pocket, and education and kindred problems will naturally be solved, for he will not only ask for them himself but will be able to furnish the money to provide them. When we learned that there was to be an additional appointment in the Cabinet, and that that appointment would carry the Agriculture portfolio, it gave us much pleasure. May I suggest in all humility and without in the least being invidious, that if there is to be a Minister of Agriculture, he should be the best brain in the Cabinet. We need knowledge, energy, drive, and a recognition that if this Department is to flourish, those responsible will find that their duties have to be performed very largely in the plains. No Department with these needs in view can function on such a meagre allotment. Closely allied to this is the question of *Animal Husbandry*. 18 months ago I succeeded in moving a Resolution and obtaining its unanimous acceptance by the House. Since then nothing has been done. I shall refer again and again to this subject of *Animal Husbandry* because it is unquestionably the greatest potential source of wealth in this Province. We have nearly a crore of cattle, and if we raise the capital value per head by Re.1 it needs little calculation to see how much better off the ryot is going to be.....

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : The hon. member has just finished his time.

MR. F. W. HOCKENHULL : We are putting up only one member from this group, and I request that I may have a little indulgence.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : The hon. member may have 5 minutes more.

MR. F. W. HOCKENHULL : Sir, in this connection may I remind the House that we are still importing butter, ghee and large quantities of tinned milk, and that the quantity of milk available for infant consumption is far below what is really required. An additional supply of milk will go a long way to improve the physical condition of our people.

I am afraid I must curtail my remarks. Before I sit down I will say just a word regarding the Veterinary establishment. In this province which is so wealthy in cattle, we spend under one pice per head per annum on their welfare. I leave it to the hon. members to draw their own conclusions.

In other directions I will offer three suggestions to Government. First if quinine can be produced with success and profit in the Darjeeling hills, it does not seem outside the bounds of possibility to make some effort in this direction in the Khasi hills, which might make this Government independent regarding its supply of quinine.

One word about the Forest Department. One side of this Department is a business concern. In these days when the price of steel has risen so high it is most desirable that the Forest Department should indulge in propaganda. They should advertise their timber, explain how it could be seasoned, what types are most suitable for different kinds of work, and inform us where it can be obtained.

Lastly, I would ask Government's consideration that in the light of working the Motor Vehicles Act Rules for one year, it may be possible to review them with a view to removing many inequalities and injustices.

In conclusion we hope that Government will recognise that our criticism is intended to be constructive. We, perhaps, more than most, realise their difficulties. We, too, appreciate the great opportunity the new Reforms offer for a real improvement in the condition of the people. We can only hope that they will have vision to see, faith to act, and courage to persevere.

DR. MAHENDRANATH SAIKIA: Sir, many hon. members have subscribed their esteemed speeches as valuable contributions towards the proceedings of the budget session of the Assembly and some important details of the present budget have already been commented upon. I do not wish to waste the valuable time of the House by repeating what others have said already. I may be allowed to touch on one or two points only. The budget as stated by many is an imitation of the budgets of the past bureaucratic Government with the exception that some attempts have been made in the nation-building departments to satisfy to a little extent the public needs; but that also has been done in a considerably low scale in proportion to the expectations of the people under the present democratic Government. Before we go to make our comments on the present budget we must not fail to realise the responsibilities of a legislator of an autonomous province and that we should keep in mind that it is we who are going to rule the province and not the bureaucratic Government of the old days. Sir, I do not hesitate to say that this Ministry, that is to say the present Government, is our Government as we have extended our support to the present Ministry with the expectation that they will adopt all possible measures to relieve the sufferings of the masses and as such we shall be making reasonable demands from time to time from the side of the poor people of the province.

We all certainly have given pledge to our respective constituencies to give them various kinds of relief, but when we look to the financial position of the Assam Government as is disclosed in the present budget, we prefer going back to the primitive stage throwing all the paper resolutions into the waste paper basket, to making any attempt to keep pace with the time of the present day civilization.

Sir, I am glad to note that many hon. members of this House have tabled hundreds of resolutions making demands for grants for roads, water supply, dispensaries, medical school, university, high court, agricultural schemes, education, etc., the sum total of which will exceed ten times the present income of Government.

Sir, on the other hand resolutions are coming forth for 50 per cent. land revenue reduction, for reduction of local rates, for the writing off of the agricultural loan, etc., which I think will considerably lead towards bringing Government to a standstill, not to speak of taking up of any new schemes into their hands.

Again, Sir, the big number of proposals for formation of enquiry committees which I have come across in the list of resolutions tabled to be moved in this session by many of the hon. members of this House, together with the committees already formed, will no doubt exhaust a considerable portion of the Government income.

I do not know, Sir, how far we are justified in accusing Government when we want to reduce the income on the receipt side and at the same time demand for more money on the expenditure side of the budget. We must be able to realise the difficulties of the time when the portfolios will come to such of us as are criticizing the present budget. However, Sir, there arises the question of topheavy Government. For that, Sir, the present Ministry cannot be held responsible, as they have no power beyond the Government of India Act of 1935, except on retrenchment of the provincial establishment. So let us watch patiently what line of action the other provinces take in the matter.

Sir, turning to the important problem of education, I beg to say that much has already been said for compulsory primary education. Now I may be allowed to mention that we are all gratified to find that there has been a great impetus for higher education amongst the females. There

is a gradual increase of girl students in the Cotton College, Gauhati. But many people are objecting to co-education. If funds would permit, I would ask Government to take steps for the establishment of a girls' college at Gauhati. But at any rate it is high time that provision should be made immediately for separate girls' sections in the Cotton College. I congratulate the Education Minister for giving a grant to the Silchar College to enable them to open girls' sections. I hope he will not grudge in allotting some money to the Cotton College for the purpose. At the same time I would request the Hon'ble Education Minister to allot a considerable amount for the Girls' High School at Nowgong, which is the only headquarters town in the province without a High School for the girl students.

Sir, now I beg to draw the attention of Government to the poor agriculturists, the poor mass people. What is the present condition of the agriculturists in these days of economic depression? Thousands of plots of cultivable land are being put to sale for realisation of arrears of revenue every year and are being sold for want of high bidders at much lower prices.

Sir, if anybody in the name of humanity wants to do any good to the suffering mass of people, it is the poor agriculturists who deserve our sympathy and attention more than anybody else at the present moment. Sir, these poor people are crying, not for motorable roads, not for another medical school, not for a university and not for a high court, at the present moment, but for a reduction of land-revenue by 50 per cent. which in their estimation will give them new vigour and life in the new era. Sir, my idea is to tax the rich to relieve the poor. I beg to recommend land revenue reduction even by more than 50 per cent. to those agriculturists only whose land-revenue does not exceed Rs. 25. As the question of land-revenue reduction has become burning topic of the day and a necessity, I hope Government will give a favourable consideration to the matter.

Now coming to the Department of Agriculture, I am sorry to say that this department has rather been a burden on the agriculturist than being of any good being done to them. A reformed scheme should be prepared to hold the department responsible for the agricultural produce of the province and the economic condition of the poor agriculturists.

Sir, with these few words I beg to resume my seat.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Sir, on the 3rd of August at 3 p. m., while sitting in this hall of the dead or the sleeping as Dr. B. C. Roy puts it—I fell into a reverie, when I saw before me the apparition of five magicians one after another. I was awakened by the first voice "To make a start".

My mind travelled over a long period of history from Ward down to Scott and heard the self-same cry—"start, start, start." The gamble of starts leads to nowhere or it may lead even to disaster as some of us may know from a race-course. Sir, the magician's art is to deceive. He deceives this House into the belief that the budget is balanced and misappropriates the credit due to Sir Otto Niemeyer or the India Government. But in order to avoid detection, he has cleverly kept the donations from the Central Government for rural uplift beyond the reach of the hon. members. It has been "charged" as if to a thousand volts. Danger, Beware.

Then appeared the second magician priding on the highest expenditure on education. My awakened faculty of association drove my mind to another magician, the one of Sabarmati who cries—"mass education for little or no money". The one before us spoke of traditions and orthodoxy mating with modernism and the other would ply away to the *sauvik*

regime 6000 years old and yet would dally with the ultra-modernism of Leningrad. Where do we stand? Shall we have to wait till the fight of ideals is over? In the meantime Cunninghams and Smalls will have a merry time of it in deceiving and blighting the budding flowers of the nation.

Curiously enough this magician is also the gurdian angel of the hoary forests of Assam, but unfortunately his cherubs and seraphs eat up all the fruits leaving the peels and rinds for the Government and the people.

After another interval came another magician into my ken. I seemed to recognise him as a missing comrade. He appeared rather anxious not to be discourteous to old associations. Appalling poverty indeed touches him (or his old self?) The weird magician satisfies his conscience with the pious wish of starting a small fund as insurance against calamitous floods.

Next came the fourth expert in the black art—a life-long devotee of the opium problem. Long ago he contemplated a finis to his race for prohibition in 8 years, twice eight have gone by, still he sees no end. Grown cautious by experience he has exchanged his "opium-8" into an indefinite "few years" for the body engineers called Civil Surgeons do not know how to close the leak of new opium-passes every year.

Last came a voice which seemed hardly to affect my senses. I felt as if in the midst of a country which was sinking deeper and deeper into the fathomless depths of darkness. Suddenly I was startled by a cry of silver-lining. He has faith on the ennobling example of sturdy Punjab. I thought to myself—why not save all the trouble of travelling 2,000 miles to distant Punjab and the cost thereof? Purchase at much lesser cost copies of "Calvert" and distribute them broadcast. In vain the half-naked magician cried "Official inspection, hedgerow texts will not do. Live and work among the villagers and by force of example educate them to energy and association." The young magician spoke of co-operation as the pivot of agricultural and industrial development. But the proceedings of co-operative societies in the files of Director are a dismal proof of failure of mere direction and imitation.

Now coming to the question of finance, I would say that the Hon'ble Ministers have not unthinkingly wedded the province on a mere impulse of passion for office without discussing beforehand ways and means for running the household at least for the sake of avoiding divorce proceedings. I hope they have studied the disposition of provincial finance under the new Act and have not accepted it in a spirit of abject helplessness. Sir, as yet we have not heard anything from the Treasury Bench as regards their own scheme of retrenchment. But so far as taxation is concerned we are astounded to hear of some novel canons namely discrimination between district and district, valley and valley. We read in our Schooldays that the wonderful personality Aurangzeb put "Jizia" on Rajputana but during the closing days of his life with the vision of impending ruin of his carefully preserved empire, he found out his mistake and gave some sound advice in letters to his son Azim. Sir, I could support even the "Jizia" on the ground of right of conquest. Have our new rulers led by the valiant Knight conquered the permanently settled area? We heard of one expedition to Kulaura.

Revenue can be levied on lands, revenue can be levied on persons, but we always spend for the person, the citizen. So in a discussion of levy of cess on land, there is no room for discussion of expenditure which is for the person. Yet, Sir, we have heard such discussion in this House and you have been pleased to allow it. Such discussions are irrelevant unless it is

agreed to by this House that the expenditure for the benefit of the population of a district must be confined within its revenue limits—a most pernicious principle which goes against the fundamental idea of provincial integrity.

Sir, the Hon'ble Ministers have missed the basic principle of taxation. It is the faculty theory with progressive form of distribution that finds favour with modern economists. Congress has also generally agreed to this principle. Are the Ministers ready to tax the superfluities of the rich and the excess of the land portion of their income over Rs.2,000 in order to find out money for nation-building purposes?

Sir, it is a budget of the rich folk and political adventures expecting a share in the spoils of the budget policy. Increment in the scale of salaries following the political movement of 1905 enabled the Bengalee and Assamese officers in plain dhuty to put on a hat but without the tie. After the political movement of 1920 we find Navy Cuts in their mouths as a result of the Lee-Largess. This is how the nation is being emusculated. Sir, we have heard nothing new besides the detailed figures of mere running the departments as of old. Why not take a nap and leave the budget preparation and presentation to good old Mr. Jones?

Sir, we have noticed with amusement the opposition given to the budget by the members behind the Treasury Bench which has been reshuffled during the budget discussion. It proves that the Ministry are in possession not on the intrinsic merit of their scheme of things but on other considerations. Do such Hon'ble members consider their speeches as mere petitioning? Would they come over to the benches opposite if Government do not modify the budget in response to their demand? I draw your attention, Sir, to the point as you are the custodian of the dignity of the House.

Allow me, Sir, to add a few words in my capacity as the representative of a territorial Constituency. The Sub-Registry of Barlikha has been retrenched long ago to the immense hardship of the people who have been tagged to the Beanibazar Sub-Registry office situated at a considerable distance and badly connected by communication. The popular demand for the restoration of the Barlikha office is unequivocal.

The existing road system for connecting Maulvibazar straight with Karimganj was the Latu-Hingazia Road which runs through the heart and the populous part of the Subdivision but the communication has been diverted into a circuitous way through a few tea gardens and a vast area of desolate jungles perhaps giving facilities to the officers to draw higher travelling allowance and see their friends on the way. If the Latu-Hingazia Road is made fit for motor traffic, there will be marketing facilities for the products of Hakaluki to the ultimate gain of Government.

Then the blockade of water passage by the road from Barlikha to Hakaluki and by the bunds put up on the Government fisheries is responsible for early inundations and chronic failure of crops in Pargannas Chhotalikha, Barlikha, Pathoria, Bahadurpur etc. It adversely affects the sanitation as well. Many families have migrated from this area to save their lives. People are crying hoarse over the matter of out-let for water. But it is all a cry in the wilderness. The condition of Panchakhanda and Churkhai Pargannas is no better for the same reason of absence of suitable out-let for water. Sir, out of a catalogue of thousand and one grievances, I narrate only the most urgent ones to draw the attention of Government with all the emphasis I can command for redress of the grievances.

With these few words I give my response to the invitation offered on the 3rd August to be delivered to proper quarters through you Mr. Speaker Sir.

MAULAVI DEWAN MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: On a point of information, Sir, regarding the question of 'Jizia' raised by my hon. friend Mr. Aditya, is it not an indirect insinuation and reflection on the Muslim community? Will he kindly withdraw his irrelevant remark?

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: In my mind it was never meant to offend any community and I meant no disrespect to anybody. However, if any community takes offence, I do not desire to offend it and may accept his suggestion, but my friend should read the speech as a whole beforehand and gather the spirit.

MAULAVI GYASUDDIN AHMAD: Sir, I rise on this occasion to speak on the budget that has been presented before this House. The present cabinet has assumed the charge of the Ministry only in April last with the inauguration of the new Constitution and during this short period the Hon'ble Ministers have prepared a budget with the available resources that have come to their hands. Sir, a more liberal budget on the various nation-building departments with better prospect of expansion would have averted a ruthless criticism from opposition. A look into the budget shows an extravagant expenditure towards the maintenance of Government officials with their paraphernalia, forgetful of the real development of the ideas in practice. A protracted and long tour of the heads of the departments incurring heavy expenditure towards their travelling allowance will not certainly improve public health, will not ameliorate the condition of the raiyots nor will it thrive the village co-operative societies.

Sir, in this connection I may be permitted to add a few lines regarding the various Municipalities of the Province. These days we have talked and heard much of the rural areas. Should we forget the towns? Have they been treated as so many excluded areas? It is an admitted fact that both the poor and the rich live in the town—they live in the town and from morning till they go to bed they are taxed and taxed heavily. Perhaps Sir, in every town of this province, there are innumerable cases of T. B. This dreadful and fatal disease is wiping out the signs of many families from this province. What have Government done in order to fight out and prevent the spread of this disease? Do not Government consider it their duty to find out ways and means to fight out this fell disease? In the name of humanity I request the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Public Health, to think for a moment about the mental worries and agonies of the families who have been affected by the attack of this fell disease and then let him say whether the contributions made towards the various Municipalities are adequate to tackle this vital problem. Sir, I do not understand why there have been two departments—Medical and Public Health, why we are more concerned with the technicalities of the departments when both of them deal with people's health and administration of medicines? What is the necessity of maintaining both Inspector General of Civil Hospitals and the Director of Public Health at a cost of Rs.33,000 and Rs.27,600 annually with their incidental costs of establishments? Can a deficit province, in the name of Public Health, indulge in the maintenance of two Assistant Directors of Public Health at annual cost of Rs.12,900. In my opinion, Sir, these two departments should be amalgamated in the interests of the public in order to give more relief to the suffering humanity. We should not forget, Sir, that if the people of Assam have got good health, they will certainly earn more wealth in order to finance this poor province

Sir, some of the hon. members of this House, have shown by substractions and deductions that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has presented the budget on fictitious figures. Whatever the figures shown by the Hon'ble Finance Minister may be, he is prepared to follow the expenditure as shown by him. He has assured this House of the formation of a Committee of Resources and Retrenchment and he hopes to present before this House the next budget a more liberal and hopeful one. As one of the participators into the destinies of the people of this poor province I should like to know from the Hon'ble the Finance Minister whether we get any portion of the Excise duty on matches that are prepared at the Assam Match Factory at Dhubri, by the local labour with Goalpara timber. This excise duty goes to the Central Fund. In normal times this factory gives an annual income of over 4 lakhs by way of excise duty. At least half of this, if not more, should come to our province.

Sir, Hon'ble Education Minister has said in his speech that the total sum provided for education is the highest expenditure in the present budget. While thanking him for an endeavours he has made for getting lion's share under the head education I must bring it to his notice that though this sum is a lion's share it is hardly adequate to meet the growing demands of the people. Every civilised nation in the world has thought about and acted up to the removal of illiteracy. They have passed that stage and now they are running a race as to their scientific developments and inventions. But Indians as a subject race have been put to much restrictions and even if they wish, they get very little scope.

In this connection, I think, I shall be failing in my duty towards my district if I do not try to impress upon this House the position of Goalpara in the matter of education. The Government are maintaining only two secondary schools one at Dhubri and the other at Goalpara in the district, having a population of over ten lakhs. Goalpara people are grateful to the Zemindars of the district who are maintaining 4 more secondary schools. But for this liberal donation by the young zemindars of Chapar, Dhubri would not have dreamt of the Lady Kerr Girls' High School—but for the endeavour of the late Pir of Jaleswar Goalpara would have gone without a senior Madrasa. The culture of Sanskrit language is still alive at Gouripur through the generosity of the Rajabahadur of Gouripur. The growing needs of the people of the district were not satisfied. The consciousness of removing the illiteracy from the backward tribal people arose in the minds of our tribal brethren and with this end in view they themselves have started a High school at Kokrajhar—a place chiefly occupied by our Bodo brethren. They have approached Government for taking up that school but up till now nothing has been done and I do not find anything in the budget. I request the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Education not to nip in the bud the ambition of the original inhabitants of the district. From the vicinity of Goalpara town up to the border of Mymensingh district this vast tract having a population of over 2 lakhs within the district of Goalpara was going on without a High School. The people felt the necessity of a High School. Thanks are due to our hon. M. L. A., friend Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan who gave a start to a High School at South Salmara with the help of the leading jotdars of the locality. A deputation waited upon His Excellency Sir Michael Keane, the late Governor of Assam, at South Salmara on his way to Tura in February of 1934 and placed before him the necessity of a high

school there. Fortunately for me, Sir, I was one of the deputationists and at the informal talk His Excellency suggested a monthly grant of Rs.100. But I do not know Sir, if the case of this school was ever taken up for consideration of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Education of the present cabinet or of the Minister of the old Legislature. The jotedars and tenants are hard hit and they cannot maintain the school, the result being that it is in a tottering condition.

Sir, I must record an emphatic protest against the action of the Education Department which has altogether neglected the problem of providing sufficient funds for the expansion of Lady Kerr Girls' High School, at Dhubri and against the non-recognition of Kokrajhar and South Salmara High Schools. It is for want of funds that Lady Kerr Girls' High School is going on without a Moslem hostel for girls and without any provision for Islamic teaching. Though this institution is labouring under much difficulty it has been securing the first place in the matter of securing the scholarships and getting highest number of successful students in the matric examination. Government cannot ask us—as they did when we could not understand the patting policy of the Government—to go to the district zemindars for help. The zemindars have done what they could. Now their funds are limited. Government have provided in the permanently-settled area of the Surma Valley a College at an enormous cost, the Keane bridge, when the province was growing under heavy burden of debts—a technical school—a Sanskrit College and many other things. The Government have been maintaining the Cotton College, Berry-White Medical School—the Tea Planting districts with “Paris Roads.” We regret for the stepmotherly treatment Goalpara has received at the hands of Government. Sir, we do not grudge the other districts or Valleys having all the advantages and privileges for the common good of the people, but why should Goalpara be precluded from having such privileges and advantages?

In this connection Sir, may I enquire of the Hon'ble Finance Minister what explanation he can give before this House why not a single farthing had been allotted for the Dhubri subdivision from the Road Board Fund by the old regime. The treatment we have received at the hands of Government naturally has aroused a suspicion in the minds of the Goalpara people that, perhaps, the Assam Government do not want us to be with Assam. If that be so, Sir, let Assam Government bid us farewell and we will try our lot elsewhere. Goalpara should not be treated as a financier of other districts of this province.

Our Hon'ble Revenue Minister has been the object of much criticism for the portfolio he holds. An exponent of reduction of Land Revenue, as a Councillor in the old Legislature—he has taken up this portfolio under the New Constitution and I am sure he feels his difficulty now to keep up the balance if there be 50 per cent. reduction in land revenue. As a true representative of the mass with his slogan in the election propaganda I am sure he has not forgotten the lots of the poor tenants who can hardly make their both ends meet in these days of economic depression. We are all here demanding more money for the uplift of the mass. Let us think very seriously whether it is possible to meet the popular demands if there be 50 per cent. reduction in land revenue. If we can make a reduction at least by one fourth by way of retrenchment and by abolition of some posts, then 50 per cent. reduction in land revenue is possible. Let us hope our Hon'ble the Revenue Minister will prove himself worthy of the portfolio he holds.

Sir, let me say a few lines about the co-operative movements in Assam. We all know, Sir, Refegine, the father of German co-operative movement has set an example to the world by solving the economic question of Germany. In India, the Punjab is an eye opener to us. The co-operative movement in Assam is in its infant stage and I would request the Hon'ble Minister in charge of this portfolio to find out a Refegine for Assam. By co-operative movements the economic condition of the mass can be improved to a great extent. The Registrar or for the matter of that the Assistant Registrars having expert knowledge in that line must not confine themselves only to checking the accounts of the Central Banks in the towns. If they really want to do real service to the country and to the people they must come in touch with the village banks; they must infuse the spirit of co-operation amongst the villagers; they must educate the mass as to what co-operative movement means—what its effects are.

Agricultural developments go side by side with co-operative movement. The sums provided for this department are quite insufficient to meet the growing needs of the people. We find the activity of the departments of agriculture and industry in a moribund condition. Only providing 20 pumps in the Surma Valley and 2 or 3 in the Assam Valley can hardly receive any appreciation. Half an hour's inspection by Inspecting officers and three hours' writing of report on the inspection can hardly improve the condition of the agriculturists. What have Government done towards the protection of the plough cattle of the agriculturists. Are Government aware that some zemindars are more prompt in settling lands with tenants for realisation of rents than to think for the plough cattle that are the main weapon for the agriculturists. Sir Abraham Laine, the then Revenue Member, rightly said in connection with an informal talk over the question of allowing the South Salmara and Mankachar thana people, to graze their cattle in the Garo Hills, that the agriculturist keep animals which may be treated as so many goats. Sir, without grazing ground cattle cannot have fodder, and without fodder they cannot grow. Sir, I cannot but express before this House that the Government have introduced a line system between the Garo Hills cattle and South Salmara and Mankachar cattle. Sir, I do not know how His Excellency the Viceroy will take this restriction put on the cattle. The authorities should realise that the annual ravage by rinderpest and epidemics on the emaciated cattle is one of the causes for failure of crops and consequently for the non-payment of rent.

Sir, I must confess that the Hon'ble Minister for Local Self Government will be greatly embarrassed to finance the various local boards if there be 50 per cent. reduction of land revenue and if the Local Rate Amendment Bill is passed. Every member of this House has given pledge to his constituency to give relief in one form or the other, and I am sure, the popular demand will get precedence over other things. It is true this House will be loathe to put fresh taxation on the people. Let us hope that the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Local Self-Government will find out money in consultation with other Hon'ble Ministers to feed the Local Self-Government institutions of the province.

Sir, criticism on the budget rightly or wrongly gives us a scope to realise the financial position of this poor province and let us, as members of this democratic institution work out our plan of work on the principle—"born for the people, bred for the people, for whom should we serve but for the people."

BABU KAMINI KUMAR SEN: Sir, many criticisms and suggestions, some of which are very valuable have already been made by the hon. members who have spoken before me. As I agree with most of these suggestions, I do not like to repeat them and take the valuable time of the Hon. House. Sir, some of the hon. members of this House have already submitted long catalogues of local and provincial grievances. Though my constituency and my subdivision—Karimganj—is no less loud in its cry for more tanks, more wells, more hospitals, more schools more veterinary dispensaries, I do not like to add to that list as I anticipate that no useful purpose will be served by lengthening that list. Now, Sir, coming to the budget itself though I shall be lacking in courtesy if I do not join the hon. members in offering customary felicitations to the Hon'ble Prime Minister at least, for presenting a surplus budget after deficit of years, I must frankly confess Sir, that the budget of 1937-38 which has been presented before the House is disappointing and discouraging, (*hear, hear*). This is the first budget under the new constitution and we were naturally looking forward to a document which would break new ground and bring us new hopes and new aspirations but that hope, Sir, to our utter regret, has not come to be true. With the inauguration of the provincial autonomy, however disappointing and however hopeless it may be, there has been complete change in the control of provincial finance. Formerly in pre-reformed days the Hon'ble Ministers were given only shares of the provincial revenue to administer their departments and in that too they had not complete control but now Sir, the position has been otherwise. Of course, there are some reservations and we need not bother about those reservations at present but with these reservations the Hon'ble Finance Minister has now full control of the provincial finance, and he can now do whatever he likes with the money at his disposal. So, Sir, in these circumstances is it not natural for us to expect that this budget would be something quite different from the wooden, unfeeling and a lifeless budget with which we have been regaled year after year. The Hon'ble Ministers have taken office for five years—at least they hope to continue for five years—but what is their policy, what is their programme? Have we got any indication of that policy in the budget that has been presented before the House? Time and again, Sir, in the press and platform they have been persistently pressed to declare what will be their policy and what will be their programme but they have persistently and stubbornly remained silent. Of course, Sir, this is no doubt a challenge to the public opinion and I hope public will take a note of it. I do not expect that the Hon'ble Ministers will remove illiteracy or drive away diseases or effect economic uplift so as to give "dal bhat" to the masses within the course of a day. I do not expect that but what I want, Sir, is that a comprehensive plan—a well thought-out scheme should be prepared and a good beginning made without delay. It may be, they may not have time to fulfil that programme, they may not have the opportunity to come to the end of that programme but we want that they should at least make a programme and make a good start but they have not yet done so. Now if they make a programme, and if they make an earnest attempt to give effect to that programme, there is no harm, if they do not come to the end of their programme. Their successors will begin the work where they leave—the plan will be there, the goal would be there and the province will have opportunity to judge them by their policy and certainly render them all co-operation and sympathy if that policy, if that programme goes to uplift the nation. Sir, of course, the Hon'ble Ministers may raise the question of finance. Where will money

province should have been debited on account of the loan taken from the Government of India. From these facts we can see how far the budget prepared by the Finance Minister is in reality a surplus budget.

Sir, the affairs of the Province from the rate-payers' point of view and from the point of view of the people and the masses are demonstrably in a bad condition. We are living on the terrace of a building the foundation of which is not only shaky but also uncared for and unlooked after. We have not only a costly system of administration which renders it difficult for the necessary things being done for those below but also a Government, which absorbed as it is in its own stability and self preservation, is blind and has turned deaf ears to the needs of the masses. We are told that everything can not be done in one day but have we made a beginning anywhere? This Government is the custodian of a great trust. Has Government discharged that trust faithfully?

If the Hon'ble Ministers could do no more but to express sympathies, pious wishes and apologies for not being able to do this for want of time or funds it would be better to close up this business.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURY: Sir, as I take my stand this afternoon in this mighty hall of all honourables, my mind goes back to the hungry millions to the have-nots, for whose interests we have come here and for whom Congress thought it fit to fight the election. I understand every member of this House including the Hon'ble Ministers have in their election manifesto given certain promises to the electorates. Now I would ask the hon. members of the House to scan the budget from figure to figure, from page to page and to find out what is there. When they leave this House can they take back any ray of hope to the people to say that their grievances have been looked after and would be looked after? I would ask the Hon'ble Ministers to take the sporting chance of resigning on the issue of the budget and get themselves re-elected. But I am afraid if I do not congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister, I shall be lacking in the customary practice of congratulating him. I find, however, in going through the budget only one factor for which I can congratulate him. I congratulate him for the ingenious manipulation of the budget figures by which a really deficit budget has been presented as a surplus budget. I do not know whom to praise for this, whether the Finance Minister or Mr. Jones who went to Bombay to get enlightenment on the financial condition of the Province. Sir, the theory of the surplus budget has vanished in the horizon after we have heard the speeches of the hon. members.

I do not like to detain the House by dilating upon this point, but there are one or two matters which I should like to mention. The Government of India has of course given us a grant of 45 lakhs but has saddled us with a liability of 90 lakhs on account of State Provident Fund. No light has been thrown how this liability is going to be met. Again of the 45 lakhs we are going to get only 30 lakhs from next year. Moreover the legacy of the last Government amounting to Rs. 46 lakhs 78 thousand is to be met by a loan. The real character of the estimated enhanced receipt under Land Revenue and Jute duties has been shewn by my friend Mr. Omeo Kumar Das. Moreover the estimated additional amount of Rs. 2,50,000 under head "Stamps" is due to the enhanced stamp duties which was opposed by the whole country. I ask the hon. members to ponder and say whether it is a surplus budget? I have not the robust optimism of Sir Saadulla and the whole financial aspect of the province fills me with despair and dismay. I, Sir, therefore, submit that the budget is really a deficit budget. Again we

have in charge of Excise a Minister whose profession is to cater to the spiritual needs of the people—whose whole scheme ought to have been aimed at prohibition. The excise revenue receipts of over 35 lakhs show how he is catering to the spiritual needs of the people. Are we to take it, Sir, that lure of high office has driven Jesus from the arena of politics?

THE HON'BLE REV. J.J.M. NICHOLS-ROY: Does the hon. member mean to say that there has been any increase over 35 lakhs?

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURY: I do not say that. What I say is that the revenue estimate goes up to more than 35 lakhs.

This is one side of the picture. Let us, Sir, examine the other side of the total estimated expenditure of Rs.2,82,480,000. The bulk of the revenue has been engulfed by General Administration and Police; the flesh has been taken away, only the skeleton remaining for the nation building departments. The general administration shows an increase of 9 lakhs over that in 1934 and police 6 lakhs. This is the real position.

Let us examine the new schemes. The other day the Education Minister waxed eloquent on his education budget. For a total population of 862,251 there is a total grant of Rs.50 thousand for the extension of primary education—an extension indeed. I would leave it to the House to say whether this programme touches the fringe of the problem of illiteracy. We have heard of the Conference and the tall talks of village reconstruction. What has this show produced—a grant of Rs.10,000. Is it not a jest—a mirage? It would have been better if no mention was made of it. To add insult to injury, there is, Sir, the huge sum of Rs.1,500 for solving the question of unemployment—a real solution indeed. Is it not a colossal hoax? Whereas we have a new scheme to spend Rs.34,130 to construct a residential building for the Superintendent of Police at Dhubri, I am reminded of the old saying—while Rome was burning, Nero was fiddling. These figures would have shamed anybody out of office. Is there no sense of decorum even? May I ask the Hon'ble Ministers what they mean by it? Do they think that the whole country has gone mad and they are, therefore, providing for the additional grant to the Tezpur Mental Hospital. This is autonomy. May heaven spare. I am tempted to organise a thanksgiving day, an address of welcome to the Hon'ble Ministers for these grants.

The Ministry has waxed eloquent as regards the grant for rural reconstruction by the Government of India. I fail to understand; we want light. What this Government has to do with it? The Ministry may find pleasure in this agency, but I regret I cannot give them any credit.

Now turning to the real needs of the district and the constituency I represent, I would ask the hon. members to scan the budget and find out what portion of the capital expenditure for new schemes is going to be spent in the Surma Valley. The other day, we heard enough from the Revenue Minister as to starving the local boards of the Assam Valley. May we know whether he had the lion's share in framing the new schemes? The hand of the witch, as used by the Revenue Minister, is seen here particularly. More than 8 lakhs were spent for the Sylhet Medical School. The buildings are the standing monuments of disgrace to the Government. Has the present Ministry taken the least care to complete the scheme? Land for the landless, annual recurrence of flood and want of pure drinking water are the greatest scourge of the district of Sylhet. What steps have Government taken to remove that? The landless labourers of Sylhet, comprising one-third of the total population, were asked by a late Governor, Sir Laurie Hammond, to emigrate to Upper Assam. Does the invitation still stand? Is there any emigration programme of Sir Saadulla?

As regards floods, Government spent nearly 5 lakhs since 1929 in the shape of agricultural loans. A Flood Enquiry Committee was appointed, but its recommendations have been thrown into the waste paper basket. No waterways division has yet been created. Kusiara, Manu, Barak, Surma—the whole river system in the Surma Valley—is drying up. In my constituency, Hail Haor and the river Gopla are silting up. The only result is, flood every year—a normal affair of existence. A question was put Sir, to get the approximate loss of crops—Government in right bureaucratic style replied that they had no information in the matter. I boldly assert, Sir, the total loss of crops is not less than half.

As regards industry and agriculture the recommendations of the Sugar Committee have been neglected and how the grant of the Government of India is being spent, the less said the better.

Now coming to the question of water supply, I have personal experience. I have seen in this hot weather ladies and youngsters going three or four miles for drinking water. Cholera broke out in South Sylhet and it was admitted by the local doctors that the scourge was mainly due to want of pure water supply. Even in the town of Maulvi Bazar the total population had to depend for drinking water upon a single tank. Is it not scandalous? May we know from the Hon'ble Ministers what they have got to say?

This is the real character of the new dispensation. In an All Fools' Day, we have all been befooled. Provincial autonomy is cried from house to house, we have the Government communicate, the radio broadcasting to sing the praise of the new Act. I would appeal to the sensible members not to forget the staggering sight of the country, for which we have come here, seated in this mighty hall in cushioned chairs, provided by the blood of those people, while the hungry havenots cry for more food, people die slowly but surely for want of preventive measures, for medicine, maternity welfare centres, ignorance stagger outsiders, while people look towards the State for employment, for improvement of agriculture, industries—for marketing facilities—for reduction of the cost of topheavy administration, the engines of state merrily go on with its paraphernalia of Ministers drawing high salary, highly paid officials enjoying the cool climate of the hills. We have the same top-heavy administration, the same redtapism, Government through departments—the same callousness—the same indifference to the real needs of the country—the Criminal Investigation Department dogging the footsteps of every public worker. I would ask the honourable members to picture in their minds the real state of things. Is it autonomy? Is there any programme? Any looking forward? I emphatically say, no. The Jagannath's car merrily goes on—the dogs bark but the caravan goes on, to quote Sir Samuel Hoare. Well, might the Ministry say that we cannot change the whole structure, the whole fabric in a day: but may I ask, is there any programme? The Great War left Germany, Italy, Russia staggering. But what do we perceive to-day? They are dictating to the whole world. What has that been due to? By the adoption of economic recovery plans spread through a period of years, all energies of the nation has been harnessed by the State for the good of the people. Has the Ministry given us any plan—any programme? Let me now take the brief of the Ministers. The Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture has rightly said, Sir, that the agricultural and industrial prosperity depends on the success of the co-operative movement. But with all apology to the Treasury Bench do we find any presence of co-operative mind between, say, two members of the Treasury Bench? I submit, in the nature of things, as the Ministry is constituted, they cannot possibly have any programme. New programme

indeed ! A thana here, an office building there—materials may be new, but that is merely the old old story. Is there any plan to solve the major problem of the province, any clear conception of its interests ? We shall hear the interests of the province often repeated in this House. Outside the great party, to which I have the honour to belong, is there any single conception as to what constitutes the interests of the province ? I find the Treasury Bench has no mind at all in certain important matters ; they sail to the wind of the opposition ; opposition really leads the House. This is surely government by opposition. Those who are in office are not backed by a majority party. At every division a precarious crowd is gathered to Ministry's support. It is for this reason that Hon'ble Ministers cannot initiate any programme. Is it responsible Government ? Parliamentary system is possible only where the Ministry has a programme.

I have the courage to put that forward, always ready to take the chance of defeat, walking out blatantly throwing the challenge to the opposition to work out its programme. Yet the Ministry holds together not on the strength of a political programme, but by an undercurrent formula, of which the less said the better. I would leave it to the House to say if any good administration is possible under the circumstances. In England convention is that the bureaucracy is supreme in its own sphere of executing the policies as laid down by the Ministry. But here, Sir, the Ministers interfere in the day to day administration. They do not part with the patronage of employment, transfers, promotions, Government contracts, nominations, in spite of the Public Service Commission whose jurisdiction must be limited. To make support sure, these engines of oppression on the public at large are daily requisitioned.

This is the real character of the new era, Sir. At every page of the Budget this attitude is writ large. No boldness, no outlook, no looking forward—but merely dragging on—merely the continuation of the old order. I appeal to the hon. members to judge for themselves.

We are moving in a vicious circle, Sir. The white bureaucrats speak through brown successors—the grip of imperialism—the chains of slavery—tighten. It was well, Sir, that the new Constitution was inaugurated on an All-Fools' Day—I mean the 1st of April and the country has been befooled. This Budget furnishes us additional ground for the congress decision to mend or to end this sham constitution.

Sir, in regard to a local problem, I should like to speak a few words before I sit down. Just now I have received a representation that the Sub-Registrar's office at Balaganj has been abolished by the Government though there is great need of the locality. It has been transferred to Tajpur at a distance of about seven miles and there is no road connecting Balaganj with Tajpur. I therefore hope, Sir, that the grievances of the people of Balaganj will be looked into and if the Sub-Registrar's office at Tajpur cannot be shifted back to Balaganj, there will be a second office at Balaganj to look to the interests of the people living near about Balaganj. Sir, the people of Balaganj have got to go during rains through Haors a distance of some ten miles to attend the Sub-Registrar's office at Tajpur. Thus they have to undergo great hardship. With these few words I leave it to the consideration of the House.

SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI : Sir, I must express my gratitude to you for having allowed me to speak when there have been so many claims in the House for participation in this budget discussion. It may be necessary, Sir, for me to take just a little more time than the usual time that has been taken by the hon. members of the House, in particular view of the

fact that the Congress have come to the legislature after a lapse of seven years, as a representative of their party. It may be my duty to present the outlook of the Congress—its programme, its relationship with other parties that are here and many other matters from the standpoint of the Congress. If, therefore, in dealing with these subjects, I take just a little time more than other members have taken, I will claim the indulgence of the House and of the Hon'ble Speaker who presides over the House.

Sir, I have found that some hon. members during the course of the debates have gone out and come in. Sometimes they have found, I suppose, the debate rather insipid and sometimes rather more refreshing but I made it a point to hear the debates through and through from every member speaking, and from every section of the House giving expression to their feelings and ideas. I wanted to know how far and to what extent the budget that was presented by the Hon'ble Minister received support from all the sections of the House. We the Congress members have always been accused of being destructive critics; we have always been accused of being like wild bulls in China shops, but I was struck that the same attitude practically in all respects has been taken by all other sections of the house excepting that portion of the House which is led by my hon. friend Mr. Hockenull. Sir, we are all here to represent the cause of the various communities in one way or the other. We have come here to represent the masses—may be of different communities.—And persons who have actually come to represent the masses have had only one thing to say namely that the budget has been completely disappointing and that the finances are not in the least sufficient to remove the grievances of any party. (*Hear, hear*). Personally, I feel that if I could have allotments for even two village roads from this budget grants, I think, I would have expressed satisfaction, but there is no room ever for that. What I really find is that, these expressions of disappointment have been uttered by every member that I have heard. There is one hon. member Khan Sahib Maulavi Sayidur Rahman who was trying to come to the rescue of the Ministry. He had started with a sort of congratulatory utterance in the beginning of his speech, but when he just came to details, I think, he did not very much differ from the position that was taken up by the Opposition bench (*hear, hear*).

Sir, if we just want to go behind to the figures of this budget, if we just try to widen our outlook to find out the reason for all this, we will find that it will be an impossibility for the Ministry to provide for the wants of the people. I think, Sir, we have got to go very much beyond these debates—I mean the discussions in this House to find out that reason. All the same, Sir, I propose to show as briefly as possible the reasons why we have been reduced to this position. When I consider that aspect of the matter I do not have the same feeling of opposition towards the Ministry as many hon. members have expressed. I really have a feeling of pity for them, and when I take personal elements into consideration my pity is often times converted into sympathy. Sir, if you will only look deeper into the matter, you will see that the whole thing has been due to the existence of an alien rule. I need not take up the time of the House by questioning the right of our rulers to rule us. We have to accept it as a broad fact. But we cannot ignore the evils which have been responsible for this degradation of ours. Sir, if we try to analyse these factors, we will first see that we have to maintain an army of occupation. I need not go into the details of the figures but probably you all know that from more than 50 per cent. up to 33 per cent. of the imperial revenue is absorbed by this one item alone. Sir, we all feel strongly about this and I must exercise my right to speak, because we also contribute to the maintenance of that army.

Then, Sir, you will take into account the economic exploitation to which we have been subjected. I can say that this could not have been possible unless there was the existence of this alien rule. You will find that as a result of this policy our people in the villages, have been reduced to the lowest stages of poverty and neglect, our little cottage industries have all gone and the whole countryside has been reduced to a bleak of poverty, squalor, illiteracy and disease. That has again been the result of combining the economic policy with the Policy of domination. Then, Sir, you have another great evil which is also a part of the same rule and it is the maintenance of a most expensive public service in India. Sir, it is an accepted fact. I suppose, and it is probably known to everybody in the House, that the average income of an Indian is 2 to 4 rupees per mensem, only. But what amount of money are we paying for this expensive machinery? I would like to put that in a country where the income of an ordinary man is 2 to 4 rupees, maintenance of a system of public service each servant of which has got to be paid in thousands and thousands is a positive crime, and I say, Sir, this has been possible only for the reason that we are under an alien Rule. Then, Sir, there are hundred other evils which I do not propose to discuss here but the worst of them is that it has resulted in our moral degradation and it pains me to note in this connection that we all have come to imbibe what has been called the inferiority complex and in that matter the Hon'ble Ministers will excuse me for saying that they do not share this complex in any degree less than any other person. I shall probably have to refer to this matter in a later stage of my speech, but the fact remains that the Hon'ble Ministers have not been able to shake off that inferiority complex which is so very necessary to run even the present administration.

These evils were perceived by the Congress long before. It first started with petitions, it passed resolutions, it requested Government, it believed in the *bona fides* of the Rulers, but it was found, Sir, that nothing would improve matters. I will not take up the time of the House by repeating all that history of pledges given during the time of the War, to be broken soon after the War was over. I do not also propose to take up the time of the House in describing those circumstances which resulted in conference between the half naked man and the Viceroy, Lord Irwin. But I desire to say this that if the issue of independence was raised, it was raised at a time—it was in 1930—when it was found that there was no alternative for the amelioration of the condition of the masses, no alternative for an ordinary order of thing for Indians besides fighting out the issue of independence. I do not also propose to take up the time of the House by referring to those unhappy demands that were made by different communities in England during the Round Table Conferences, which made an united Demand impossible; but I would particularly refer to the fact that the constitution which has resulted from those negotiations has been an absolute failure so far as India is concerned and has been so retrograde as does not give to the people of India any power necessary for self-government in order to do away with the evils that I have just now complained of.

Sir, the House will kindly excuse me if I speak in greater details about the limitations that the Federal Constitution has imposed upon us and I may briefly say, Sir, that in the matter of defence, it has not been given to the hands of the Indians, we cannot be trusted with the defence of our own country. Of course the Foreign Relation is out of question; that

must remain with the Viceroy. The necessary power for trade and commerce for a free country has not been given to us by the Constitution. The present discrimination in favour of foreign capitalists and even racial discrimination in favour of the Britishers remain as before. The all powerful Indian Civil Service and Indian Police Service remain as they are ; the Railway administration which drains several crores of rupees is taken absolutely out of the hands of the Indian Legislature. But the worst feature of the Federal Constitution is that we have been tagged on to a set of reactionary States whose representatives will form part of the Federal Legislature. This is done evidently with the idea of defeating the popular voice in matters of the Government of the Federal State. The sum total of these, Sir, is that instead of free Government, instead of independence that we had claimed, we have a perpetuation of the old regime, the regime of exploitation of the masses, the regime where alien rulers will continue to rule us with impunity as before. Therefore, Sir, the Congress want to reject this Federal Constitution. It would not be satisfied till it has done so in the first place, by not allowing this Federal Constitution to function and if it is to come at all in spite of this, by offering all resistance to the Federal part of the Constitution.

In this connection, Sir, I want to make certain suggestions to the Hon'ble Ministers, I particularly mean the Finance Minister in this matter.

I suppose the House is agreed that we contribute to the maintenance of the Army in India. We feel, and I believe the House also feels—I do not know how a portion of the House led by Mr. Hockenhull feel—but I think the rest of the House feel that the Army estimates are really too heavy, and when we do contribute to the maintenance of that Army, I think it should be up to us to move the India Government that the expenditure should be curtailed on that account and that any saving from it should be made available to the province.

I take it, Sir, that the Report of Sir Otto Niemeyer and the Award given by Government under it is a part of the policy of Central Government. Sir Otto Niemeyer seemed to be over anxious for the maintenance of the Centre—an irresponsible Centre—and it is only natural for him to provide very much more for it than the Centre actually requires, thus depriving the Provinces and keeping them within starving limits. I therefore want to suggest for the acceptance of the House and for the consideration of the Hon'ble Finance Minister that we should demand a reduction of the Army estimates in order to make some funds available to the provinces, particularly to our province.

Then when we come to the dispensation of the Act to the provinces, I think the evils are no less great. In the first place we have been divided into so many interests, so many classes and communities each thinking on its own line, that we fear that the interests of the masses will be altogether lost sight of. We have been given the most expensive services, I mean the I. C. S., the I. P. S. and the other Imperial Services, and in this connection I want to say that I do not see any reason why all these Services cannot be provincialised. When we have come to provincial autonomy why cannot we accept this principle of provincial autonomy with regard to our Services? While giving them higher emoluments we have given no consideration to the poorer Services—I mean the Mandals, Kanungoes, the school-teachers and the like?

Then, Sir, you will see that the powers of the Governor in many matters have been kept absolutely unlimited, and in matters like the Governor's salary—and the expenditure relating to the excluded areas we have no voice

in the matter—we cannot even discuss the Governor's salary ; it is out of the purview, out of the jurisdiction of this House. I do not see why that should not be allowed. Even the King's Civil List is allowed to be discussed in the British Houses of Parliament. We pay for his salary, we are the representatives of the people, and I do not understand why we should not be allowed to discuss his salary. There are other matters regarding the excluded areas which we are not allowed to discuss. We pay for them and I do not see any reason why we should not have a voice in the matter. Therefore I feel that in all these matters this so-called provincial autonomy has been a failure—it is not autonomy—it may be partial autonomy, it cannot be a complete autonomy. Therefore the attitude of the Congress is that we cannot be satisfied with the Constitution that has been imposed from outside. We must develop that Constitution ourselves and the Constitution that has to be made, has to be ours, should be drawn up by ourselves and should be based on the suffrage of adult franchise from all communities. Then and then only can it be a true Constitution framed by ourselves for ourselves and by ourselves. That is the demand of the Congress for a Constituent Assembly and that demand we will keep before us till we have achieved it.

But, Sir, in doing so we do not forget the needs of the masses. We see that millions of our countrymen who live in the countryside want our help and support ; we see that lakhs in this province alone die of malaria, we see that literacy in this province is only 7 per cent. of the entire population, and we also see that people lie under the burden of heavy taxation and die premature deaths of preventable diseases. Therefore the position of the Congress in this respect is that they will make use of this present Constitution for doing such good to the masses as may be possible, and the Hon'ble the Chief Minister can take it from us that if they will move any proposal for the amelioration of the condition of the masses, if they will move any proposal for prohibition, or any proposal for affording relief to the Harijans or the labouring classes, or for the release of political prisoners, the Government will not receive any obstruction from us and will receive all support from us.

But what do we find in the action of the present Government ? We find that the repressive laws for which there is now absolutely no necessity have been retained in the Statute Book, I do not know for what purpose. The political prisoners are still there, and I consider it a very sad thing that the Hon'ble Chief Minister could not see his way to repatriate, not to speak of releasing, them. It was a very humble suggestion that was thrown out, but we want that they should be immediately released. Then, Sir, confiscation of pension of an eminent citizen like that of Dr. Hari Krishna Das, is yet in force. Notices for demand of security of papers which were advocating the Congress viewpoint like the " Assam Rise " is yet there. Then what is the Government doing for relieving the distress of the masses ? In regard to that vital matter so very many and such long discussions have taken place that I do not wish to take up the time of the House by repeating them, but I cannot refrain from referring to the attitude of the Hon'ble Revenue Minister in respect to the adjournment motion the other day. To him the lives of 350 labourers were of no consequence—and the man, I mean, Babu Bipin Ch. Chakravarty, who took up the cause of those starving men to the point of his death was dubbed a miscreant.

Then, regarding the peasants' condition I have only to refer to my hon. friend's reference in his budget speech, *viz.*—that the condition of the raiyats is improving.

I do not know if on account of his official position or on account of the figures in the budget, he has come to that conclusion. But it is only four months ago that he was moving about the country with these very eyes and at that time he thought and said otherwise. Sir, have four or five months brought about all these changes in his outlook? I can only say that I am sorry for him and sorry for his outlook.

A lot has been spoken about the excise policy and many things have been said about the education policy. I do not want to speak much about these. But I cannot refrain from just making an observation about the top-heaviness of the administration. I congratulate the Hon'ble the Finance Minister for his statement in this connection. But I hope that the Committee that he proposes will not be a mere repetition of the work which he had done in 1931. If we are to have a Committee there must be substantial work done and it must not end only in recommendations. It is there, I beg to submit, that he will require to work vigorously and throw away the inferiority complex. We know this is a matter in which the Governor can exercise his individual judgment. It will require a sufficient degree of strength to put the case from the side of the present Government before him.

Sir, therefore, taking all the aspects into consideration, I must say that the budget has been disappointing to us all. There has not been the slightest change in the bureaucratic outlook which probably even the framers of the Act wanted to change and it continues to be the same. The masses continue to be ground down under the burden of heavy taxation. Sir, I cannot but refer also to what the hon. member who spoke before me said, namely the want of party and programme of the present Ministry. We have the curious spectacle in these discussions about the budget that excepting the portion of the House which is led by the hon. member Mr. Hocken-hull, no member or party is supporting the Budget; and in that behalf I find that all ideas of representative Government, all ideas of parliamentary system has been altogether shut out in this House. I had expected that the budget presented by the Hon'ble Ministers would be supported by at least the party behind them. I do not find one hon. member standing for it. Is this Parliamentary Government? If the five Hon'ble Ministers compose themselves into a party it is absolutely a different matter. In fully Parliamentary institutions we all expect that the position of the Ministers is supported by at least a party of the House.

I must say, Sir, that this budget is a wretched one. It is wretched in the enunciation of principles; it is wretched in the working of the details.

MR. C. GOLDSMITH: Sir, it is difficult to find out how the Finance Minister could formulate a balanced budget. Many have criticised him for showing a little surplus: it is a mistake to call it a surplus budget. The surplus that is shown is only an expenditure item on emergency column, somewhat like a contingent grant to schools. Virtually it is only a balanced budget. In any case the Hon'ble Minister must have been in great difficulty in deciding as to what kind of budget is to be presented. If a surplus is shown it would seem to many as only an eye-wash. If a deficit is shown he would be called an unworthy Minister. If a balanced budget is shown legislators will say he is only a good mathematician. He knows he cannot please everybody and, therefore, he has tried to please himself. If he is himself satisfied, being the Premier, then there is something in what he presented.

Several things must be borne in mind. Assam has been a deficit country for the last few years. Over and above this Assam has a big debt hung on her neck. Add to this the increased expenditure on account of the

inauguration of the Provincial Autonomy. Over all these the Finance Minister has had no control. Whoever may be the Finance Minister, to blame him for all these will be highly unjust. Let only one of us place himself in that position, and let all the other members criticise him.

A cursory glance over the budget would certainly show a lack of a bold programme of expenditure as could be expected from the first autonomous Government. This I realise is due to absence of sources of increased revenue or lack of provision for reduction of costly top-heavy administration. In one hand there is the crying need of further rural, agricultural, educational, economic, social and moral development and on the other reduction of revenue. Government needs revenue to run the administration. I am for reasonable revenue but at the same time demand all facilities for self-realization as a citizen. Government is in a dilemma, if revenue is to be reduced and nation-building programmes are to be taken up, sources of revenue must be shown. But in the budget sources of revenue are not shown to take up these projects. Add to these the crying need for the reduction of revenue on Excise. Opium and drink are evils. Government cannot run on income from evils. I, as a Christian, cannot support that policy.

The need of extension of primary education is another crying need. More money should have been provided than what is provided in the present budget. When we talk of schools we must think of teachers for those schools. If schools are needed for backward, tribal and scheduled castes and the *ex-garden* communities, teachers for those classes will be needed and provision for their training be made even from now. Without proper teachers all money spent on those schools will be in vain. If money be short and demands innumerable as made by the new projected University, by certain Colleges, High Schools and also by primary education projects, we, who come from the backward communities, join with all our colleagues who are supporters of extension of primary education, and emphatically protest against the idea of granting money to these higher institutions in preference to primary education.

I don't like to lengthen the list of further expenditure items. The main and fundamental demands such as reduction of land revenue and excise, funds for nation-building programmes such as educational, rural, agricultural economic and industrial development, all of them need much more money than what the budget provides for.

Where to get this money? That is the pivot on which the whole discussion is revolving on all directions. From all that I have heard from the hon. members, my colleagues, in the form of criticisms or suggestions and from my study of the budget in a general way, the whole thing, it is clear, resolves itself into this: To fulfil the wishes of the legislature, two things must be done. (1) To approach the Central Government and ask for a recurring subvention in lieu of what Assam is losing in the share of kerosene and petrol duty and in protecting the North-East frontier and (2) Retrenchment and reduction in the cost of top-heavy administration.

But here let us not be critics alone. It is easier to destroy than to build, easier to criticise than to suggest. Let us see what the Ministry has done. Among the two alternatives open to them as regards the first one, Assam has received a subvention and the Minister has assured us that all efforts will be made to get all that Assam can realise from the Central Government. As regards the second one, Government has suggested a Retrenchment Committee to be elected by this legislature. What more can be done? If any fault lies with the Ministry then it is that they have not taken upon themselves the bold work of wholesale retrenchment and reduction and that without the sanction of the legislature. If we were not consulted in the matter

would we have been happy about it? The suggestion is given, the bill is before us, will of the legislature is sought and it is for us now to give our verdict. The fault lies with the Finance Minister in that this responsibility he has not taken upon himself but he has laid on the legislature. And does not all responsibility lie on the legislature after all? The Minister has laid the burden on the proper shoulders as this is the first chance he has got to consult the new legislature of the much talked of 'Provincial Autonomy'.

Sir, a word or two on General Administration. In this connection the question of economy comes up. Families, societies, institutions, states, entire country takes recourse to economy as a war-time measure or during famine or depression. But to my mind economy in all departments of administration should be the policy of every Government at all times. Government must realise that Assam is an indebted province and is in the midst of a calamity or on the verge of a calamity no less fearful than an imminent war, famine or depression. Every moment Government should move having this in mind. Every possible pice must be saved and not unnecessarily spent.

Economy slips are still seen on Government envelopes which perhaps came into being during depression time. It is well and good. It is not uncommon to see that in bazars such envelopes are being used for wrapping up fish after office hours. Government must save every possible pice but should not adopt a penny-wise and pound-foolish policy. When rural development work is taken up, I have a word of caution to extend to the Government. Education in the broad sense will form the basic factor in that scheme. But educating small children will not solve the problem. Educating the masses, especially the grown-ups will be a necessity. For instance, you give medicine as quinine, santonine, chinappodium for malaria and worms and patients are cured but the grown-ups do not care to use mosquito nets or keep their surroundings clean and have no proper provision for latrines, etc., then malaria and hookworm will claim them again as their victims. Expense will be a waste. If good milch-cows are provided by good breeding process and provision of good fodder made, milk will be available for children and the milk is sold in order to eke out money to perform expensive marriages or other ceremonies, then children go about unnourished. If tanks are provided and are well fenced, but if grown-up people do not take care to keep cows and bullocks away from polluting or themselves do not desist from bathing in them, then money is thrown in those tanks. This shows that the grown-ups need education and enlightenment—not in the future when their children will be educated—but now when the rural development scheme is started. The spirit of self-help and co-operation is an absolute necessity in all village uplift schemes, especially in village-road and agriculture improvement projects.

Local Boards.—In the administrative function of the Assam Government the main artery of life and the main organ of function are the Local Boards. In their hands lie education, sanitation, village road-building, water-supply, rural development—in fact the whole nation-building programme. It is a general feeling that most of these boards do not run well.

Whether there is corruption or bankruptcy of statesmanship or practical ability it is difficult to say. But the Assam Government must see that they are radically overhauled.

Co-operative village Banks.—It is also well-known that the village banks started to save the poor raiyats from the harsh and heartless money lenders, are not running well. Mismanagement, corruption and distrust are rampant, resulting in the utter degradation of the raiyats. Has Government nothing to do in this respect?

Industries.—Cottage industries, small industries, fruit culture, sericulture, all these are suggested. Well and good, but if arrangements are not made for sale of these products and markets opened, and they are not also protected from foreign competition at the infant stage, then all will die in their infancy.

Coming to the bearing of the budget on my community, I should like to make it clear at the outset that I do not come here to quarrel over a fixed share of loaves and fishes that should be reserved for Christians. We like to make common cause with the rest of the other communities. I come here to work out the principle of give and take in co-operation with all, that all may be satisfied and live peacefully. We are ready to go even so far as to give up our share if that giving up would bring a settlement between two quarrelling communities and bring harmony. We have received no special favours nor do we now ask for special favours, if grants have been made to schools and hospitals in the past, they have been done on the principle of merit alone. I only say that my community expects to receive the same amount of consideration as other communities are getting or will be getting. We do not seek anything more or anything new. We plead that this proviso be made that in the services, provincial or subordinate, when candidates of various communities are selected, whenever deserving Christian candidates come forth, their case be also considered. This will apply to all the departments, educational, police, medical, clerical, agriculture, forests, etc. Special attention is drawn to the principle of the granting of scholarships. It should be borne in mind that Christians will be found in all the communities and particularly amongst backward Hills, tribal and *ex-garden* community. If Assam is really to develop, she can do so only by raising these backward people to a high level intellectually, socially, morally and economically. To keep these people down means to retard the progress of Assam as a whole. If special scholarships are given and special inducements shown to enable the backward people to take advantage of all facilities of education and other pursuits of life, then such provision will surely come within the nation-building programme.

I would make a special appeal to the Hon'ble Minister of Education to note that among private people who have contributed most to the advancement of learning in this province in the past they are the Christian missions. In fact they were the pioneers in male and female education among all the backward communities and in female education among all the amongst all classes of people. Government have been relieved much of the burden of educating all these classes of people. Therefore now my particular appeal to the Hon'ble Minister is that as Christian communities in various parts of Assam have been contributing much from their own pockets to open schools and run them, ample Government aid be given or grants be made to encourage those schools and enable them to run more satisfactorily, which they had not been able to do for lack of funds or sympathy. The policy of Government ought to be to help more those who have done something to help themselves. Such Middle English Schools for girls as well as boys awaiting immediate help can be found in all parts of Assam, particularly in the districts of Goalpara, Darrang and Sibsagar. Besides these, there are many primary schools. Education in the broadest sense is the key to advancement, and on education I lay most emphasis.

Finally, Sir, two specific cases need attention. One is with regard to the model village experiment scheme. I know of a community which needs such an experiment. I mean that great section of *ex-garden* community lying in and round about us which cannot be neglected. Christians I think claim more than half of them. Model villages here and there amongst them

will be a great eyeopener. They are in a lower stratum of life. Education, cleanliness, industry, temperance, self-help and co-operative spirit are the things necessary for their uplift.

The second one is regarding the Forest Laws. As one hon. member has referred to forced labour in Cachar, there is the same complaint from the people of South Kamrup at the foot of the hills, and also regarding forest laws in Goalpara South Bank at the foot of the Garo Hills coming within the range of Bijni State. There the time-honoured custom and right called "প্রজ্ঞ স্বত্ব" is denied to the original inhabitants of the land.

In conclusion I would like to pass this remark, that the Ministry have given two assurances that they would approach the Central Government and are ready to retrench. The House has to pass the opinion in what manner and to what extent these should be done. It is understood, I believe, that, if the opinion of this Assembly is acceptable to the Ministry, they will carry on the administration, and if not they are ready to resign.

I believe, Sir, I have done no injustice to the opposition and the Ministry.

MAULAVI MUZARROF ALI LASKAR: Sir, thanks to the Hon'ble Ministers for their lucid presentation of a surplus budget for the current year—unlike those of a number of years in the past. The credit of the surplus, however, is due to certain help from, and mercies of, the Central Government in the shape of contributions and remission of their dues from this Government. But strangely enough, this Government have not shown even proportionately smaller mercy to the people by granting remission of a few lakhs of rupees—the arrears of agricultural loans advanced to the cultivators of the province from time to time during the last several years of successive floods, drought and other natural and governmental calamities. This lack of clemency is probably reminiscent of a system of administration which the advent of provincial autonomy is said to have ended. It appears to me that the popular Ministers have yet much to shake off the traditions of the old bureaucracy.

The Hon'ble Revenue Minister in his speech introducing the budget and in replies to certain questions tried to make us believe that a slight increase in revenue collection is indicative of return of prosperity—we sincerely wish it were so—but we have unfortunately had personal experience of the methods adopted in the realisation of accumulated arrears of revenue and agricultural loans; and to my mind this increase is the direct result of the coercive and extensive nature of collection measures. Prosperity is a thing yet unknown to the peasants. Now, Sir, is the busiest season for the cultivators and they are to adjust *their* budget on the result of their toil in the field? But, Sir, what is the present condition there? As for the district I represent, the *Aus* crop has almost failed for want of rains, although we find to our surprise the official weekly report stating "favourable weather and fair prospect of crops". The present condition of other crop is also indicating similar results, as cattle disease has been at present prevailing in an epidemic form throughout the district, besides drought.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister offered his thanks to the Finance Department on the observance of right economy; but I submit there is yet much to be done in that direction. I find that a retrenchment committee will be appointed to explore avenues for retrenchment, but I would like to ask the Hon'ble Ministers as to what steps they have already taken to give effect to the recommendations of the previous Committee on retrenchment piloted by the Hon'ble Chief Minister himself. Sir, do the Hon'ble Ministers expect us to wait for the recommendation of the future Retrenchment Committee to bring down their salary to a reasonable level?

Sir, the Hon'ble Ministers may say that they have done their best in allotting money for the benefit of the people and that they could not possibly, with their limited funds, satisfy all the demands of the hon. members of this House. But my submission is, Sir, that they did not try to save money in the proper direction.

Sir, the Saadulla Committee on Retrenchment recommended the abolition of one post of Superintending Engineer and the other post with the approval of the Secretary of State. If these posts are abolished, the savings would be about Rs.50,000 a year. There is no justification for keeping a Registrar in the Public Works Department Secretariat. The savings thus made will be about Rs.9,000 per annum. The Under-Secretary in the Public Works Department may perform the duties of the Registrar, as the Registrar has done the duties of the Under-Secretary in addition to his own. If the posts of the two Divisional Commissioners with their establishment, the two Assistant Directors of Public Health, ten Deputy Superintendents of Police, one Deputy Director of Agriculture and Live Stock and three other Deputy Directors, and the post of the Personal Assistant to the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals are abolished—there will be a saving of about Rs. 2½ lakhs more a year. Sir, all this is merely illustrative and not exhaustive. Many other similar posts drawing princely salaries could with advantage be abolished. A general reduction on the salary of other high officials could also be introduced. And in that case the Hon'ble Ministers would find ample money to spare for the nation-building departments and to give relief to the people in the direction of reducing land revenue and remission of agricultural loans. Unless the top-heaviness is relieved and money found by such savings, further development of nation-building departments is out of question. This top-heavy system of official arrangement has been maintained and provided for in the budget but no money could be found for the Medical School at Sylhet. Nothing could be more unfortunate. At a cost of more than nine lakhs of rupees beautiful buildings were constructed and these are a living testimony of Ministerial antipathy.

Sir, I should be failing in my duty as a member from Cachar if I let go this occasion without drawing the attention of the Government to some of the long standing grievances of my district. In the Hailakandi Subdivision there is only one Middle English School at Lala which is being maintained by the local public for about the last 30 years without any outside aid except a nominal grant of Rs.20 a month from the Local Board. This is one of the best schools in the Surma Valley ; but all its cries for grant-in-aid to the authorities from time to time have gone unheeded. A cut in the small fixed pay of the teachers was introduced several years ago and it is still being maintained on economic grounds. To crown all, the school Committee have been all through realising school fees at a higher rate of 4 annas in each class than that of a Government High School. Similarly the only Junior Madrasa of the Subdivision at Hailakandi is being maintained through hard economic difficulties with only a small grant of Rs.25 a month allotted only last year. The post of an Arabic teacher in the Silchar Government High School has been a pressing necessity for many years and it was actually sanctioned by the authorities, but no appointment has yet been made for reasons known to them.

Sir, over 90 per cent. of the people of my Subdivision are actual cultivators, but the Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture did not think it proper to provide for even one Inspector of Agriculture for the whole Subdivision. I must also express my emphatic protect against the policy of making Muhammadan appointments in the Assam School Service. During the last

seven years—out of 20 appointments made for the Surma Valley districts not a single has fallen to the lot of my poor district, in spite of there being duly qualified registered candidates all through. Same is the lot of my district in every other Departments.

Sir, the allotment of the departments of Education and Forest seems to have been logical in as much as a rapid expansion of Education may necessitate clearance of forests. There are large areas of cultivable land included in the Cachar Forest Reserves, but our landless people are annually immigrating to Nowgong in large numbers. I see no reason why they should not be provided with land by throwing open suitable portions of the Forest Reserves of Jamira, Kalarhowar and other places for their settlement.

Sir, the Hon'ble Education Minister has provided some money for the expansion of primary education. But this amount is certainly insufficient to meet even the keen demand and legitimate claim of the ever neglected poor primary school teachers for the improvement of their condition—not to speak of taking over all the existing venture school in the province—leaving the question of introducing compulsory primary education out of all consideration. Similarly the provision of a few thousands of rupees for grants-in-aid to secondary schools is no doubt a drop in the ocean. Repeatedly resolutions were passed in previous Councils for giving time scale of pay to aided school teachers, but to no effect. I hope the hon. members of this House will all agree with me that the aided schools are giving much relief to the educational machinery of the Government and there can be no doubt about the legitimacy of their claim. But in the adjustment of the Budget, it seems that this aspect of the secondary education has been lost sight of.

Sir, the method of accounting the budget by showing side by side the actual and revised figures of the previous years is certainly very nice for a layman like myself to understand, but it should not, to my mind, be a magnetic guide for the framers of the budget in not adjusting the same in accordance with the crying need of the people for whose benefit and welfare the hon. members of this House are here and specially those in the Ministry who have come to power to work out the destiny of the people of the Province. In the new arrangement what the public want is a Government with lighter head and healthier body in place of the top-heavy system of former bureaucracy. But here in the budget the *status quo* has been steadily maintained with slight departure here and there—giving only a well compared mathematical adjustment of the account. No special measure of economy has been aimed at, and, as a result, no fund for the improvement of the depressed condition of the people has been, nor could possibly be, provided in the budget.

Sir, in conclusion I am constrained to say that this House has regretfully noticed in the Ministers traces of attitude adopted by former Government in regard to popular demands. If however the present Government is to continue and if it desires that it should win the confidence and respect of the public it should free itself from the fetters of the traditions of bygone administrations and fall in line with what the people expect them to be. A spirit of sacrifice is primarily needed to run a popular Government.

KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI MAHMUD ALI: Sir, we the people of Assam express our gratefulness to His Majesty's Government for granting us Provincial Autonomy. We are now responsible for our own legislation and I hope that we shall try to work out what His Majesty's Government has granted us by the Act of 1935. But, Sir, to my surprise I find in this House something which is the index of the work which we may do in the next 5 years.

Sir, the Hon'ble Speaker granted us or rather authorised us to manage our speeches in the Budget discussion, but to my utter disappointment, Sir, we cannot manage our own affairs. We are in trouble as to how to speak, we are anxious to speak one after another, five, six or ten of us rise at a time. That is the responsibility we are in. We should be more responsible.

Sir, a gentleman has already spoken that the Budget is a partial one—that more amount has been allotted to the Assam Valley and less to the Surma Valley. I say that on demand and on requisition more amount has been allotted to the Assam Valley and less to the Surma Valley. But there may not be anything in the minds of the Ministers.

One thing, I submit Sir. The insinuation might be regarding Ministers from the Surma Valley. It may be due to two things. One of these lived in Dacca throughout the whole of his life and does not know anything about the district of Sylhet or Cachar. Another thing is this that one living in palatial buildings of Murshidabad does not know what is the state of things in the district.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The hon. member should not speak in this way. He himself represents the whole of Assam living in Karimganj.

BABU HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Sir, perhaps my friend is wanting to impress the House.....

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: He was making a personal attack.

KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI MAHMUD ALI: Coming to the Budget proper. Many say it is a balanced budget. Many say that really it is not. Sir, where should our Ministers get money from? The Budget is deficit since 1929 after the 1929 flood. It is God, it is Providence that has made the Budget deficit and not any other hand. By the able hand of Sir Saiyid the budget appears to the present position.

Sir, the Budget might be balanced, but our demands and requirements of the province are not satisfied. Sir, our requirements for the Surma Valley is that the title classes in Madrassa Alia of Sylhet should be opened; it is a Muslim need. The whole Muslim community is labouring under this inconvenience. They are not satisfied. On many occasions this question was discussed in this House. Hon. members of the House passed the resolution on many occasions. And I think it was in the administrative book of the Government and in the proceedings of the Council for taking it up, but for economy unfortunately it was dropped. It was in time of Sir Saiyid's Education ministry when the question was taken up first. He took it up, but after all for reasons of economy it was dropped. Again, Sir, it was budgeted in the time of Hon'ble Mr. Hamid; but again it was dropped. It is now still pending and it is gratifying no doubt that in this Budget there is a shadow of this. Here Sir, I find, though the completion of the Madrassa with title classes means the opening of M.A. classes in the College—it is equal in status—I find that Rs. 250 for the head of the institution and Rs. 200 for the second man. Sir, in Colleges principals are getting more than a thousand, whereas in Madrassa the principal now should get this small amount. I find, Sir, it is below the mark, it is below the satisfaction of the people. Hon'ble Minister should consider that for this amount a properly educated Maulana may be available.

Again, Sir, what has made the Budget deficit? It is earthquake and flood which visits our country and put us into difficulty. There is no remedy. I think, Sir, without an increase in revenue of the country, there is no salvation. Subvention and Otto Niemeyer's recommendation cannot and will not make the budget balanced. It is revenue which alone can make our Budget balanced. Sir, my opinion and suggestion is that—Government should grant more unsettled land to the people and get the revenue in return and in

time you will find the budget balanced. If there be progress and development of the colonies and if you grant lands to the people, there will be increase of revenue. It will be permanent and not temporary. As a temporary measure we may retrench this department or that; that will not supply our needs and demands. Grant more lands to the people—there are more lands still unsettled and the Forest Department have taken them up for nothing; they say that the lands are their own, they do not allow Government to settle with the people for cultivation—there are lands in *Kalar Haor* and *Jamira* which are held by the Forest Department, these may be easily be settled with the people—there are vast areas which may give us revenue and make up the deficit in the Budget. Another thing is Sir, that in the Sylhet district there are lands in Patharkandi thana, Ratabari thana near Durlavcherra. In Patharkandi there are the Magraband and the Manikband. There are vast tracts of land where beasts only are living. People of Sylhet are going to Tippera which is beyond the boundary of the British Empire. This should be stopped.

Due to line system many people cannot go to Assam. I say, Sir, withdraw the line system and grant lands as far as available and from the revenue derived you will be able to balance your Budget.

Communication in some part of Railway lines without sufficient waterways are also responsible for our bad plight and financial trouble.

Now let me pass on to another important matter regarding the Medical School at Sylhet. You will find, Sir, that a sum of Rs. 8,00,000 have been wasted for this Medical School. How can a Medical School without its proper equipments and apparatus be run? The building at Sylhet has been lying for so many years but no money has been provided for starting the school (*hear, hear*). The work of this building was started by the then Minister. He is also now a Minister of the same portfolio but no effort is going to be made for the completion of this building and starting the school. I hope the Hon'ble Minister will try to start the school during his regime.

Sir, in the last session of the last Council a resolution was unanimously passed for starting an Agricultural School but now I find to my utter disappointment that there is no move in that direction, and no provision has been made in the budget for this school. Sir, if an agricultural school would be started, it would, I think, to some extent atleast, solve the unemployment problem and would meet the requirements of the country but Government are silent in this matter. We find, Sir, that only Rs. 2,000 has been provided in the budget for an agricultural colony. This sum, I must say, is quite insufficient for the purpose. It is a drop in the ocean. Lands are available both in Surma Valley and Assam Valley and some colonies may be easily started in a few places.

Now, Sir, I should like to speak a few words about compulsory primary education. I find that there is some difficulty for the poor people. After the floods of 1929 and the earthquake of 1931 people have lost their financial capacity and now they are quite unable to pay up one-third of the whole expenditure according to the Act. So I find, that the compulsory Primary Education Act is not at all effective and not at all useful, so the Government should provide funds and take the initiative to enforce compulsory primary education without taxing the people for the purpose.

Then I come to the Public Health Department. We know, Sir, that epidemic spreads here and there and the people die like so many cats and dogs for want of proper medical help. There are only very few number of doctors. We find that doctors visit a place after the death of many people. I have got personal information about this. So, I hope the number of doctors should be increased.

Now coming to the Vaccination Department, we find, Sir, that the number of Vaccinators are very few. Their services are required when small-pox breaks out. One thing which strikes me most is that they are very ill paid. The scale of the pay of the Inspectors of Vaccinations and Vaccinators should be raised so that they may work with satisfaction. Again, Sir, peons and orderlies are very ill paid and over and above that they do not get travelling allowance, etc. for their mufassil works. Again when they retire in their old age after 25 or 30 years' service they get only a pension of Rs. 4 or so per month which is very unsatisfactory. We find, Sir, that the establishment charges take the major portion of our budget. I hope this establishment charges should be reduced.

SRIJUT JOGENDRA CHANDRA NATH: Sir, in speaking about the budget I do not find a more suitable word to describe it than that it is a dreary one. It shows a spirit of conservatism and want of broad outlook that was very much in evidence in pre-autonomy days, but everybody expected that with the advent of new era, the spirit of irresponsiveness to the public opinion of the country, utter indifference to the vital problems and needs of the people has been given the go-by for ever. But, Sir, what do we find instead?

Our Hon'ble Ministers—all elected representatives of the people—present us a budget, which bears upon it, in all aspects, the stamp of the former beauracratc Government—a Government which it was thought has been ended for ever.

The budget—if it reflects the policy of the Government—this Government surely lacks in farsightedness and imagination, not to speak of want of sympathy towards the people whose destiny Providence has unluckily placed in its hands.

To come to the budget itself, I do not wish to enter, Sir, into details and bore this House, but, Sir, after reading it carefully I cannot but come to the conclusion that it is a speculative budget, in as much as a surplus of Rs.2,26,000 has been shown on the strength of calculations arrived at by speculations on the progress of actuals which may not after all come to materialise.

The calculated increases under these heads of revenue, which may prove to be faulty can be stated to be as follows—

	Rs.
Land Revenue	7,00,000
Country spirit	50,000
Forests	1,00,000
Administration of Justice— (General fees, fines and forfeitures) ...	6,000
Public Health— (Sale-proceeds of sera and vaccine, etc.) ...	3,000
Agriculture— (Agricultural Receipts)	23,000
Total ...	8,82,000

Sir, as my hon. friend Srijut Omeo Kumar Das has shown to this House that the increase in land revenue may not materialise owing to the want of rains in proper time. As regards the other items of revenue, the calculations which are made may not also come to materialise as these heads depend very much upon this particular head.

Sir, the price of timber has already gone down by 25 per cent. owing to the sudden rise in the prices of tin and iron. The tendency of the market is getting worse day by day; so the calculated increase of Rs.1,00,000 will most probably not come to pass. Therefore even the small crumbs that are proposed to be thrown to the people in the shape of some insignificant new schemes in the nation-building departments may ultimately in some cases be abandoned.

Had the Hon'ble Ministers been possessed of boldness and initiative and could they have been divested of their parochial outlook, altogether a different picture of the state of things could have been brought about.

By giving effect to the retrenchment proposals, that are before the country and which the Government is well aware of, even partially and obeying to the unanimous verdict of the people of this province in the matter of abolishing some unnecessary fat-salaried posts, and resorting again to the cut in salaries of highly paid officials unjustly restored, a really very big surplus could have been available for the nation-building departments. These matters, Sir, I leave to other hon. members of this House to deal. The subject to which I want to draw the attention of this House especially is the administration of Forests.

Sir, the Forest Department is not a reserved subject now. It offers ample scope for development and is pregnant with vast potentialities. I am glad to find in the speech of the Hon'ble Minister in charge that the forest service is under reorganisation which may result in reduction in the higher ranks.

The administration of this Department has been a long-standing scandal and ought to be completely overhauled. Sir, out of the total revenue of Rs.15,60,000 near about 7 lakhs or about 50 per cent. are swallowed by salaries. Sir, I can state from personal experience of the Forest Department, where I have worked as a Contractor for long years, that there are some unnecessary and useless posts which stand in immediate need of being abolished; I mean the Deputy Conservators of Forests and a saving of about Rs.1,20,000 will be made. There are also a good number of Extra Assistant Conservators of Forests, which can be reduced to 12 without impairing the efficiency of administration or management. A dozen Extra Assistant Conservators could with efficiency discharge the duties as the head of each division, and I believe there are altogether 12 divisions in our Province.

Sir, in the name of organisation, improvement, regeneration and sylvicultural treatment of Forests, much of the poor tax-payers' money is wasted to provide for the fat-salaried officers, which could have been reduced to dozen Extra Assistant Conservators as I have suggested before. Sir, I could bring most damaging allegations before the House, of bribery and corruption which is prevalent even amongst the higher ranks, which have resulted in a great loss of revenue, as an effect of selling trees at a considerably reduced price on the false plea of inaccessible area which cannot be justified looking at the present good conditions of the market and moreover while persons were not wanting to purchase these trees at the usual rates. This policy of giving big coupes and selling trees to big contractors coming from outside the Province has also resulted in squeezing out the indigenous people of the Province from the lucrative timber business. So I would ask the Hon'ble Minister in charge to bestow his earnest attention on the subject and take this House into confidence by appointing a small committee consisting of the hon. members of this House, specially those who are interested in this Department, to go into the whole matter and report on the working of the administration of the Forest Department and submit suggestions thereon.

Sir, in passing, I cannot but briefly speak a few words regarding the administration of the Bijni Raj Court of Wards' Estate Forests. The state of affairs there is worse than that existing in Government Forests. In the name of improvement and sylvicultural treatment of Forests, a total destruction is being made of Forests there by marking big sound trees for improvement to favour big foreign contractors, violating the principles of improvement felling. Much loss of revenue to the estate coffers has resulted from the unchecked and unrestricted license given to the forest officers of the estate. Sir, I shall refrain from going into details at present and postpone it till the discussion on Demands for Grants come in, when I shall be able to convince the House about the deplorable state of affairs existing in the Department by bringing definite charges against the Forest Department. Sir, I want to refer to a very important subject to which, I hope, Government will soon devote their attention. It is about the cause of frequent floods in our Province. It has been admitted by the authorities on the subject that denudation and disforestation in the hills as the result of the practice of shifting cultivation (I mean *jhumming*), practised by the hill people, has been one of the causes of the persistent floods in the plains, especially at Nowgong. I do not know what has been done by the Government to give effect to the recommendations of its own experts. If it has not been done formerly, I want to request the Hon'ble Minister in charge to devote his early attention to this and to those persons who are afflicted by the floods owing to the failure of the Government in not giving effect to the recommendations of the Authorities—Reliefs in the shape of supplying forest materials free of cost should be given by the Forest Department.

Sir, the raiyats' grievances regarding fuel and collection of thatching grass should be considered sympathetically by the Minister. These rights which the people can claim as their birthrights should be extended without loss of time. In our district, I mean the district of Goalpara, these privileges existed from distant ages and owing to the policy of estate officers these rights have vanished, by adoption of coercive methods on the part of authorities. In order to ease the relations between the proprietors and tenants the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Revenue should lose no time to accede to the almost universal demand of the people in these matters. Lastly I cannot but condemn the shortsighted policy of the Forest Department in ousting the indigenous people of the Province from the timber business, as a result of which enormous wealth is passing year after year out of the Province. This must be put a stop to and the policy of the Government pursued so long should be changed *in toto* for the benefit of the poor tax-payers, whose welfare it is the duty of the Government to look after.

Sir, I bring to the notice of the Government the condition of the raiyats under the Zemindars in the district of Goalpara. The estates with which I am more concerned, I mean—the Mechpara and Bijni estates, are both of them under the management of the Court of Wards. The cost of management of the Bijni estate, *i.e.*, 15.9 per cent. as has been admitted by the Government, is too high and should be sufficiently reduced there being ample scope for it.

Sir, on a perusal of the statement containing the details of expenditure on the several works of improvement carried out by the estates, it can be said that a very small percentage is spent by the estates for the benefit of the raiyats. Sir, the rents assessed on the different classes of land in the Mechpara Estate are very high and it is very unfortunate that Government are taking no steps to stop the illegal increment of rents that has been made by the officers in contravention of the provisions of the Goalpara Tenancy Act.

THE HON'BLE the SPEAKER: The hon. member should finish.

SRIJUT JOGENDRA CHANDRA NATH: This exorbitant rent coupled with the low prices of agricultural produce and bad harvests year after year have brought the poor peasants to a stage, when, if the Government do not come to their rescue with some relief in the shape of granting sufficient reduction of rents, I am afraid, Sir, most of the lands of the peasants will pass over to the hands of the middle class.

Sir, a resolution recommending the Government to reduce the rents of the Mechpara and Bijni Estates was carried by the former Council and, if I remember aright, the Hon'ble Revenue Minister voted for the resolution.

May I now urge upon the Hon'ble Minister to devote his earnest attention to the matter and see what reduction can be granted to these people and thereby earn the blessings of the poor tenants, whose cause he so ably upheld during the last Legislature.

Sir, I would also request the Hon'ble Minister in charge to bring about a total discontinuance of the practice of filing certificate cases.....

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: I am sorry. I cannot allow any more time to the hon. member. He should sit down.

[At this stage the hon. member resumed his seat.]

BABU HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Sir, I do not feel much inclined to take up the budget discussion here as from my previous knowledge I find that this discussion is nothing but an academical discussion. Sir, year after year we put forward our innumerable grievances before Government, but we do not know how many of them are actually redressed. Still, Sir, although we know that our cries are lost in the wilderness we must be free to our conscience so I must say a few words here.

Sir, we have seen our Hon'ble Minister for Education very jubilant the other day while he was introducing the budget under his portfolio to this House. He was jubilant on the ground that he has been able to produce the biggest budget that was ever presented before the House, but after scrutiny I do not find any reason for his being so jubilant, as the Hon'ble Minister for Education has not done anything beyond scattering a few thousands of rupees here and a few thousands there as was done by his predecessors in previous years. Had he been able to put before the House a well-thought-out scheme for the development of either compulsory primary education or for re-enforcement of secondary education we could have thanked him and there would have been grounds for his jubilation, but in the absence of that I do not think that he is entitled to our appreciation.

The Hon'ble Minister has provided a petty sum of Rs.8,400 to promote secondary education amongst girls. I should say that this amount is ridiculously insufficient. Even in doing so he failed to consider the demand of many institutions. I would mention particularly the case of Girls' Middle English School at Hailakandi. We have been trying to raise it to the High School standard and after the last inspection of the Director of Public Instruction we thought that Government would at least provide some funds to enable us to raise the school, but to our utter disappointment we find that not a pie has been given to this institution. Sir, in Hailakandi there is no other girls' institution where the girls can receive higher education, therefore, I would request the Hon'ble Education Minister to see that that persistent demand of that backward place is met.

Now, Sir, coming to the Forest Department, I must confess that I cannot give a better description than that was given by my hon'ble friend Mr. Chanda the other day. This Forest Department is going on merrily having under it vast tracts of land which are fit for cultivation, but they do

not like the idea of settling that land with landless agriculturists. Sir, every year numerous petitions are submitted to the Subdivisional Officer and to the Deputy Commissioner of the district for settlement of land—the people are starving, they want land to cultivate. As agriculture is the only source of their livelihood they badly want land to feed themselves but to no effect. I do not know why Government should be so callous as not to settle this land with the landless people.

Then, Sir, a few words about the Veterinary Department. Sir, I do not know whether the Department is only a mere show. In my subdivision which is a pretty large one there is only one Veterinary Assistant Surgeon to look after the whole subdivision; when people come to headquarters they are told that he is not there. Nobody knows where he is as he is to run from one end of the subdivision to the other. The Local Board has on several occasions asked for funds to entertain another Veterinary Assistant, but Government have not cared to consider that request. Sir, if Government cannot provide suitable or sufficient staff it is useless to maintain an inadequate staff. And it is for that reason that people cannot appreciate the work and therefore think that this Department is doing no work.

Then, Sir, a few words about the Agriculture Department. The work of this Department is also not appreciated by the people. Nobody knows what this Department is doing. We know that there are some Farms in our province but I do not know what purposes are being served by them. I have enquired of the people living near these Farms whether they have learnt anything from these farms and to my great surprise I have found that they have not learnt anything from the officers of this Department. It might be a fact that these Agricultural people do not like to give demonstration to the cultivators. In my subdivision there is only one demonstrator. But he never goes to give any demonstrations and practical instructions to the cultivators as to how to grow important crops; but all that he does is to send reports to the Department that the weather is favourable for such and such crops, etc.

Besides that, I do not think he is doing any work. If that be the state of affairs I should suggest that it would be better to abolish this Department and the money available should be made over to the cultivators for the purpose of purchasing suitable plough cattle and other ploughing implements. I think if that be done, the portfolio of the Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture will be lightened and at the same time people will get some benefit.

With these words, Sir, I finish my speech.

SRIJUT KHOR SING TERANG: মাননীয় সভাপতি মহোদয়, মই পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ দৰে এই এছেম্বলি হাউচত কিছুমান বিষয়ে দুঃখপ্ৰকাশ কৰিব খুজিছোঁ। দুঃখপ্ৰকাশ কৰাৰ আগতে এই নতুন constituencyত পিচপৰা মিকিব সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ পৰা প্ৰতিনিধি হৈ এই এছেম্বলি হলত দুঃখপ্ৰকাশ কৰিব পৰাত আসাম গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট বাহাদুৰক অভ্যৰ্থনা কৰি বিশেষ ধন্যবাদ জনাইছোঁ।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, এই পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতি আদাম প্ৰদেশৰ ভিতৰত দৰং, খাচিয়া ভয়ন্তিয়া পাহাৰ, নগাঁও আৰু শিৱসাগৰ জিলাৰ ভিতৰত বাস কৰে বুলি জনা যায়। কিন্তু মই বিশেষ কৈ নগাঁও আৰু শিৱসাগৰ জিলাৰ ভিতৰত থকা বুলি জানোঁ। আৰু তেওঁ বিলাকৰ দৰে ভালকৈ বুজোঁ। পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতি বৰ নম্ৰ, শান্ত আৰু অকৰা জাতি পূৰ্বেই প্ৰচলিত নিয়মৰ বাহিৰে নতুন নিয়ম, নতুন বুদ্ধি থকাই প্ৰচলন কৰিব পৰা নাই। এই

জাতি ইমান ভয়াতুব য় সামান্ত মানুহে সামান্ত ধুতিখন যদি পিন্ধি গাবলৈ যায় তাক দেখিলে মটা মাইকি, লৰা ছোৱালী পলায় আক ভিতৰৰ পৰা নোলায়। এই জাতিটোক মানুহৰ তুল্য নধৰি হাবিত থকা পণ্ডশ্ৰেণীৰ তুল্য বুলি ধৰিব পাৰি। আজি ব্ৰিটিশ গৱৰ্ণমেণ্ট আসামত শাসন কৰা ১০০ বছৰতকৈও বেচিহৈ গল। তথাপি পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ কাৰণে কোনো খবৰ লোৱা নাই—তেওঁ বিলাকৰ শিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে স্কুল দিয়া নাই, অহাযোৱাৰ কাৰণে আলি দিয়া নাই আৰু বেমাৰ আক্ৰান্ত হলে দৰব খাবলৈ হাস্পাতাল নাই। সেই কাৰণে এই পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ মৃত্যুৰ সংখ্যা বেচি বৰুৱা দেখা গৈছে। যদি এই পিচপৰা জাতিৰ প্ৰতি, এই বিলাক বিষয়ে, গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ দৃষ্টি থাকিলহেঁতেন তেনেহলে আজিলৈকে তেওঁ বিলাকে পণ্ডৰ নিচিনা হৈ পিচপৰি নাথাকিলহেঁতেন। সভাপতি মহোদয়, আসাম গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে এই পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ প্ৰতি সন্মতি নবখাত অতি দুখৰ বিষয় হৈছে। গতিকে মই এই এছেম্বলিৰ জৰিয়তে আসাম গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টক অনুৰোধ কৰি জনাওঁ যে শিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে ৫৬ খন গাবৰ ভিতৰত এখন কৈ Lower Primary স্কুল দিয়ক আৰু পণ্ডিত জনক অইন জাগাতকৈ পিচপৰা পাহাৰী ঠাইৰ কাৰণে অলপ বেতন বঢ়াই দিয়ক। বেতন অলপ বঢ়াই নিদিলে পাহাৰী ঠাইত পণ্ডিত জনে থাকিবলৈ ইচ্ছা নকৰিব। আৰু প্ৰাইমাৰী শিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে যে বাজেটত ৫০,০০০ টকা ধৰা হৈছে সি গোটেইখন আসাম প্ৰদেশৰ কাৰণে কোনোবাকমে যথেষ্ট নহয়। গতিকে পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ কাৰণে যেনেকৈ নহওক এটা lump sum ৰেণ sanction কৰে। মিকিব পাহাৰৰ টকা পৰ্ব্বতত এটা নতুনকৈ Middle English স্কুল হব বুলি জানি অতি আনন্দ পাইছে। আৰু তাৰ কাৰণে গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টক ধন্যবাদ জনাইছোঁ।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, শিক্ষাৰ লগতে পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ অহাযোৱাৰ সুবিধাৰ কাৰণে আলিবাট দিয়ক। আলিবাটৰ সম্বন্ধে মোৰ ১১৭ নম্বৰ questionত আছে। সেই questionৰ উত্তৰত অনাবেবোল চীফ্ মিনিষ্টাৰ মহোদয়ে 'প্ৰশ্নকাৰী মেম্বৰে যদি suggestion দিয়ে তেন্তে সেই suggestion মতে কৰা হ'ব' বুলি প্ৰতিশ্ৰুতি দিছে। বৰ্তমান মোৰ suggestion এই যে প্ৰথমতে নগাৰৰ পাব খোৱাৰ পৰা আবন্তকৰি ফুলনী, বকলীয়া, মহন্তিজুয়াইদি এটা আলি বন্ধাই বোকাভানৱ ওচৰৰ গোলাঘাটৰ পৰা ডিমাপুৰৰ Public Works Department আলিত লগ লগাই দিয়ক। আৰু মহন্তিজুয়াৰ পৰা দিহুইল আৰু এটা আলি বাট দিয়ক। এই suggestion মতে অতি সোনকালে আলি বাট দিয়ক। এই খিনি আলি দিলে গৰীৰ পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ অহাযোৱা আৰু বস্ত কিনা বেচাৰ সুবিধা হবৰ বহুত আশা দেখা যায়। আলি বাট নোহোৱাত বস্ত কিনা বেচাৰ এনেকুৱা অনুবিধা হৈছে যে ১০ টকাৰ মাল ৫ টকাত বিক্ৰি যায় আৰু ৫ টকাৰ বস্ত ১০ টকাত কিনিব লগীয়া হৈছে।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, এই পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিটোৰ অৱস্থা বৰ শোচনীয়। বছৰত কৰা খেতিৰে এবছৰ খাবলৈ নোজোৰে; কাৰণ, বছৰত যি খেতি কৰা হয়, তাৰে খেতি কৰাৰ সময়ত মহাজনৰ পৰা অল্প ধাৰৰ টকা পৰিশোধ কৰিবলৈ যাওঁতে মূলতকৈ ৩৪ গুণ বেচি

দিব লগীয়া হয়। সেই বিনিমো বাকী পাবলৈ টান; গতিকে বাধ্য হৈ লব লগীয়া হয়। এই কাৰণেই পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিটোৱে আজিলৈকে উন্নতি কৰিব পৰা নাই। এই বিষয়ে আসাম গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট বাহাদুৰক অনুৰোধ কৰি জনাওঁ যে পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ খেতি বাতিৰ উন্নতিৰ নিমিত্তে বৰকাৰ অনুগ্ৰহে কিছু কিছু টকা কেই বছৰ মানৰ কাৰণে ধাৰলৈ দি সহায় কৰক। যদি হে গবৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ পৰা সেই সহায় নাপায় তেন্তে বৰ্তমান যি একোখন লেন্ডটা আছে সেই লেন্ডটা খনো মহাজনৰ ঘৰত বন্ধক দিব লাগিব। মহাজনে লেন্ডটা ধান বন্ধক লৈ টকা দিবনে? নিদিলে উপায় কি হব? গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট বাহাদুৰে যেন সুবিবেচনা কৰি এই ১২৩৭।৩৮ চনৰ পৰাই গৰীব প্ৰজাৰ কাৰণে এটা সুবন্দোবস্ত কৰি দিয়ে। যদিহে নকৰে তেন্তে গবৰ্ণমেণ্টক দিব লগীয়া খাজানাও দিব পৰা নহব। ঘৰ ফ্ৰোক কৰিবলৈ হলেও বাহৰ চূড়া কেইটা মানহে পাব।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ শোচনীয় অৱস্থা আৰু অশিক্ষিত হোৱাৰ মূল কাৰণ হৈছে কানি খোৱাই। এই জাতিৰ ভিতৰত শতকৰা ২২ জনে কানি খায়। ইয়াৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰায় আধা ভাগৰ পট্টা আছে আৰু আধা ভাগৰ পট্টা নাই। যিবিলাকৰ পট্টা নাই সিহঁতৰ প্ৰায় ভাগেই চোৰাং কানি খায় আৰু প্ৰায় ভাগেই আইনৰ পৰা পট্টা খুৰি আনি কানি খায়। চোৰাং কানি বিক্ৰি কৰা আৰু পট্টা বিক্ৰি কৰা প্ৰথাটোৰ প্ৰতি গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে বিশেষ দৃষ্টি ৰাখিলে বৰ ভাল আছিল। অতীত জাতি বিলাকৰ কানী-য়াৰ পট্টাৰ পৰা 10 per cent. 20 per cent কৈ কানি কাটিব লাগিছে; কিন্তু পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ কানিৰ পট্টাৰ কানি কটা নাই। কানি কাটক চাৰি ডাক্তৰৰ চাৰ্টিফিকেট লব পাৰিলে নতুন পট্টা পাব পাৰে বুলি ডাক্তৰ আৰু Subdivisional Officer চাহাবে ঠায়ে ঠায়ে গৈ ধুমাধুম নতুন পট্টা দিব লাগিছে। আৰু যুগ্মক বানাক কৈ শুনিবলৈ পালে। যে নতুন আসাম ব্যৱস্থাপক সভাই কানিৰ সম্বন্ধে কি কৰা তালৈহে বাট চাই আছে। যদিহে এই সভাৰ পৰা অলপমান ইঙ্গিত পায় তেন্তে আকৌ ধুমাধুম পট্টা দিয়া হব। তেওঁলোকে মাত্ৰ এই সভালৈ বাট চাই আছে। এতেকে এই ব্যৱস্থাপক সভাক মই অনুৰোধ কৰি জনাওঁ যে মিকিব পাহাৰত চোৰাং কানি বিক্ৰি কৰা, পট্টা বিক্ৰি কৰা আৰু নতুন পট্টা দিবলৈ গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে সাহু হৈ থকা কথা যাতে বন্ধ হয় তাৰ নিমিত্তে যেন ব্যৱস্থা কৰে।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, যোৱা কালি মোৰ বন্ধু অনাৰ্বেবোল মেথৰ শ্ৰীযুত শঙ্কৰ চন্দ্ৰ বৰুৱাই কৈছে যে বৰপথাৰ আৰু সৰুপথাৰ মৌজা মিকিব হিল area ৰ লগত জাপি দিছে। বাস্তৱিকই ই অতি দুঃখৰ বিষয়। বৰপথাৰ আৰু সৰুপথাৰ মৌজাৰ ভিতৰত ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ মহাজন, ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ মানুহ আৰু বহুত বিদ্বান লোকে বাস কৰে। তেওঁলোকে কিয় মিকিব আইনৰ অধীনত থাকিব? আৰু পিচ পৰা মিকিব জাতিৰ কাৰণেনো কিয় বেলেগ বিচাৰ ৰাখিব? পিচপৰা মিকিব জাতি কি মানুহ নহয়। তেওঁবিলাকৰ ওপৰত কোনো বিচাৰ নাই, ভয় নাই, হাইকোৰ্ট নাই, জিলাৰ ডিপুটী

কমিছনাৰে যি ইচ্ছা তাকে কৰিবলৈ গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট বাহাৰুৰে বিচাৰেনে ? পিচ পৰা জাতি শিক্ষিত জাতিৰ লগত আদান প্রদান কৰিবলৈ নিদিলে পিচপৰা জাতিয়ে কেনেকৈ উন্নতি কৰিব পাৰিব ? এতেকে গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট বাহাৰুৰক জনাও যে পিচপৰা মিকিৰ জাতিৰ বাবে political আইন নকৰি বা সামান্য আইনৰ লগত বেলেগ নকৰি যাতে সকলোৰে লগত আদান প্রদান চলাব পাৰে, তাৰ কাৰণে গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে সুবিবেচনা কৰে যেন ।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, আসাম গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে পিচপৰা মিকিৰ জাতিৰ পৰা হাউচ টেক্স, মাটিৰ খাজানা, লাৰ বয়েলটি, বেট, বাঁহ, খেৰ আদিৰ বয়েলটি আৰু Excise Departmentৰ কানিৰ পৰা বহুত টাকা পায় । কিন্তু এই বিলাক টকা আসাম গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে পিচপৰা মিকিৰৰ কাৰণে সমূলি খৰচ কৰা নাই । প্রত্যেকে গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট বাহাৰুৰে ওপৰত উল্লেখ কৰা মতে পিচ পৰা মিকিৰ জাতিৰ কাৰণে সুদৃষ্টি ৰাখে যেন ।

SRIJUT DHIRSING DEURI: Sir, much has been discussed about the present budget from different points of view. I need not go further into its details. However it will be my first and foremost duty to express my gratitude to the British Parliament as we have the greatest opportunity of representing our grievances in this Assembly.

The present budget is practically a surplus one. But it is clear to all that it has failed to meet the growing demands and needs of the people of the province. In these days of economic distress, Sir, the condition of the cultivators is so deplorable that, not to speak of the nation building problem, they are now on the verge of starvation.

Sir, I consider the Assembly is completely responsible for the uplift of these poor cultivators who are eagerly looking to Government for their relief. This year there is very scanty rainfall in districts of the Assam Valley. Cultivators will have to die for want of food not to speak of their having to pay revenue.

Sir, if you look at the vast areas covered by the whole Brahmaputra Valley extending from the western end of the district of Goalpara to the eastern extremity of the north-eastern frontier district, you will find in almost all the places that the backward Tribal people are found in large numbers. From time immemorial these people are living in economic distress, without receiving any help or sympathy from Government and struggling hard for their bare existence. Some of my hon. friends have already spoken about our grievances. The safeguarding of the interests of these people has already become a great problem at this time. Unless the proper attention of Government is drawn to this and their burning demands are met, immediately, I am sure, Sir, that these people will be extinct from the land. Let me point out, Sir, to the hon. members of this House to-day that it was these Tribal people, especially the Cacharis, that have brought honour to this province of Assam by fighting and sacrificing their lives in the last great European War for the British cause. These people should not be negligible factors in the eye of Government.

Now, Sir, I should like to take the opportunity of speaking something about my constituency. I have come as the representative of the backward Tribal people of the plains from the Nowgong district. Sir, there is a newly started High school at Raha, which is not yet getting any aid from Government, though the public of the locality are trying their utmost for

substantial help. I should like to add here that the school is situated in backward areas and will be much helpful to the backward Tribal and depressed classes who constitute a very large number there. It will be impossible to maintain the school any longer if Government do not give immediate help to it. I hope the Hon'ble Education Minister will provide some money towards the maintenance of the said Raha High School.

Sir, I do not like to confine myself to my district, but would like to say a few words about the backward Tribal community in general. In the district of Kamrup the backward Tribal people have started Middle English Schools at Barama and Gaureswar, which may be said to be the centre of this community. I would also draw the special attention of the Hon'ble Education Minister to the Kokrajhar High English School in the northern part of the district of Goalpara, which is the only high school started for giving secondary education to the tribal and other backward people. Sufficient grants should be allotted to these schools.

Now, Sir, I would beg to draw the attention of Government to the grievances of the villagers of Karaiguri and Oabari in the mauza of Tetalia in the district of Nowgong. These villages have been infected with *kala azar* and malaria for a long time. Within a short space of time more than 30 deaths occurred, but Government officers did not take proper care of these poor sufferers. It seems to me that Government officers place much importance on mere formalities than on realities. Sir, is it not the duty of the Government officers to take immediate steps to relieve the poor sufferers by giving them proper medical aid?

Sir, there are a lot of things to be said before the House regarding the backward Tribal people. I have given expression to only a few of them. I hope the grievances of these people will be properly redressed. With these few words I resume my seat.

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD ABDUS SALAM : Sir, allow me to congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister and his Hon'ble Colleagues for the lucid budget they have presented before the House in a very short period and under circumstances over which they had hardly any control. In doing so, I must not lose sight of the defects that have cropped up in the first budget of the autonomous province of Assam.

Sir, I am not going to criticize the budget now. I only wish to draw the attention of the House to the following grievances and demands of the people I represent. Most of the hon. members of this House are aware that Jaintia pargana is the only temporarily-settled area in the district of Sylhet. Though belonging to a far advanced district like Sylhet, and though it pays large amounts as land revenue and local rates, it is ever neglected in respect of education, communication and sanitation. Sir, Jaintia Pargana contributes much to the income of the North Sylhet Local Board, which for this reason can boast of having the greatest income of all the local boards in the province. But the local board cares little for ameliorating the conditions of education, communication and sanitation of the locality. Sir, the area is far behind time in modern education. About 99 per cent. of the population is composed of uneducated agriculturists. There are only 90 primary schools and makhtabs throughout the whole area consisting of no less than 700 villages. Jaintia deserves the special attention of Government in this respect.

As regards communication, excepting the portion of Sylhet-Shillong Road lying between Dawki and Haripur, Jaintia has got practically no road communication worthy to be mentioned. Some of the local board roads have been turned into impenetrable forest *mahals*. Within this long period of 101 years of British rule the two most important places, Gowainghat and

Kanaighat in Jaintia have not up to this day been connected by a suitable road, which is a crying need of the people. I ask the Hon'ble Minister for the Public Works Department to take notice of it kindly.

Sir, Jaintia Pargana is an abode of malaria and cholera, which visit it every year and take a heavy toll. Adequate medical relief is urgently needed.

Sir, antiquated invidious Forest laws and regulations have also brought untold miseries on the people of Jaintia. On flimsical grounds and sometimes on no grounds they are very often harassed and prosecuted for cutting and selling fire-wood from their private land and for taking grass for fodder from unclassified State Forest. As they have no grazing land for their cattle, they are very often forced by circumstances to take grass from Government land.

Sir, for selling fire-wood from their own holding about 500 wood cutters of Rajaganj and the neighbouring villages in Jaintia have been harassed, prosecuted and fined heavily for nothing. I urge upon Government to exempt them from fines and to make arrangement for them to cut and sell fire-wood from their own land at large.

The Hon'ble Minister of Education has been criticised by some hon. members that he could find money for Madrassas and no money for other nation-building departments. This remark, I think, is the most uncharitable one in view of the fact that Sylhet has got a first grade Sanskrit College of many years standing, the expenditure of which far exceeds that of Sylhet Government Madrasa. But the hon. member has not got a word to say against it. The institution of Title Classes in the Sylhet Government Madrasa for the provision of higher Islamic studies is welcomed by the Muslims from all sides.

It does not look well on the part of the popular Government not to provide money for the opening of the Medical School at Sylhet, the buildings of which are being wasted for nothing. In this connection, Sir, I may suggest to the Hon'ble Ministers to see if they could not start the work of opening the said Medical School out of the closing balance of Rs.2,26,000 which has been shown in the budget.

One word more and I finish. Much criticism has been hurled against the provision that has been made for the Ministers' salary. I think Sir, in this connection the prestige of Assam is concerned. We should give our Ministry a salary which will keep them above reproach.

SRIJUT PARAMANANDA DAS: My hon. friend Khan Sahib Maulavi Sayidur Rahman asked a very pertinent question—'what a critic of the budget would have done had he been the Finance Minister'? I am a critic of the budget but I am not Finance Minister. So I cannot tell what I should have done exactly in his position. However I shall answer his question to the best of my ability.

In case I would have been the Finance Minister I would have a majority behind me. With the help of that majority I would have effected reforms, of course within the four corners of the Government of India Act, 1935. First of all I would have conciliated the masses by reducing the land revenue to a proper extent. By using the adjective proper I mean I would have ascertained to what extent the prices of commodities have fallen with the aid of an economist. He would have supplied me the index figure indicating the fall. I would have proposed reduction of land revenue to that extent which the index figure warranted.

Secondly, I would have cancelled all the licenses granted to opium-eaters of Assam. This would not have created any disadvantage of the opium-eaters, because I know, in jails opium-eaters do not feel the want of that

substance. That would not have sufficed me, I should have appointed informers at the place of origin so that smuggling could not take place. Besides this there would have remained the usual excise officers to prevent smuggling. I would have stopped all licenses of country liquor shops in tea garden areas, for I know these shops are degenerating labourers, their income is limited; if they spend their paltry income on drugs they will be obliged to fast at least two days a week. Excise officers would have been on vigorous look out, so that illicit manufacture might not take place. I fear excise officers would not have been able to stop altogether illicit manufacture. In spite of all these illicit manufactures, I would have cancelled licenses of country liquor shops in those areas, for I cannot appreciate the argument, because I cannot detect illicit manufacture, others should be allured to drink that drug. I would have made provisions for education of these people, for I know their cheap labour is an important factor for the development of the province.

But, Sir, partial remission of land revenue, total refusal of opium licenses and stoppage of country liquor to tea garden labourers would have entailed a deficit in the revenue of Government. In order to make up that deficiency I would have put a cut upon all salaries from Rs.50 and upwards on a rising scale, that is, bigger the salary bigger the percentage of cuts. I know I could not have been able to touch the salaries of services termed 'Imperial'. But I would have tried to persuade these officers so that they might part with a portion of their salaries by way of cut. I might have been successful or not, but I would not have cared for that at all. I would have taxed the cinema-goers, I would have levied provincial income-tax and would have enhanced the death duties. By this way I would have made up the deficit and I would have done many things more after taking the opinion of committees which I would have appointed before the budget session of the Assembly, namely, the retrenchment committee and the development committee.

Sir, this is my ideal. If anything falls short of that ideal in the budget I must criticise it, for without ruthless criticism I cannot achieve my object. The budget falls short of our expectation. My hon. friend Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan has very aptly remarked that you will get everything in the budget except provision for the peasants and labourers upon whom the whole political and economic structure stands. Sir, we hoped our popular Ministers would face the agrarian problems and labour problems boldly. That should be the starting point of every national budget worth the name.

Now, Sir, I turn to our local subjects. We live in Zemindary areas of Goalpara district. There too distress due to economic depression is very acute. Certificate cases have swelled up; many have been compelled to quit their hearth and home in order to satisfy the rent demands of the Court of Wards. Many have lost everything, in cash, in cattle and in ornaments in order to save their homesteads and agricultural lands. We are paying rents year in and year out, but we do not get anything in return from the proprietors. In the temporarily-settled districts people have at least the consolation that their money is being utilised by their own Government, but we have not even that. Government are by honour bound not to touch the revenue which they are to get from the proprietors, they can neither increase nor decrease it. Sir, may I not ask our Council of Ministry to legislate on the line that the proprietors must spend a portion of the rents they get for the welfare of their tenants? Sir, our Subdivision is under-represented in Provincial and Subordinate services. The only M. B. passed man of our Subdivision has not yet been able to secure any Government service.

In our subdivision there are about 150 venture schools still unrecognised by educational authorities ; the Local Board, Goalpara, has not sufficient sum to make any provision for them.

In matters of communication our district specially our subdivision is far behind other districts of Assam. Though about the whole length of Assam Trunk Road has been metalled or improved otherwise, the section from Lakhipur to Fakirganj has been allowed to rot. From the reply of the Hon'ble Minister for Public Works Department we learn that this section is only a fair weather cartable track.

Sir, we have only one road maintained by the Public Works Department on the North bank of the Goalpara subdivision. This road is the only outlet for Goalpara town people to Eastern Bengal Railway. On the third mile of that road there is a rivulet named Haripani. There is a Public Works Department ferry.

Sir, it is a strange thing that as soon as the economic depression set in, the ferry rates have been doubled, even trebled in the case of carts. Indeed the road has been completely gravelled lately, but the people are feeling keenly the want of a bridge over the Haripani. Nobody now wishes to open bus service from Jogighopa to Bongaigaon for want of this bridge. Sir, in our subdivision journey is very difficult this time. I had to pass full 23 miles in a buffalo cart to reach Bongaigaon. It took me 11 hours. As regards ferry rates we hope that our popular Minister would revise the Public Works Department ferry rates ; but I find no indication whatsoever in the Budget figures.

Sir, I now turn to the Budget figures. Local bodies are to get Rs.8,63,676 as grant for primary education. There is a provision of Rs.30,227 for excluded areas. I hope in the matter of venture schools, other local boards are in similar position to what I described about Goalpara Local Board. Our primary school teachers are very underpaid. Their scale of pay needs revision. These teachers want the scale of pay which is allowed in Government primary schools. Without improving their pay, we cannot expect improvement in teaching. Again there is another factor, namely female education which is in a very backward state. In this connection, I wish to bring to the notice of the House that the curriculum followed in these girls' schools should be radically changed. With literary education all other domestic works besides knitting and weaving need be introduced. Sir, we have enough of educated youth vagabonds out of the present system of education. We do not want vagabond spinsters any more. Will the sum allotted suffice for the growing needs of the province ? Our popular Minister of Education before allotting the lump sum of Rs.50,000 for the expansion of primary education should have surveyed the whole situation, and then made adequate provisions. The plain thing is that in the interests of primary education we need revision of the Budget. There is an item of grant of Rs.20,000 to local bodies for special education. If that means industrial education, then the sum is quite insufficient.

Sir, under head Medical, we find a provision is made for the new Sadiya Hospital. Is there no need of any hospital in other parts of the province ? With the exception of a contribution to Goalpara Dispensary Female Ward, for which we are grateful, and a contribution to Barpeta Leper Asylum, we find no other grants made to local boards for any new medical project. Sir,

the only redeeming feature of the Medical Budget is that for the first time Rs.8,000 have been set apart as subsidy to rural medical practitioners. I hope this scheme will be a successful one and it is likely to do some good to village people.

Sir, I shall now discuss the grants to local bodies from the Head—Public Health. In this connection, I shall not bring the contribution of India Government for economic development of rural areas within the picture at all. Sir, we have just claimed upon the revenue of Government for such matters as water supply and sanitation. From the Budget figures we find an allotment of Rs.16,050 for water supply which sum is to go to Tezpur Municipality and Rs.30 only to Garo Hills District Fund. But I ask the pertinent question—“Does the Hon’ble Minister for Public Health think that he has discharged his responsibility towards the local bodies by granting those Rs.16,080?”

I shall now discuss grants to local bodies under Head—Civil Works. Here too I shall not bring in the contribution from India Government into the discussion. I find the cut in the grant-in-aid last year has been restored. But we expected our popular Finance Minister would double that grant-in-aid. However, some credit goes to him.

Now, Sir, I shall discuss Budget provisions under sub-head—Communications. Here too I shall not bring the subvention from the Road Development Fund into the picture, in order to show how far our popular Minister has discharged responsibilities regarding this out of the revenue of the Government. I find a provision of Rs.7,600 has been made for original work and in communication a provision of Rs.25,000 has been charged in this head. The Hon’ble Minister has provided Rs.17,99,700 (voted)—Rs.300 charged—Rs.3,45,500 for Excluded areas for repair works. But I submit, Sir, Government are bound to spend these sums inasmuch as a sick man must spend something on medicine if he wishes to live longer. The thing is, we need expansion. Without all round expansion the economic factors operating are disturbed, and stagnation comes in and with the stagnation comes spiritual death.

MAULAVI JAHANUDDIN AHMED: Sir, let me congratulate the Hon’ble the Finance Minister on his presentation of the budget in so nice a manner. The estimated income of the year under the consideration has, unlike the budget of the other years, shown a surplus of two lakhs and twenty-six thousands.

Criticisms have been levelled from all quarters of this House as to the nature of the budget being very much narrow in outlook, lack of foresight and statesmanship. But, Sir, within a space of 4 months of the regime of this Ministry, as we find, a fair attempt to grapple the burning needs and problems affecting the mass and solution of unemployment has been done.

But, Sir, in a province where 72 per cent. of the people are agriculturists the Government of Assam have not thought of even establishing an agricultural school and have rest satisfied with having made provisions only for a few fat salaried officers who care very little for visiting the rural areas, rather than look into the improved mode of cultivation, better fieldwork and manuring and see to the marketing of their produce to get a proper yield of their labour.

The agricultural indebtedness of the poor cultivators is a patent fact. The Assam Money Lenders Act, and setting up rural arbitration boards for settlement of debts are no doubts healthy and laudable measures. But the effect of these should reach the poor cultivators through gradual training of the mass mind and liberal education.

Sir, in a province like Assam and in keeping with the past history of bright traditions and self-respect the establishment of a University and a High Court was much expected. And the Council of Ministers receive no good praise for want of such a much needed measure and lack of attempt at such a vital question of the province.

Sir, there is no knowing how long the province of Assam shall have to continue to be tagged with the sister province of Bengal. The figures obtained does give us a hope that it would be quite within our means to have the project materialised.

The total annual recurring expenditure which the Government of Assam is to bear for the maintenance of the Calcutta High Court as share cost and for Law officers is one lakh and sixty-one thousand. The present sale of court-fees to Assam by the Calcutta High Court is 18 thousand and for the enrolment of Advocates Assam pays Rs.7,000, to the Calcutta High Court. Thus a sum of Rs.25,000 is annually paid to the Calcutta High Court as her quota from Assam which will be double if not more, if a High Court is established with a total present annual income of two lakhs eleven thousand.

Sir, the figures obtained do not disappoint us but a well thought-out plan is required so as to have the project fructified. Sir, about the University, I have no figures with me at present but I suppose, Sir, the examination fees realised from the students of Assam are sufficient for the establishment of a University in Assam, about which a statement was made by the Hon'ble Finance Minister since years back. Sir, it is no longer self-respecting neither profitable to be a continual hanger on the sister province of Bengal, when with a little statesmanship and bold ministerial policy we can have the same materialised.

Sir, supply of good drinking water to the entire province is a crying need. The need is so vitally connected with the very existence of the masses that Sir, scanty provision of drinking water for the entire population of the province is more than a passing phase. I am sure, Sir, no good Government can overlook such a pressing need of its people when to their very face they see that thousands of people are dying of all sorts of epidemics every year owing to want of good drinking water. Sir, the memorable earthquake of 1931 rendered unfit the few tanks and wells that we had in the district of Goalpara and Sir, may I submit that any provision to supply the district with some good drinking water would be more than a smile of favour.

BABU KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Sir, the budget that has been presented before us has been laboured out as a surplus one, inspite of debts to the Government of India. The allegation of irresponsibility that was levelled against us yesterday by the Hon'ble Finance Minister may well be directed against him in return for the presentation of such a budget, which is calculated to be a deficit one. This budget deserves to be thrown out in its entirety. Illiteracy amongst peasantry, unemployment among the middle classes and tenantry, economic distress in the villages have not drawn the serious attention of the hon. members of this cabinet who are also the representatives of these aggrieved people. Sir, we cannot tolerate the idea of taxation on the poor villagers. Revenue from forests, excise, stamps and court-fees, etc., should be gradually curtailed. Expenditure under certain heads should also be increased to give relief to the poor people. Sir, though I know that it will be a cry in the wilderness my suggestion to Government would be how to make good the loss to be sustained in case of decrease in revenue and increase in the expenditure, if made according to the suggestions that have already been made on the floor of this House. My suggestions would be as follows—Provincial and subordinate services should be

amalgamated. I do not understand why persons having same qualifications and same standard of education in both services should be unjustly subjected to different grades of pay and prospects. So this amalgamation, if effected, will make a substantial amount of savings, in the budget. I should also suggest that all the posts of the Heads of Departments should be abolished. The Secretaries to Government should function the duties of these abolished posts. Some posts of Deputy Secretaries, Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries should be increased. In place of departmental experts persons who are specially versed in certain subjects should be appointed the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Under-Secretary in departments in which these subjects are dealt with. At the time of selection and distribution of duties the extent of responsibilities should be taken into consideration, as for instance Director of Public Instruction should be the Education Secretary and under him the Director of Agriculture should function as Deputy Secretary and Director of Industries as Under-Secretary and all these Secretaries should have Assistant Secretaries, who should be recruited from the Secretariat Assistants. The present Head Assistants are sufficiently qualified to perform the function of these Assistant Secretaries. The posts of the Head Assistants and Registrars are not required. Senior Assistants will be quite competent to remain in-charge of each of these subjects. It is an undeniable fact that the office works of all Government offices are really performed by these Assistants. Most of the high officials drawing large amount of salaries spend their time in gaiety, in game and in race courses and finish their duties in putting their signatures in files prepared by their Assistants. There cannot be any questions regarding the efficiency of these Assistants and we need not go very far for citing an example. Sir, as I have no time to go into the detail I am sorry, I cannot show by working out comparative figures of the proposed gradation of salaries of each of the Secretaries and Assistants and of all the Heads of the Departments how a huge amount of money can be saved without affecting the efficiency in any way.

Sir as regards public works, it is most regrettable that scanty provision has been made in the budget for the irrigation purposes. An irrigation branch is an urgent necessity to save the poor agriculturists who form the bulk of the population of the province, from utter destruction. Their crops are constantly being damaged by dearth of water and floods and their lands remain uncultivated for want of proper supply of water. Canals and wells are required to be excavated for irrigating the fields. Bunds are to be constructed for accumulating water and for the checking of floods. The people of Sunamganj subdivision specially suffer often from all these natural calamities but this subdivision is always neglected. Sunamganj always remains unthought of and uncared for and unlooked after. Immediate steps should be taken to construct bunds in Abuna Khal near village Pirojpur under police station Sunamganj, in Rotta Khal near Sukhair under police station Dharampassa, in Gaglakhal under police station Dharampassa and in Fehidala under police station Jagannathpur. It is highly regrettable that no provision has been made under head—Original Works Communications for Sunamganj though from the birth of the town till now not a pie has been spent for this unfortunate subdivision. I appeal to the members of the Communications Board to remember this unlucky subdivision. A good deal of saving may be affected in the provisions made in the budget for the expenditure in the Public Works Department. It is absolutely unnecessary that there should be any residential buildings. Officers can easily live in hired houses which are always available in the town. All the old buildings should be sold at once and the scheme

for construction of new works should be abandoned. The construction of work detailed in items 19 and 21 of the Public Works Department budget estimate for original works under 50.—Civil Works should be stopped.

The construction of police stations in Beanibazar and Barleka are quite unnecessary. It is quite possible for the police officers to rule the jurisdictions under proposed police stations from Jaldhup. The work can be well managed if they remain in camps in alternate batches. I know, Sir, it is not difficult for these officers to find camps in villages. The police officers belong to ever privileged class of Government though they do more harm to the people than good. The oppression of innocents and showing favour to the real culprits are almost the daily doings of the police officials.

The post of the Superintending Engineers should be abolished. The intermediate department is quite unnecessary. The Executive Engineers will be able to manage the duties performed by the Superintending Engineers and have direct correspondence with the Public Works Department Secretariat. The Chief Engineer should not be given the special allowance. He is only performing the duties of the Secretary. A Chief Engineer does nothing except checking the plans of buildings and roads. His tour in Mofussils is a formal one. I knew one Chief Engineer who spent his time in holiday excursion and in other games. In the absence of game for hunting he felt himself satisfied in catching even a small butterfly and showing it to his companions with the remark "See what a beautiful animal I have caught". The post of the Registrar should be abolished. This post has no other functions than the distribution of receipts. If the Minister in charge cannot find others for doing these duties he should himself take charge of this distribution. I regret that out of Rs.27,800 shown in the budget to be utilized for some new schemes, nothing is to be spent for the Sunamganj subdivision although to protect that town from the erosion of the Surma river is an urgent necessity.

MAULAVI BADARUDDIN AHMED: Sir, the budget we are discussing is said to be a balanced budget, but on close scrutiny of the mass of figures I find the budget is not so imposing as it looks. With a deficit of 32 lakhs in the year 1936-37 and a liability of 90 lakhs the budget cannot be called a surplus budget. I must say that I am disappointed to find the budget of the autonomous Government in its present complexion. With the change in the system of accounts I anticipated a budget distinct in its character from the budgets hitherto presented to this House. But alas that is not to be. I sympathise with the Hon'ble Ministers in this uncomfortable position.

So far as my Subdivision is concerned the budget is still more disappointing to me. Mangaldai, as the hon. members know, is backward in all respects. Its communication is bad. Its water is undrinkable. It is backward in matters of education and rural sanitation. But what do I find in the Budget? There is no provision whatsoever for the improvement of this neglected subdivision in any direction.

Sir, I come from the Darrang Muslim Constituency. The Muslim Community of Darrang is proverbially poor and backward in point of education. The hon. members will be surprised to hear that only in last year one Assamese Muslim boy could pass the Matriculation Examination from the Tezpur Subdivision during the whole of the British regime. This is really pitiable. The hon. members should not think that no Muslim boys come and read, but in the town

they do not get any place for their stay under suitable guardians nor is there a hostel for them worth the name. After a few years' reading in the School as soon as they come in contact with the undesirable persons they discontinue going to school and mar their whole future career. Is not Government responsible for these young men? The Hon'ble Minister in charge has not thought it proper to make some provision in this direction in the Budget.

Again, Sir, Mangaldai is one of the subdivisions of Darrang District. It is a most neglected part of the Province. There is one Government High School. The plinth of the School building is still a *katcha* one. In the months of *Phalgun* and *Chaitra* the plinth becomes full of dust. Every step of a boy accompanied with strong wind in *Phalgun* month makes the rooms full of dust. Is it hygienic, Sir? Are not the lives of the children reading in the School as much valuable as the lives of those of the authority concerned?

There is a Moslem Hostel; I need not say much of it. The Hon'ble Chief Minister when he was practising as a pleader saw this hostel building. It consists of 8 or 9 thatched houses lying in the background of the imposing Town Middle Vernacular School Building. The hostel buildings are hardly visible from the sadar road. The condition of the hostels (the less said the better) is worse than so many stables. I cannot refrain from saying that the condition of the Hindu Hostel is almost the same. This also is situated near the theatre Hall. The boarders used to dance and jump to the tune of the harmonium when any play is staged in the Hall. Although the Government has reserved a site for the Hostel buildings they have not thought it proper to remove the Hostel to the site as yet. In the Budget of 1936-37 Government was pleased to make a provision for the construction of a Muslim Hostel with the Superintendent's quarters, but as a measure of economy the scheme was postponed in the revised estimates of the year. In the present Budget although there is a surplus the scheme has been altogether dropped. It is a misfortune for the Mangaldai public that when any economic measure is to be adopted, the Government withdraws the grant already made to it. Before the Sylhet Flood a grant of 55 thousand rupees for a water-works at Mangaldai Town was made. But when funds for the relief of the flood stricken people were required the Government was pleased to transfer the grant to the relief work. We do not grudge it. But it is most deplorable that from that year the Government has not considered the fate of the people of the Mangaldai town, although Government admits that the water of the town is notoriously bad.

Sir, the Co-operative movement as it is reported from the other provinces is found working wonders towards the uplift of the villagers. But in our province, specially in the Mangaldai Subdivision, as I have seen, due to lack of proper supervision and want of required inculcation of spirit of educative value of the movement, taking of loans from the Co-operative Societies appears to be a horror to the villagers. Many of the Societies have gone into liquidation due to the fault of the office-bearers who in some cases issued loans to persons without considering their repaying capacity and in some cases issued loans to themselves in reality giving names of some imaginary persons. In the long run when the loans became quite irrecoverable the societies wind up their business. The members of the Village Societies being responsible to unlimited liability the entire liability is recovered from the few solvent members,

which leads the movement towards the verge of unpopularity among the villagers. The Registrar considers himself to have finished his work after inspecting the accounts of the few roadside Societies. Will this sort of work do any good to the country, Sir? A simple visit to a Society will no doubt make the Registrar and his staff entitled to draw travelling allowance, but this will do nothing towards the betterment of the villages unless there should be a separate and distinct class of officers specially trained to inculcate the beneficial side of the movement. In the budget I am surprised to see that though some provision has been made to train the existing inspecting staff in this direction no provision has been made to maintain a separate audit staff. Unless the staff be strengthened those trained officers will get very little time to devote themselves to the education side of the movement after doing their ordinary audit work. If the budget is really a surplus one I do not see why Government failed to make a provision to maintain a separate audit staff.

Sir, in the distribution of Government grants to the Local Boards I find Government has not hitherto followed any principle. The Government policy of distributing grants to Local Boards should be based not on requirements but should be in proportion to local rates realised by each Board. Owing to Government not following this policy the Mangaldai Local Board has suffered a good deal.

Sir, for the administration of the Rural Development Fund and proper and timely utilization of the allotments made to the districts, the District Committees should be re-organised with the present members of the Legislature.

Sir, the surplus amount has been kept over to meet the demand at the time of emergency. I have nothing to say about it. Sir, to prevent the frequent recurrence of floods in the different parts of the province a bold step is called for. Government may consider the advisability of opening an Irrigation Department in Assam as a preliminary step in that direction.

Sir, most of the electorates in my constituency are illiterate. They do not understand what is a balanced budget and what is a deficit budget and they also do not want to know that. They want a reduction in land revenue, good drinking water, a drop of medicine during their time of illness, and facility for education. Sir, the first and foremost demand of my constituency is the reduction in land revenue. Government should find out ways and means to grant a reduction in the land revenue at least.

With these few words I beg to resume my seat.

BABU BALARAM SIRCAR: Sir, at the outset I thank the British Parliament for allocation of so many seats in this House to the Tribal, Backward and Depressed class people. Formerly the House was monopolised by certain chosen classes, but to-day it offers a different spectacle. We find in this Chamber to-day from a high class Brahmin to a Pariah even. This is due to the liberal and broad political view of the British people for which they deserve heartfelt thanks of the down-trodden dumb masses of the classes referred to above.

Sir, I now turn to the budget. Prior to my speaking anything about it I beg to draw the attention of the House to the Depressed Class Conference held in this very Hall in 1934 at the instance of Government. The aims and objects of the Conference were to ameliorate the condition of the said classes. Accordingly the members representing the depressed classes passed some resolutions, *viz.*—

(1) a scheme for the spread of education amongst the depressed classes;

- (2) reservation of seats in the various Boards ;
- (3) proper share in Public Services ; and
- (4) settlement of waste lands, excise and opium shops, forest mahals, fishery mahals and ferries, etc.

Though more than two years have elapsed no action on these resolutions has been taken by Government, and they waited patiently for their countrymen of the Reformed Council to whom all powers of Government have been transferred by the Government of India Act, 1935, to do something on their behalf. But to our utter misfortune and disappointment we find no improvement at all. The budget presented to the House repeats the old story. No provision has been made for the uplift of these classes. They are allowed to remain where they were.

Sir, it is a known fact that the depressed classes as a whole are very poor. As such they cannot afford to meet the educational expenses of their children. Consequently 99 per cent. of the people are illiterate. Therefore if there is any class that requires Government support and encouragement it is the depressed class only. Instead, we find in the budget the handsome grants allotted to Missionary School, Madrassas, private Colleges, etc., but not a cowrie is provided to spread education amongst the depressed classes, and thereby Government have ignored and overlooked the demands totally of a needy class of people.

Sir, in rural areas it will be seen that almost all schools are located in places where there are a sufficient number of enlightened people far far away from the depressed class localities. This being the case the little boys of the depressed classes feel too much inconvenience to attend schools situated at a great distance, and consequently in many cases they give up their studies for this reason. This can be avoided by opening schools in nearer quarters where there are sufficient number of depressed class students. Similarly there are no dispensaries in the depressed areas. The result is that these people are dying like cats and dogs whenever any epidemic breaks out. Again, Sir, the epidemic is mainly due to the scarcity of pure drinking water. So I urge the Hon'ble Minister of Education to allot some special grants for the depressed classes to establish some schools at least for the compulsory primary education in their localities and to grant special scholarships and free studentships to the depressed students to enable them to prepare for higher studies.

Sir, I also request the Hon'ble Minister of Local Self-Government Department to make special provision for opening charitable dispensaries and for digging wells for pure drinking water in the depressed areas where there are no such facilities.

THE HON'BLE REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS ROY : Will the hon. member make it clear what localities he means ?

BABU BALARAM SIRCAR : In the subdivision of Karimganj. The dispensaries there are too small in number.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : The hon. member will please try to finish his speech.

BABU BALARAM SIRCAR : Government are kind enough to grant sufficient allotment to the local bodies for these purposes but they show great apathy towards the needs of these classes of people. Unless and until there is pressure from Government side to these bodies our cries will go unheeded as before.

Sir, specially I beg to draw the attention of the House that in the last drought in Karimganj subdivision where depressed class people are in majority many people suffered a great deal for want of pure drinking water and people had to draw water from a remote tank and sometimes from

private tanks at the cost of their health. Further, there are no dispensaries in the subdivision within easy reach for first medical aid to the depressed classes at times of epidemic and this is a matter which it is hoped will engage the kind attention of Government.

With these few words I resume my seat.

SRIJUT DEVESWAR SARMAH: On a point of information, Sir. Shall we be allowed to put in our written speeches to-day or the next day?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: I do not know what the hon. member means.

SRIJUT DEBESWAR SARMAH: Most of us have yet to make our submission to this House, and it is the practice in this House to read written speeches. Should we be right in handing in our speeches as we may not have time to deliver them?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: That cannot be allowed. The hon. member knows that speeches are to be delivered in this House, and while one member may be capable of doing so extempore another member may find it easier to write out his speech and then read it. Although written speeches should be discouraged I have thought it better to allow this practice in regard to the general discussion of the Budget. I, however, think that there has been sufficient discussion of the Budget; and what I feel is that after the leader of the opposition has had his say the Congress Party should not have put up any more members. Similarly the Members of the Ministerial party also should not have spoken after the criticisms made by the leaders of the parties which now compose the Ministerial party.

MAULAVI MABARAK ALI: Sir, with other hon. members who have done so, I also like to offer my congratulation to the Hon'ble Ministers for the lucid speeches with which they have treated the House at the time of presentation of the budget. But Sir, I have to find fault with many aspects of the budget as it is my duty to criticise it from the point of view of the people.

Sir, the budget for the year 1937-38 has been placed before the House and the hon. members have been criticising the various figures in details both on the receipt as well as on the expenditure side of it. Many hon. members have come out with their respective local grievances and the Hon'ble Ministers are taking note of them very minutely as if some remedy and relief might come out of it; or, it may be that the hon. members owe their duty to the constituency and they like to show to their voters that they are at least crying for the amelioration of their grievances. But, Sir, I wonder are they really serious about it? I like to draw the attention of this hon. House a bit deeper into the very root of the policy and principles governing the whole budget presented before the House and I also like to point it out to all that unless the outlook of the policy and the principles are changed, there is no hope of bringing relief to their constituencies or to the loitering masses of the province. All the fine speeches will be like crying in the wilderness. What I mean to impress upon the House is this, that the budget is hopelessly disappointing for there is no scope for improvement in it. And I venture to justify my views on the following grounds, from out of a multitude.

We have heard so much of provincial autonomy—we have heard that we are at the dawn of a new era—but I feel and I hope many will share my feeling that in this province of Assam the Ministry are groping in the darkness of a bureaucratic regime. We see around us, in almost all the countries in the world, nay in some of our neighbouring provinces, the budget is going to be framed on a planned economy; but the very first reason for the failure

of our budget is that it has no economic plan or scheme behind it. It is as if to drag on somehow. The budget of a country should surely be the index of its problems and also of the solution proposed thereof. But what are the problems in this poor province of Assam? Poverty has saddled upon the agriculturists of our province who form about 80 per cent. of the population. Floods and drought are kind enough to visit a major portion of it almost annually only to add to this. Illiteracy is reigning supreme. The unemployment problem both in the educated middle class and in the illiterate peasantry is looming large and the problem is eating into the vitality of the population of the province. The influence of liquor and opium has unmanned a large section of the people. Various epidemic diseases are taking their immense tolls year after year and people in villages die in large numbers suffering from diseases without any treatment whatsoever and without a drop of medicine. The villagers go without drinking water in the burning sun of long summer days, nay, they quench their thirst by muddy water, that too taking from a long distance. The poor people suffer from the chilly cold in winter for want of sufficient clothings. The foreign capital is taking out from the heart of the province a huge amount by way of dividends, leaving the son of the soil poorer. The labourers in factories as well as in fields are living a life of veritable animals, half-fed and half-clad, having no education or facility for high amusements—Godless and hopeless. These are the problems that any Government which will come into power shall have to face and face with boldness. But I confess that the present budget has failed even to venture an attempt towards that. It offers no solution as to crying problems in the province, hence it is an utter failure.

As I have said before, in the absence of an eye to these problems in the budget the question of solution cannot arise therein.

As against these problems, even a glance at the receipt side is sufficient to convince anyone that the whole policy of taxation is vicious and divorced from realities. The poor people are overtaxed. Some of my hon. friends have said on the floor of this House that this surplus budget is not really a surplus one, it is really a deficit one. But in my opinion this discussion of deficit and surplus is useless; and why? Because the whole system of taxation is unevenly distributed amongst the population. The poor man is more heavily taxed while the rich people are exempted from their due share of taxation for the provincial exchequer. The Land Revenue, the Excise, the Court-fees and Stamps, the Forest, all these direct taxations of the provincial legislature are devised to extract the coins of the poor and the present budget has only aggravated the situation. Sir, I say the system of taxation is iniquitous and the present Ministry has failed even to approach it from a correct angle of vision, not to speak of handling it in a proper way. I am rather surprised to find a responsible Government, that cannot meet the problems of the masses for adequate funds, should go in for the luxury of the restoration of temporary cuts in the fees of the associate pleaders and to fill up the borrow pits in a particular locality. As I have already said, I do not like to deal with the detailed figures, as I feel it useless—as matters stand, the only remedy to rectify the present budget is to force the hands of Government to curtail the top-heavy administration and thereby to create funds to meet the crying needs of the helpless masses. Sir, it is the constant uneven taxation and disproportionate expenditure that bring revolution in the country. This poor province of ours will be heading to a crisis if things are permitted to go on like this. Sir, in any way, the disproportionate method of taxation and the unjust expenditure on the administration and the Police must go. Otherwise, I warn the Government that the revolt of the hungry and the down-trodden is ahead.

SRIJUT BHAIRAB CHANDRA DAS : Sir, I want to speak one word. I find in the budget that a sum of Rs.2,400 has been put down for tea-garden boys' education. I thank Government for this. I may, however, point out that the amount is too small. I therefore request the Hon'ble Minister for Education to see his way to increase the amount.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : Do the hon. members desire to sit for another half hour ? The next day we sit we shall have only one hour and that will be given to the Hon'ble Ministers.

(As several hon. members wanted to speak, the Hon'ble Speaker agreed to continue the sitting for some time more.)

SRIJUT BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN : May I speak a word, Sir ?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : Yes. But the hon. member should be brief.

SRIJUT BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN : Sir, considering the number of population of the tea gardens in Assam, which run to over ten lakhs of people or about $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions of people and considering the amounts which have been allotted for the different departments, I think the amount which has been allotted for the education of the tea-garden labourers is too small. I would therefore request the Hon'ble Minister for Education to allot a more liberal amount so as to enable these poor and wretched people to have more schools for the uplift and enlightenment of their children.

MAULAVI ABDUL AZIZ : Sir, on an occasion like this, the usual practice is either to congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister or to condemn him. But I think, Sir, there is a third course open and that is to congratulate him where he has done well and not to do so where he has not. I follow this course and congratulate him for the frank and straightforward way in which he has detailed his various limitations and disabilities in his speech and also because I find that his speech is permeated with a strong desire on his part to be more useful to the people and to be more helpful to the communities who are in need of help.

Coming to the budget itself, I regret I cannot congratulate him on the merits of the budget. It is said to be a surplus budget, but, on the face of it, it is a deficit budget in and out. Sir, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has told us in his speech that the Government of India has very kindly written-off a huge debt of this province amounting to a sum of Rs. 1,77,88,000, which represents the debts contracted by this Government up to the 31st March 1936. But during the period between the 1st April 1936 to the 31st March 1937 there has been a deficit of Rs. 46,48,000. The interest on this loan during this period has come to Rs. 86,000. He has also said that this amount will have to be paid within 18 months. This sum of Rs. 46,48,000 with its one-year old child, namely the interest of Rs. 86,000, amounts to Rs. 47,38,000. Sir, if this sum had indeed appeared in the budget at the time when the Hon'ble Minister was preparing his budget, then certainly he must not have said that the budget is a surplus one. Again, Sir, there is the liability for the State Provident Fund amounting to Rs. 90,00,000, which was so long in the keeping of the Central Government but which has been recently thrust on the Government of the province. Sir, these State liabilities have been left out of consideration when the surplus of Rs. 2,26,000 has been worked out. This enormous sum of 90 lakhs is quite sufficient to take away the breath of the province. From this it appears that the financial position of Government is not at all hopeful, not at all healthy. There are cankers eating into the soul of Government. Therefore, Sir, it behoves the Ministry to make a strong determination to build a healthy financial position purged of all debts and liabilities.

It will not at all be interesting, Sir, to go into the details of the expenditure side of the budget, as it has failed to strike any new line but has only followed the old beaten track which its predecessors have done. To me, Sir, the budget appears to be dull, colourless, and commonplace and is of the old bureaucratic type. A glance over the bloated figures of the expenditure side at once tells us that the cost of administration under all heads is prodigally enormous and out of all proportion and not at all justified by the receipts. Sir, a reference to some of the departments will bear out the truth of my remarks.

Now I shall refer to the Forest Department. We find under head "Establishment, Pay of officers, Conservators, Deputy Conservators, Assistant Conservators" the total expenditure amounts to Rs. 2,66,780 and pay of subordinate forest establishment, Dispensary establishment—temporary establishment amounts to Rs. 3,14,400. Thus the pay of these two kinds of officers amounts in all to Rs. 5,81,180 out of the total expenditure under that head amounting to Rs. 8,64,400. The travelling allowances of these officers are Rs. 22,900 in non-excluded and Rs. 1,800 in excluded areas and the travelling allowances of their establishment are Rs. 69,270 in non-excluded and Rs. 11,000 in excluded areas. These give us a total travelling allowance amounting to Rs. 1,04,970 out of a total expenditure of Rs. 8,64,400. Thus the pay of officers takes up more than half, and travelling allowances one-eighth of the total expenditure.

Similarly in Excise under head Superintendence, the pay of the Excise Commissioner is Rs. 22,994, the pay of his clerks Rs. 16,178, pay of servants Rs. 1,142. Under head District Executive Establishment, the pay of Excise Inspectors is Rs. 72,146, clerks Rs. 22,415, servants Rs. 25,994. Under head Distillery—pay of clerks Rs. 1,021, pay of Excise Inspectors Rs. 19,258, servants Rs. 3,488. All these figures, Sir, come to Rs. 1,86,096, which is clearly over a quarter of the total expenditure of Rs. 4,57,700. Here the travelling allowances are Rs. 2,200 under head Superintendence, Rs. 48,770 under head District Executive Establishment, Rs. 420 under head Distilleries and all these come to Rs. 51,940.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Hon. member will please curtail his speech.

MAULAVI ABDUL AZIZ: Very well Sir, referring to Registration we find the same story. The pay of officers is Rs. 69,275, pay of clerks Rs. 40,819 and that of servants Rs. 7,465 which in all amount to Rs. 1,17,559 out of a total of Rs. 1,37,700.

Under the head General Administration the position is the same. Here we have two new additions, viz., the Public Service Commission and a Council—the two prodigal sons of the new Reforms. The Public Service Commission costs Rs. 63,000 and the Legislative Council costs Rs. 35,000 and odd. The latter is an uncalled for imposition or rather infliction so to say, on the revenue for which the governance will not improve any the least. The Public Service Commission is also an unwelcome additional burden and I am of opinion it would have been well for the administration if it could help without it for some years yet.

Then, Sir, in the centre of the budget we find the colossal figure under the head—Police—which comes to 23 lakhs of rupees and odd. Sir, in this way we find that our administration is top-heavy and it must be curtailed and economy observed if Government wants to go on.

SRIJUT JOGENDRA NARAYAN MANDAL: Sir, I should like to make an humble attempt to have a say on the budget on a few points and before that I must congratulate the Hon'ble Chief Minister and his Colleagues for the arduous task and strenuous effort which they have taken in balancing the budget. Under the new Constitution the Assam Ministry

presents its first budget with a surplus of Rs. 2,26,000. We are very much pleased to see that a considerable change has been brought about in the new budget. The arrangement in the budget raises a ray of hopes. Assam has just passed her previous deficit days only to eke out an existence. Again when we consider the proposed budget estimate allotted to different heads we see, not without disappointment, that the proposed estimate for industry, education, public health and agriculture is quite inadequate to meet the demands and falls far short of what it ought to have been. The budgeted estimate should aim at real needs of the people. The whole province was looking forward for a millennium to be ushered in with a hope of deriving benefit of an ideal state. But it is beyond our expectation and we cannot certainly expect a big departure from the previous years within so short a time but we hope the Finance Minister will render justice to all departments and whenever possible.

Opinions will differ and critics might be many and we must go through the whole affair with a justification for solution of the financial position. Assam has been deprived of revenue from petrol and kerosene and the income from excise duty on matches and she must remain contented with her slender resources of income. Sir Otto Niemeyer recommended a meagre subvention of Rs. 30 lakhs which is entirely disproportionate to the growing needs of Assam, "the least developed of the Governor's provinces". We are again helpless that we cannot claim our just dues from the excise duty on petrol and kerosene produced within the boundaries of our province. We hope, that the Hon'ble the Chief Minister will give a stubborn fight for this cause and we assure our support emphatically.

Sir, we understand that Government intends to appoint a Committee of Resources and Retrenchment with a view to find out ways and means. It is a move in the right direction. Drastic steps should be taken very soon in order to find out sufficient resources for proper development in a poor and backward province like Assam. It is well-known that civil administration in Assam was top-heavy and that Government were lavish on the well-paid appointments but niggardly in the case of menial staff. We hope there is still time for our popular Ministry to distribute an increased allotment in all departments.

No doubt Government has expressed its policy and programme by the budgeted estimate to bring ameliorative measures for the masses. We agree that there are defects and short-comings in the budget. But the problem with which the Ministry is faced is stupendous and everything cannot be done overnight. It requires a good deal of time for reflection and serious consideration on the part of the Ministry and this Assembly to master the intricacies of the whole affair.

Sir, I would like to humbly suggest that the most vital points which concern much the financial condition of the province are two, namely, the need for retrenchment and the demand for more money for nation-building purposes. From the monetary point of view, looking into the various heads of departments and their utility for the uplift of the masses, I would further suggest the abolition of the present system of Agriculture, Veterinary, Industries, Excise and Public Works Departments. An economic and comprehensive scheme awaits the earnest and serious consideration of the popular Ministry.

The Agriculture Department with its heavy estimated expenditure of over 6 lakhs serves no purpose for the improvement of the condition of poor cultivators. It would have been better if some demonstration agricultural farms were established in every Subdivision where cultivators could learn in the field improved manuring and how to get an increase of outturns from

land cultivation. The veterinary budget does not help us any way. Money is wasted in this department and the amount involved is Rs.1,60,600. The department with its insufficient staff could not render any help to the poor cultivators while there was widespread epidemic of cattle disease throughout the province.

The Departments of Industries, Excise and Public Works failed in their projects to bring any real improvement to the condition of masses. Again, there is a real cause of complaint against the heavy expenditure under the heads of Administration and Police.

Sir, I do not agree to the point that economic condition of the masses has improved. The miseries of trade depression are still continuing and this year want of sufficient rainfall in the province has brought in apprehension in the mind of people for future sufferings due to failure of crops. Sir, I regret to say that Government are not seriously thinking of stamping out illiteracy in the province. There are yet 90 per cent. of the people who are illiterate. The expenditure *per capita* on education, medical help and public health in Assam is less than that in many other provinces. A provision of Rs.50,000 made to enable the local bodies to arrange for expansion of primary education in the province is only a drop of water in the ocean. Sir, we should first of all look to the main three items, *viz.*, (i) increase of outturn from land cultivation, (ii) good sanitation and (iii) mass education—these are the first and foremost requirements of village uplift. The next items are (i) village communication and (ii) rural water supply and (iii) a scheme of cattle improvement. We are thankful to the Hon'ble Minister that a rural uplift scheme has been prepared with these projects in view.

Sir, I hope it will not be unwise on my part if I put forth the grievances of my district of Goalpara before this House today. My colleagues, hon. members from the district, have already complained that the causes of Goalpara have been neglected for a very long time in the past. The district of Goalpara is very backward in respect of education, communication, sanitation and in respect of services also. There are two Government High Schools in the two subdivisions. People in the mufassil are quite unable to educate their boys and defray necessary expenses in towns. Most of the local boys have their education in private schools—such schools are at Bilashipara, Bagribari and Abhayapuri. One venture school started at Kokrajhar requires Government grant. The schools at Bilashipara and Bagribari are under financial difficulties. Government should not be callous to give a suitable grant to these schools. There are again hundreds of villages which are without any Lower Primary Schools. The Boards should get their proportionate and legitimate demands for expansion of primary education.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The hon. member should hurry up.

SRIJUT JOGENDRA NARAYAN MANDAL: One thing, Sir, I must state that Local Boards do not make any discrimination in making realisation of cart taxes from poor cultivators. The cart taxes should only be realised from those who carry on business with carts and make profits thereby. But the agriculturists should not be taxed for having carts mainly for their cultivation purposes. I hope, Sir, the Hon'ble Minister will have sympathy for the poor cultivators and give them relief in this matter.

(At this time there was no quorum in the House.)

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned.

The House was adjourned till Thursday the 12th August at 11 a. m.

SHILLONG :

11th September 1937.

A. K. BARUA,

Secretary,

Assam Legislative Assembly.