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

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Skillong, at 10 A. M. on Wednesday, the 5th March, 1952.

P R E S E N T

The Hon'ble Shri Purandar Sarma, M. A. B. L., (Acting Speaker), in the Chair, the ten Hon'ble Ministers, two Deputy Ministers and eighty-eight Members.

Election of Speaker

The Hon'ble Shri PURANDAR SARMA (Acting Speaker): Are there any hon. Members who did not take their oath yesterday ?

(After a pause)

None.

Then I, take up item No.1, *i.e.*, election of Speaker. The first item for to-day's agenda is the election of a Speaker. There are two nomination papers and I shall read out the particulars of these nomination papers, as required by sub-rule (3) of Assembly Rule 4. All the nomination papers are in favour of the same Member, *viz.*, Shri Kuladhar Chaliha, M.L.A. Nomination paper No.1—proposed by Shri Mohikanta Das, M.L.A., and seconded by Shri Robin Kakati, M.L.A. Nomination paper No.2—proposed by Shri Khorshing Terang, M.L.A. and seconded by Shri Nihang Rongpher, M.L.A. As there is only one Member nominated for the office of the Speaker, I have much pleasure in declaring Shri Kuladhar Chaliha to have been duly elected as the Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly.

(Applause)

Before I request Shri Kuladhar Chaliha to take the Chair, I think, the House will like me to convey to the new Speaker the congratulations of all the hon. Members of this House on his elevation to this exalted office, and also to express the hope that under his authority and impartiality, the privileges and rights of the Members of this House will be very well maintained, and the dignity of this House enhanced. Confidence in the impartiality of the Chair is an indispensable condition for the successful working of procedure and many conventions still exist in this House and also in other Legislatures to ensure impartiality of the Speaker and to ensure that his impartiality is generally recognised. The Speaker takes no part in the debate. He votes only when the voices are equal, and by rules and procedure a number of discretions have been vested in the Chair. Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha is a parliamentarian of high repute. He had been a Member of the old Council. He was also a Member of the Constituent Assembly of India, and till recently he was a Member of the Indian Parliament. Let us hope and trust that Mr. Chaliha will prove worthy of the trust and responsibility that have been bestowed on him by the hon. Members of this House, and let us pray for his long life and prosperity.

With these few words, I now request Mr. Chaliha, our new Speaker, to take the Chair.

[At this stage the Hon'ble Srijut Purandar Sarma (Acting Speaker) vacated the Chair, and the Hon'ble Shri Kuladhar Chaliha occupied it].

(Applause)

Felicitations to the Speaker

The Hon'ble Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI: Sir, I consider it a great privilege and honour that I have got this opportunity of conveying congratulations and felicitations to you on being unanimously elected to this exalted position of Hon'ble Speaker of this House. The election of you, Sir, to this exalted Chair of the Hon'ble Speaker of this august House in the new set-up of thing, is a unique occasion in the political annals of the country, and I feel almost a glow and personal pleasure and satisfaction in doing so.

You are a veteran and valiant fighter in the struggle for freedom, and you were long associated with the late lamented T. R. Phukan and Nabin Chandra Bordoloi of the hallowed memory, and you are also a distinguished legislator and astute parliamentarian. You were a Member of the Assam Legislative Council as well as in the Parliament, and thus you have acquired sufficient experience regarding the procedure that is being followed in all the departments. You had enough experience, and you have seen large number of hon. Speakers presiding over the deliberations of these legislatures. Your wide experience, broad outlook and recognised ability are too well-known in Assam's public life and you need no fresh introduction from me to-day.

I, as a co-worker, feel a sense of personal jubilation which I am sure everybody in the House as well as outside will share and join with me in extending hearty welcome and felicitations to you, Sir, on this auspicious occasion. You are, Sir, a trusted and gifted leader of this State and your election to the position of such dignity, authority and responsibility is sure to inspire the highest confidence in this House. In piloting the proceedings of this Assembly and in guiding its deliberations as the Speaker, Sir, you are not only to act as a custodian of the rights and privileges of the hon. Members of this House, but also to wield an influence which extends further beyond the walls of this House. You are, Sir, in fact the custodian of the rights and privileges of the people at large whom we represent.

I am quite sure, with your wide and varied experience in the different fields and as Members of Parliament and Legislative Assemblies, you will be able to uphold the solemn rights and privileges of this House and the rights and privileges of the hon. Members will be quite safe in your custody.

You, Sir, had close and long association with the Parliamentary proceedings and procedures and this will greatly help in shaping and toning up the proceedings of this House. With you, Sir, as our friend and guide, we in this House would possibly be able to move quicker to our goal of making this Assembly as distinguished as any other in this land.

You are, Sir, one of the leading publicmen and Parliamentarians having wide experience in different fields of activity and it is graceful on our part that we have elected you to be the First Speaker of this House newly constituted under the Constitution framed for our Sovereign Democratic Republic of India.

I, on this side of the House, offer our whole-hearted co-operation in the discharge of your onerous duties; and I again offer my felicitations to you for being unanimously elected Speaker of this House to guide us in our deliberations.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: Sir, I heartily congratulate you on behalf of my party and the members sitting in the Opposition on your being elected to the high office in the Assembly. Sir, your name is a household word in our State for your sacrifices, gallantry and political work and I am sure that your name will go down in the history as one of the best and ablest impartial Speakers. Sir, in recent years the din and bustle of the mundane world and our love for power and pelf has overshadowed to a certain extent the significance of the Chair, but I have no measure of doubt that as democracy progresses and our people learn more and more of democratic habits and traditions, the significance of the Chair will be acknowledged by every body and the beauty and lustre of the Chair and its dignity and authority will be re-established once again. Sir, yours is an onerous duty. You are the custodian of the rights and privileges of this House and you hold the key to the success or otherwise of democracy in this country. Sir, in your actions and decisions will depend a lot the democracy in our country and in this House where the Opposition is feeble in number, I am sure you will be able to inspire confidence in us and prove that though there is a brute majority on the opposite side the minority will be represented in every sphere. Sir, we also hope that in this House every action will be judged by its merit and, Sir, under your protective wings we shall be able to speak what is just and right; and, Sir, we are sure that you will follow unreservedly the maxim that 'justice must not only be done but it must appear to have been done'.

Sir, we crave your indulgence because though a party member you are above parties and we are sure that you would hold the balance of justice evenly and your name will be in the galaxy of those names who have made history of democracy what it is to-day. Sir, I once more reiterate our decision to co-operate with you in conducting the affairs of this House and we wish you long life and prosperity.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD UMARUDDIN: Sir, I consider it my pleasant duty to associate myself with what has been said as regards you and to convey our hearty congratulations to you on your being elected as Speaker of this august House. Sir, I have the pleasure to say that there would not have been a happier and wiser selection than what has been on this occasion. Sir, your record of public service and as a Parliamentarian is well known. Your integrity and mature experience in public service will inspire confidence in all sections of the House and also in the public and we trust that in conducting the deliberation of this House your decision will be fair and judicious and we on this side of the House, though small in number, are sure that here we shall have justice and fairness from you. Sir, India to-day is at the cross-road of her destiny and one of the greatest experiments of history in democracy is being made in this country. All of us have therefore a great responsibility and by our action we want to lay the foundation of a noble tradition of democracy so that our posterity may be proud of our record.

Sir, by your action you will lay down such traditions which will be worthy of the noble and high office you hold. Sir, my personal feeling is that you belong to no party from to-day onwards. We hope that your action both inside as well as outside the House will be such that it will inspire confidence in all sections of the House as well as people outside. Sir, I believe that in other democratic countries some noble traditions have been laid down by the Speakers and it would be wise for us to emulate those traditions.

With these few words, Sir, I again offer my hearty congratulations to you and wish that God will give you the strength, wisdom and ability to conduct the proceedings of the House successfully.

Shri GHANA KANTA GOGOI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on this great occasion I take the opportunity of offering my congratulations on your election as Speaker of the Assembly. I am speaking on behalf of the Assam all-Peoples (Sarvadal) Party. To-day by your election to this high office, you rise above party level. We in the opposition are in a small minority and we hope that our cause will receive a just and fair treatment from you. Under your able guidance as the custodian of the dignity and privileges of this House, we hope that Government of the people, for the people and by the people in Assam will be established. I hope that the cause of the downtrodden, poor and hungry masses will receive ample justice under your able guidance as the Speaker of this House.

I again take the opportunity of offering my hearty congratulations to you, on your election to this great office and I wish you long life, and sound health to enable you to discharge the functions of your onerous office, ably and to the satisfaction of all.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Mr. Leader, Mr. Goswami, Mr. Umaruddin, Mr. Gogoi, and the hon. Members.

I am really very grateful to you for electing me to this onerous office. I do not think that I am fit for all those qualities which the Leaders have been pleased enough to bestow on me. I only hope that I shall come up to that level. Efficiency is an approximation to an ideal and I shall try, as far as possible, to be a non-party man, to follow the British ideal though in our own country another ideal has been set up by the Hon'ble Shri Purushattomdas Tandon. That ideal has not been followed elsewhere. In the discharge of my duties I shall always be a non-party man, a man who will try to do justice to the minorities. I shall try to protect them from the pressure of Government and tilt the scales slightly towards them. I hope and trust that you will give me the power and strength to do so. As Speaker Mr. Lowther said, "you do not require rare or brilliant qualities, what you require is qualities of tact and judgment; you require the qualities of commonsense, which are so rare. You require a little good humour, and the ability to understand the spirit of Parliament". If I can understand and feel that spirit I think I will be able to do my work. But you will have to co-operate with me. I also hope that you will bear with me patiently when my decisions may not fit in exactly with your ideas of rules and procedure but yet sometimes we are led to come to decisions for reasons which you know better than I do. You are all able Parliamentarians, you are all able people and I trust you will give me your help and that contribution to the deliberations which will lead this House to a better ideal and to a better world. I am glad to welcome the Socialists here, the Communist and other Independent Members who have brought in a vast amount of knowledge and experience of a newer world and a new current of ideas of their own. I trust that when you apply those ideas to our practical problems, you will probably yourselves scale down your own ideas or you will improve those of the rest. I trust and hope that with your co-operation I shall be able to execute the work which has been entrusted to me. I thank you again, hon. Members, for the very kind words which the Leaders have been kind enough to say to me and specially Hon. Mr. Medhi and I hope and trust that with your good will, with your guidance and with your judgment I shall carry this work to a better level than before. (Applause).

Panel of Chairmen

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The following Members will form a Panel of Chairmen for the Budget Session, 1952 :—

1. Shri Hem Chandra Chakravarty.
2. Shri Sarveswar Boruwa.
3. Maulavi Mahmud Ali.
4. Shri Hareswar Goswami.

Fixation of date and time for election of Deputy Speaker

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Under Rule 5 (1) of the Assam Legislative Assembly Rules, I hereby fix Thursday, the 6th March 1952, as the date for holding of the election of the Deputy Speaker.

Under Rule 5 (2) and 5 (3) it is necessary that the nomination papers are delivered to the Secretary either by the candidate himself or by the proposer or seconder in person before 3 P. M. to-day. A printed copy of the nomination paper has already been sent to each hon. Member.

Committee on Petitions relating to Bills

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Under Rule 122 (1) of the Assembly Rules I nominate the following Members to constitute a Committee on Petitions relating to Bills for the current Session of the Assembly :—

1. Shri Hareswar Goswami.
2. Shri Kamala Prasad Agarwala.
3. Maulavi Md. Umaruddin.
4. Shri Mahendra Nath Deka.
5. Mr. A. Alley.
6. Maulavi Faiznur Ali.

Under the Rules, the Deputy Speaker will be the Chairman of the Committee.

House Committee

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Under Rule 136 of the Assembly Rules, I nominate the following Members to constitute a House Committee for the Budget Session of the Assembly :—

1. Shri Dharanidhar Basumatari,
2. Shri Hem Chandra Hazarika,
3. Shri Ch. Saprawnga,
4. Maulavi Mahammad Roufique,
5. Shri Sashadhar Ghosh and
6. Shri Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya.

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 10 A. M., on Thursday, the 6th March, 1952.

Dated SHILLONG :
The 26th April, 1952.

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