

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

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The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong at 9 A. M. on Thursday, the 29th March, 1962.

P R E S E N T

Shri Mohendra Mohan Choudhury, B. L., Speaker in the Chair, Nine Ministers, Two Ministers of State, Three Deputy Minister and Seventy-two Members.

**Oath or Affirmation of allegiance by Members**

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Is there any Member who has not taken oath ?

(Shri Emonsingh Sangma was sworn in)

**Calling Attention**

**Re: Want of drinking water at North Gauhati**

**Mr. SPEAKER:** There is a calling attention motion by Shri Devendra Nath Sarma regarding suffering of the people of North Gauhati Town for want of drinking water.

**Shri DEVENDRA NATH SARMA (Gauhati):** I will not move it, Sir.

**Motion regarding high prices of commodities in the State.**

**Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Jorhat):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move : "This Assembly do now take into consideration the prevailing high prices of commodities in the State and thereby increasing the cost of living".

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a common experience that the prices of commodities are going higher and higher day by day. This upward trend in prices concern everybody right up from the Governor down to the common people. Government has taken up plans and programmes but I think our hon. Members will agree with me that until and unless there is a check on the soaring prices of essential commodities the development programmes will not be of any real use to the people. Mr. Speaker, Sir, our development programmes are only on paper. The success of the plans mainly depend upon raising the standard of a living of the common people, raising the per capita income as well as the national income. If you observe very carefully, Sir, you will find that in that respect these matters Government is not doing well and plans are not successful because the per capita income in Assam

is much lower than that prevailing in any other State in India. On the other hand, Sir, the cost of living is much higher in Assam than in other States of India. Therefore, Sir, it is the duty of the Government to look into the matter and to see that the per capita income can be increased and the price level stabilized to cope with the present situation. Sir, it is useless on the part of the people of this State as to what development plans are taken up by the Government until and unless there is stability in prices. Here in Assam, the cost of living is higher and on the other hand, the per capita income is unreasonably low. In this connection, the draft plan of Assam may be referred to. Sir, I am not going to deal with the statistical data. It is a common experience on the part of us all that we are facing maximum hardship in view of the high prices of essential commodities. Any way, I want to give the statistical data for a few years by taking 1949 as hundred the average cost of price index of three urban areas, Gauhati, Silchar and Tinsukia is 92 in 1955 and goes up to 111.3 in 1961. Of course, the all India statistics is quite higher than this. I am not going to give any opinion about this difference between all India statistics and our statistics. The statistics which I am giving are Government statistics. Sir, it is a matter of great concern and through you I appeal to all the hon. Members to take due consideration about this matter. Another point, Sir, if you observe carefully, the monopolists as well as the traders are raising the prices on the plea of transport bottleneck and the like. Sir, I do not rule out that there is transport difficulty but it is not the main cause of the raising prices but this is only a loophole on the part of the business community to earn undue profit. What they generally do, they keep the things and go on hoarding and make the things scarce. After a few days they throw open their stocks in the market and they earn the maximum profit. This is due, Sir, to the ineffective measures taken up by the Government to check the nefarious activities of the monopolists for whose whims the common people are suffering a lot. Sir, we are not concerned with what the rich people are doing but we should be mainly concerned with the common people as to what they are actually doing, how they are pulling on, what is their income and how they are purchasing the essential commodities to meet their barest requirements at exorbitant prices. Now, Sir, though there is a Price Control Act, it was not enforced effectively and for which the business men and traders are extracting the people's blood for their own selfish gain. Sir, it is our own Government and they are to look after the interest of the people first. But what we have observed with great regret is that they are quite unmindful of the suffering of the common man in this respect. I do not know, Sir, what our Supply Department is doing in this particular respect. It is the duty of the Supply Department to see that essential commodities are not hoarded by the business men for their own profit.

There should be a strong check against any malpractice and a surprise check of their stocks should be arranged regularly under the supervision of responsible officers.

Another thing, Sir; if we look to the border areas of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, we find that dissatisfaction prevails in the minds of the people because the suppliers, *i.e.*, the Government agents, are charging very high prices on this plea and that plea like transport bottleneck, etc. But the Government are not restraining their agents. The Government is there to relieve the distress of the border people and if the latter suffer is due to the ineffective measures taken by the Government.

Then, Sir, we have found that prices rise without any corresponding increase in wages. The last Pay Committee recommended higher wages for low-paid Government servants. We then found that even before the bills to that effect were drawn the prices of commodities went up. Similarly, when Government decided to give compensatory allowance to their employees in Shillong, the prices again shot up. Therefore, Sir, it is useless to increase wages unless and until the price-line can be controlled.

Then again, Sir, we find there is a big difference in the prices of commodities between Calcutta and Assam. For example, a nylon Saree which sells in Calcutta for Rs. 50, here in Shillong it will cost Rs.75. The dealers give all sorts of plea like transport bottleneck and other things.

**Shri KAMAKHYA PRASAD TRIPATHI (Minister, Industries):** Government is not intending to control the price of nylon Sarees which is an article of luxury.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** He was giving an example of the difference in prices between the Calcutta market and Assam market.

**Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Jorhat):** Sir, a rayon cloth which sells in Bangalore at Rs.5 per yard is charged Rs.18 per yard here. Prices are going higher every day. When I came here in 1952, potato was used to be sold at 3 to 4 annas a seer, whereas now it has gone up to 13 or 14 annas a seer. In this way, Sir, the prices of commodities are increasing day by day. Therefore, it is my earnest appeal to the Members of this House to express their grave concern at this rising trend of prices and to urge upon the Government to take effective measures to save the suffering of common people. It is the common people, irrespective of caste, creed and community who are suffering most today. It is a matter of great concern that while the income of the common people remains more or less stationary the prices of essential commodities are going higher and higher up every day. The Government should look into this matter and tackle this problem earnestly so that all, from the Governor down to the common man, can smoothly manage to pull on. With these words, Sir, I appeal to the House to consider this matter very carefully and take effective measures so that we all can lead our lives smoothly without any man-made hardships caused by the business community.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Motion moved is that this Assembly do now take into consideration the prevailing high prices of commodities in the State and thereby increasing the cost of living.

**Shri TARAPADA BHATTACHARJEE (Katigora):** Mr. Speaker Sir, I thank my hon. Friend, Shri Dulal Chandra Barua, for raising this pertinent question before the House. Sir, this is the most burning problem of the day and we must do something to check the rising trend of prices so that the people can purchase their essential commodities. Sir, there are four classes of people in our State, *viz.*, those who are very rich, the agriculturists, the labourers and the lower middle class families. As for the agriculturists the Government is pursuing a policy regarding procurement of paddy. They have fixed the price of paddy at Rs.10.50 nP per maund. They have issued licences to the co-operatives to purchase paddy. The idea is that the growers should get Rs. 9.50 nP per maund and one rupee is to be distributed among the service Co-operatives and the Apex Marketing Societies. Now, Sir, from our experience we can say that this policy is not working, the growers are not getting their price. The chairmen of the

co-operatives have opened shops in the market. As there are no other licenses, the agriculturists have got no other alternative than to sell their paddy to those Chairmen and there have been cases where the poor producers instead of getting Rs. 9.50 nP. per maund have got only Rs. 7. There was a case in Silchar where evidence was recorded before a Magistrate and it was found that the actual producer got Rs. 7 only instead of Rs. 9.50 nP. Now, Sir, if the producers get only Rs. 7 how can they live? They are to purchase other essential commodities like salt, sugar, mustard oil, etc., at a very high prices.

**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister):** On a point of information, Sir. The hon. Member said that paddy is purchased at Rs. 7 a maund. May I know from him what variety of paddy it was and which particular place he is referring to?

**Shri TARAPADA BHATTACHARJEE (Katigora):** Silchar.

**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA:** Which variety of paddy?

**Shri TARAPADA BHATTACHARJEE:** I am not in a position to say just now.

**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister):** That is very pertinent. Sir, I hope the hon. Member is referring not to Silchar town, he must be referring to some rural area in the Silchar subdivision, I would like to know that particular area.

**Shri TARAPADA BHATTACHARJEE (Katigora):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I now come to another question.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Bhattacharjee, you have not replied Hon'ble Chief Minister's question. You have made a statement. You must be in a position to give the information when called for.

**Shri TARAPADA BHATTACHARJEE:** Sir, I am not in a position to furnish the information just now. I may let you know afterwards. Now Sir, coming to my point I like to say about salt. We know that salt for which Mahatma Gandhi started movement has to be purchased by us at Rs. 10 per maund. Now, Sir, monopoly of this salt has been given to some particular firm who used to purchase it from Bombay at Rs. 5.35 nP. But this firm again sells it at Calcutta to some middlemen with some profit and when we purchase it, we do so at Rs. 10 per maund. So, Sir, we find that the salt which is a very essential commodity for us, we are purchasing it at higher rate. Now, Sir, to another point. I like to draw the attention of the Government that Government purchased paddy for their godowns to meet the natural calamities. This year, so far my knowledge goes, at Silchar their aim is to stock about 2½ lakhs maunds of paddy by the end of the year, Sir, 31st March is near. So far I gather, Sir, Procurement was only 80,000 and 85,000 maunds or so. In this connection, I like to say, Sir, that Silchar is a big place. During the rainy season, we become isolated. If we cannot stock sufficient paddy, the price will go high up. It is now selling at Rs. 20, but it will go up to Rs. 30 or so during the rainy season. So poor people will suffer like anything. Moreover, Sir, we are generally lower middle-class people—we belong to the lower middle class families. I do not hesitate to say that barring only a few all of us are suffering like anything.

I know many of us who cannot maintain their families properly, because of the fact that after the 3rd or 4th of the month all the money is exhausted and they are to pull on with loan. This is our fate. This fate is shared by even Deputy Secretaries of the State Government Departments. I also know from my personal experience at Silchar if any body dies and his relative cannot afford to perform the last rites, he can get a certificate from the Municipal Commissioner for exemption of funeral duties. Even, Sir, when any relative of any Government officer or School teacher dies, amongst middle-class people, they are not in a position to afford to pay Rs. 10 being cost of fire-wood and they have to approach us for help. This is the condition of about 60 per cent of our people. So, I appeal to the Government to take effective steps in this direction. Sir, we know that there is transport bottleneck. But we should not suffer for that reason alone. I want to say to our Ministers, to the hon. Members of this August House that something should be done to save this poor country, to save these poor and lower middle class-people, so that we may achieve the goal of our socialistic pattern of society. I find many among the treasury Bench who sacrificed much for the emancipation of the country and still trying to do their best for making the country a prosperous one. So I specially request the Treasury Bench to take proper steps so that people may not die for want of timely decision and I hope they will take proper steps to improve the situation. This is my only submission.

**\*Shri KHOGENDRA NATH BARBARUAH (Amguri) :**

মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয় পাঁচ বছৰীয়া পৰিকল্পনা দুটা শেষ হৈ গ'ল তৃতীয় পৰিকল্পনাৰ প্ৰথম বছৰ শেষ হ'বৰ হ'ল। এই পৰিকল্পনাবোৰৰ উদ্দেশ্য আছিল কি? উদ্দেশ্য আছিল দেশত উৎপন্ন বৃদ্ধি কৰি বস্তৰ মূল্য কমাই মানুহৰ চেহেৰা বদলি কৰি দিব। গবৰ্ণৰৰ ভাষণতো change of face ৰ কথা উল্লেখ আছে কিন্তু এতিয়া দেখা গৈছে তাৰ ঠিক বিপৰীতটো। বস্তৰ দাম বাঢ়ি এতিয়া ৫ গুণ পালেগৈ। পৰিকল্পনা আৰম্ভ হৈছিল ১৯৫০-৫১ চনৰ এপ্ৰিল মাহৰ পৰা তেতিয়াৰ বস্তৰ দাম আৰু এতিয়াৰ বস্তৰ দামৰ লগত তুলনা কৰি চাওক দেখিব দাম পাঁচ গুণ বাঢ়িছে। ইয়াৰ ফলত সাধাৰণ মানুহ আৰু কম দৰমহা পোৱা চৰকাৰী চাকৰীয়াৰ অৱস্থা শোচনীয় হৈ পৰিছে। বস্তৰ দাম বাঢ়াৰ লগে লগে তেওঁলোকৰ উপাৰ্জনো যদি বাঢ়াৰ পাৰিলেহেতেন বা যদি ২০০ গুটি দিয়া ৰান জোপাৰ পৰা ২,০০০ ৰান উলিয়াব পাৰিলে হেতেন, যি কল জোপাই ৬ আৰু কল দিছিল সেই কল জোপাই যদি ৩০ আৰু কল দিব পাৰিলেহেতেন বা বস্তৰ দামৰ লগত উপাৰ্জনৰ সমন্বয় ৰাখিব পাৰিলেহেতেন তেতিয়া মানুহৰ ইমান অভাৱ নহলহেতেন। কিন্তু বস্তৰ দাম যিদৰে বাঢ়িছে সেইদৰে উপাৰ্জন বাঢ়াৰ পৰা নাই। গতিকে খেতিয়কৰ অৱস্থা দিনে দিনে শোচনীয় হৈছে। আনফালে কিন্তু দেখা যায় শাসক শ্ৰেণীৰ অৱস্থা ক্ৰমান্বয়ে ভাল হৈছে।

আজি দুটাকৈ উনয়ন পৰিকল্পনা হৈ গ'ল কিন্তু যি খেতিয়কৰ এটা ভৰাল আছিল তাৰ ৫ টা ভৰাল হৈছেনে? কিন্তু যি ঠাইত দুভিক্ষ নাছিল তাতে দুভিক্ষ ৰ সংখ্যা বেচি হৈছে, প্ৰত্যেক ঠাইত প্ৰত্যেক ৰাস্তাত, প্ৰত্যেক নগৰত, প্ৰত্যেক গাঁৱত আজি ঘূৰি চালে দেখিব সকলো ঠাইতে দুভিক্ষ। ভিক্ষাৰীৰ সংখ্যা দিনে দিনে বেচি হৈছে। গতিকে দেখা যায় ৫। বছৰীয়া পৰিকল্পনাত দুখীয়া শ্ৰেণীৰ অৱস্থা আৰু দুখীয়া হৈছে। সকলো বস্তৰ দাম বেচি হৈ গৈছে।

বস্ত্ৰৰ দাম বেচি ছোৱাত, কাৰ লাভ হৈছে? লাভ হৈছে যি সকলে ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ স্বাৰ্থ ৰক্ষা কৰি আছে সেই পুজিপতি সকলৰ। এই সকলে বস্ত্ৰৰ বিতৰণৰ ভাৰ লৈ মানুহৰ জীৱনৰ লগত খেলা কৰিছে।

শিল্পৰ উন্নতি কৰি কাপোৰ সূতা উৎপন্ন কৰিছে। কিন্তু মধ্যবিত্ত শ্ৰেণীৰ লাভ হ'ল ক'ত? আজি ৫ টকাৰ বজাৰৰ কাপোৰ এগজৰ দাম হল ১০ টকা। আজি বিদেশী পুজিপতি সকলে বস্ত্ৰৰ মূল্য নিৰ্দ্ধাৰণ কৰে।

মহোদয় ৬ জানুৱাৰীৰ দিনা বহুতো চাহপাত মাটিৰ তলত পুতিছে। এনেকুৱা ঘটনা কোনোবা ৰাজ্যত ঘটেনে?

খাদ্য বস্ত্ৰলৈ যদি চোৱা হয়, তেন্তে দেখা যায় যে চৰকাৰে বস্ত্ৰৰ দাম ধাৰ্য্য কৰিবলৈ একচেটিয়া ভাৱে দিলে পুজিপতি সকলক। তেওঁলোকৰ যোগেদি সকলো বস্ত্ৰ কিনা-বেচা হব।

আমাৰ গৰীব খেতিয়কে ধান, মৰাপাট ইত্যাদি উৎপন্ন কৰে। কিন্তু তাৰ উচিত মূল্য নাপায়। কাৰণ তাৰ দাম বিদেশীয়ে নিৰ্দ্ধাৰণ কৰিব। এয়ে হল গৰীব শ্ৰেণীৰ অৱস্থা। তেওঁলোকে যি দাম ধাৰণ তাক গুৰ্ণমেণ্টে চেষ্টা কৰিলেও হ্রাস বৃদ্ধি কৰিব নোৱাৰে। ই এটা ভয়ঙ্কৰ কথা। এই পুজিপতি সকলৰ হাতত চৰকাৰ ইমান কাৰু হল কিয় যে বস্ত্ৰৰ দাম নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ কৰিব নোৱাৰা অৱস্থাত পৰিল? যেতিয়া চৰকাৰে কণ্ট্ৰ'ল কৰে তেতিয়াও এই শ্ৰেণীৰ স্বাৰ্থ ৰক্ষাই কৰি থাকে। চাউলৰ দাম ৩২ টকা বলি কলে চৰকাৰৰ কোনো বাস্তৱ নাই যে তাক কমাৰ পাৰে। বস্ত্ৰৰ নিয়ণৰ ভাৰ কিছুমান ৰাৰদেশ্যৰ হাতত তুলি দিয়া হৈছে। এয়ে আজি আমাৰ সমাজৰ দুৰ্দশা।

গতিকে আজি ইয়াৰ পৰা হাত সাৰা একমাত্ৰ উপায় হল শিল্পৰাজি চৰকাৰৰ হাতলৈ আনিব লাগে।

(Voice: কোন বিলাক শিল্প আনিব লাগে)? সকলোবিলাক আনিব লাগে। মূলশিল্প যেনে কাপোৰ, লোণ, তেল ইত্যাদি সকলো শিল্পই আনিব লাগে।

শিল্প মন্ত্ৰীয়ে কৈছে যে চীনদেশত চৰকাৰে কাপোৰ কানি তৈয়াৰ কৰিবলৈ আন মানুহক শ্ৰম দিছে। কিন্তু এটা কথা চাব লাগিব যে তাত কপাহৰ মিলে কপাহ উলিয়াইছে কাপোৰৰ মিলে কাপোৰ উৎপন্ন কৰিছে কিন্তু চৰকাৰে সকলোবিলাক কিনি লৈছে। গতিকে তাত দাম বেচি হ'ব নোৱাৰে। গতিকে চীন দেশৰ নাম লোৱাৰ কোনো অৰ্থ নাই।

আমাৰ দেশতো সেই শিল্পৰাজি চৰকাৰে পৰিকল্পনাৰ যোগেদি নিজৰ হাতলৈ আনি দাম নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ কৰিব লাগে।

ভাৰ পিচত ইহি কওঁ যে খেতিয়কৰ যিবিলাক উৎপন্ন শস্য যেনে ধান, মাহ, সবিয়হ, মৰাপাট, এই বিলাক চৰকাৰে কিনি লব লাগে নহলে বস্তৰ দাম ঠিকমতে নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ কৰি দিয়া উচিত। তেতিয়া মানুহে উৎপন্ন কৰিবলৈ উৎসাহ পাব। চৰকাৰে কিনি যদি উৎসাহ দিব পাৰে তেন্তে ক্ৰমান্বয়ে আমাৰ বস্তৰ উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি হব।

ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ আন দেশৰ ওচৰত বছ কোটি টকা ধাৰ লাগিছে। গোটেই পাঁচ বছৰীয়া পৰিকল্পনাত ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ ধাৰ হৈছে মোট ২,২৫০ কোটি টকা অসম চৰকাৰে ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ ওচৰত ধাৰ হৈছে প্ৰায় ৫০ কোটি টকাৰ।

যদি চৰকাৰে সকলো বস্ত্ৰ সংগ্ৰহ কৰি দাম নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ কৰে তেন্তে গৰীৰ আৰু মধ্যবিত্ত সকলৰ সুবিধা হব। তেতিয়া হলে আমাৰ খেতিয়ক সকলে উৎসাহ পাব আৰু তেওঁলোকে জানি উঠিব যে তেওঁলোকে মূৰৰ ঘাম মাটিত পেলাই উৎপাদন কৰা শস্য উচিত মূল্য দি চৰকাৰে কিনিব।

আজি ভাৰতবৰ্ষই বিদেশী মূল ধনৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰ কৰি ধাৰত পোত খাই পৰিছে। বিদেশৰ ওচৰত দিনে ১।। কোটি টকা ধাৰ লাগিছে। ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ ৫০ কোটি টকা আমাৰ চৰকাৰ ধৰুৱা হৈ আছে। তৃতীয় পৰি কল্পনাত ২,২৫০ কোটি টকা ধাৰ লাগিছে ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ ওচৰত। কাজেই এইদৰে প্ৰত্যেক বছৰে ধাৰৰ বোজা বৃদ্ধি কৰাটো উচিত হোৱা নাই। সেই অৱস্থাৰ লাঘব কৰিবলৈ চৰকাৰে আৱশ্যকীয় সামগ্ৰী সংগ্ৰহ কৰি দাম নিৰ্দ্ধাৰণ কৰি দোকানৰ যোগেদি ৰাইজক যোগান ধৰাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব লাগে। এনে কৰিলে খেতিয়ক সকলৰ সুবিধা হয়। সেই কাৰণে চৰকাৰে নকৰে। দলীয় অথবা বিদেশী পুৰ্জিপতিয়ে চৰকাৰৰ হাত ৰাখি ৰাখিছে নেকি যে চৰকাৰে এই বিলাক কৰিব নোৱাৰে।

এতিয়া সমস্যা হৈছে খাদ্য সামগ্ৰীৰ চৰা দাম বৃদ্ধি কৰিব লাগে; কি অসুবিধা আৰু অভাব অনাটনৰ মাজত জনসাধাৰণে জীৱনযাপন কৰিব লগা হৈছে সেইটো সকলোৱে বজিছে। আজি সাধাৰণ মানুহৰ অৱস্থা শোচনীয় হৈ পৰিছে। আৰু ডিখাৰীৰ সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি হৈছে। আনহাতে কংগ্ৰেছী সকলৰ চেহেৰা দিনকদিনে উজ্জ্বল হৈ উঠিছে। আজি দৰিদ্ৰ পীড়িত আৰু নিচলা ৰাইজৰ কল্যাণৰ অৰ্থে সকলো ব্যৱস্থা চৰকাৰে হাতত লব লাগে। দেশৰ আৰু বিদেশী পুৰ্জিপতি সকলৰ বিৰাট বিৰাট শিল্পানুষ্ঠান সহ জাতীয় কৰণ কৰিব লাগে। এই বিলাক কাম আজি আমাৰ চৰকাৰে কৰিব পাৰিলে ৰাইজৰ কল্যাণ হব দেশৰ মঙ্গল হব। সেই কাৰণে শ্ৰীযুত বৰুৱা ডাঙৰীয়াই যিটো প্ৰস্তাব সদনত দাঙি ধৰিছে : সেইটো নই সমৰ্থন কৰিলো।

**\*Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS (Barpeta):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, a few days ago, I gave notice of a motion calling attention of this House to the sudden rise of price of paddy in Barpeta Subdivision for which abnormal condition prevails.

Now, Sir, I shall make a few observations on this matter along with other matters relating to high price prevailing in our State. Sir, when I left my place the price of paddy in my Subdivision was in between 11 rupees and 50 Naye Paise and 12 rupees, per maund.

**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister)**: Sir, the hon. Member is quoting the price of Sali paddy.

**Mr. SPEAKER**: Are you quoting the price of Sali paddy?

**\*Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS (Barpeta)**: I am quoting the price of both the varieties. Ahu paddy was selling at Rs.11.50 nP. and Sali paddy at Rs.12. I am much distressed when I got the information that the price rises to Rs. 14 in some places of the Subdivision, namely, Tarabari and Jania side. The price is Rs. 14 for Sali paddy per maund and Rs. 13 per maund for Ahu paddy. Sir, the last year paddy crop in the northern side of the Subdivision, though not to the expectation, the cultivators harvested a good crop and the southern portion of our Subdivision always looks to the northern portion for their paddy supply, and from the information available, there should not be such a high price in the Subdivision at this period of the year, because there is no dearth of stock of paddy. But what is the cause of this constant rise? I fail to understand. Perhaps stockists and the merchants are hoarding a portion of their stock to create an artificial scarcity. Sir, at this period of the year, our peasants are short of funds; they are to spend some money in weeding operation of the Ahu crops and jute crops. So it is the permanent feature of our peasants in the southern part of the Subdivision that they always go to money-lenders for money to spend for weeding operation. Sir, if they are to spend so much money on paddy which they are to buy from northern part of the Subdivision, then they shall have to go on starvation, though it is not a fact that they have to remain fasting for days together. But even then, it will be very difficult for their food requirements. The Government should look into this matter.

Sir, there is an arrangement for establishing cheap foodgrains shops in different parts of the Subdivision. But, Sir, it is very regrettable that when prices rise for some days or some months, only then the Government officials come to the rescue of the poor peasants with the establishment of these shops. So, Sir, I beg to draw the attention of Government to this aspect of the matter and to request them to take early steps so that the cheap foodgrain shops which will supply rice and paddy to the cultivators may be established in my Subdivision as soon as possible.

There is another point to which I want to draw the attention of the House is the high prices of fish and milk, rather the non-availability of fish and milk in my Subdivision. Sir, you know that Barpeta had a legendary reputation for abundance of fish and milk but for some years past exactly contrary condition is prevailing there. Bigger carp variety of fish is practically unknown to the villagers now-a-days. Sir, milk is also becoming scarce due to the opening up of the reserves and the scarcity of fish is created by the defective system of settling the fisheries. Sir, I beg to draw the particular attention of the hon. Minister to this matter and request him to take necessary steps to relieve the people from the scarcity of these essential foodstuffs.

\* Speech not corrected.



Another thing to which I want to draw the attention of the House is the non-availability of mild steel rods in my Subdivision. Sir, mild steel rods of the dimension of 3/8" and 2/8" are not available in our Sub-division for a long time.

**\*Shri RAM NATH DAS [Dergaon (Reserved for Scheduled Castes)]**: On a point of information, Sir. The hon. Member has said that the scarcity of fish is due to the defective system of settlement of fisheries and he requested to remove this defective system. But the hon. Member has not given any suggestion to that effect. It will be better if the hon. Member gives a suggestion to that effect.

**\*Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS (Barpeta)**: Yes, I will give a suggestion. Sir, all the fisheries in the Subdivision are settled with the lessees and there is no reserve fishery which may be used as a breeding ground for the fish in time. All the fishes in the fisheries are exhausted by the lessees using a special type of net which has no pouring. So, the entire quantity of fish that is available in the fishery is taken out and when the season for breeding comes there is no fish in the fishery and so the breeding is stopped. Therefore, I request the Government to keep apart some fisheries so that they may be used as breeding grounds of the fish, and in the rainy season fish may be supplied from these reserve fisheries.

Now, coming to the non-availability of steel rods, I would only draw attention of the hon. Minister, in charge of Supply to this matter and I do not say anything more on this point.

Sir, you know the cost of living in Assam is the highest in India. Here the prices of all essential commodities are very high and they are rising year after year. For instance, Sir, the price of a pair of mill dhoti was Rs.20 two years ago and the price has gone up to Rs.25 to Rs.26. Within two to three years the price has gone so high. In this way the prices of all other commodities have risen within 2/3 years to a very high level. Sir, the entire trade and business in this province is in the hands of a few businessmen who have no permanent interest in this State. The local people are only petty businessmen and the wholesale trade is entirely at the hands of non-Assamese people. These big businessmen are bent upon making more money as they have no feeling for the people of the soil. Therefore, Sir, Government ought to take some measures to control these traders.

Sir, recently Government have set up procurement agencies and through these agencies they purchase paddy and send the paddy to the Mills for milling purpose and rice is taken back from the mill. In that arrangement Government was wrong in giving very good margin to the millers which would not have been available to the millers if they would have purchased paddy themselves and sold the rice. Sir, I am told that the mills give 25 seers of rice per maund of paddy though they get about 28 seers of rice. So three seers of rice they keep as their profit besides broken rice and *rice bran*. So, they make good profits. In this way from a single maund of paddy they get about Rs.3. So, the people outside have a suspicion that there must be something wrong or there must be some interest in making this sort of deal with the millers.

Therefore, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House that if this system is to continue, Government should exercise necessary caution in making agreements with the millers and should examine how much profit they make. Sir, the prices of some commodities are the same in many places. For instance the price of cement in Bihar is the same as in Assam though we are to carry cement from other States. Price of petroleum is the same in other States as in Assam, though petroleum is to be carried from Assam to other States. How this arrangement is made (Voices: In some States price of petroleum is cheaper than in Assam). I do not understand why this arrangement cannot be made in Assam also in respect of the foodstuff which are taken from Bihar, Punjab, United Province and other States to Assam? The merchants make a huge profit on the ground that they have to pay a substantial amount as freight. So, Sir, the price of foodstuff should also come under this arrangement and I request this Government that they will take up this matter with the appropriate authority.

Another thing, Sir, I want to draw the attention of the House is that our State has to grow wheat and every kind of pulses. Unfortunately Sir, we are to spend a huge amount of money annually in importing pulses and wheat which are the commodities of daily use here. As far as my knowledge goes the shortage of wheat and pulses is due to the fact that no stringent law is enacted by our State controlling the habits of the people in the matter of restraining cattle from roaming in the fields at their will. If stringent.....

\* **Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister)**: I could not follow what the hon. Member is driving at.

**Mr. SPEAKER**: He means grazing of cattle in the fields.

\* **Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS (Barpeta)**: Our cultivators cannot grow pulses and wheat because our cattle consume all these crops.

\* **Shri MOHIKANTA DAS (Barchalla)**: Why could not the fields be fenced?

\* **Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS (Barpeta)**: No, Sir, our peasants are poor; they cannot afford to pay for it. So the Veterinary Department or the appropriate department must make enactment to control the grazing habits of the cattle.

\* **Shri MOINUL HAQUE CHOUDHURY (Minister, Agriculture)**: Will the hon. Member please elaborate the point how grazing of the cattle may be controlled?

\* **Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS (Barpeta)**: Yes Sir, I am giving some hints. Enactment should be to the effect that whenever anybody's cattle are found in the crop field, the cattle should be impounded (Noise).

**Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, Order.

\***Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS (Barpeta)**: Pounds are not sufficient and the rules are not stringent. The peasants whose cattle go astray and destroy others' crop must be punished. If they do not keep a cow-herd...

\***Shri MOINUL HAQUE CHOUDHURY (Minister, Agriculture)**: Already pounds are there; if the cattle stray, they should be impounded.

\***Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS**: Repeated occurrences should be punished. The owners should be penalised. With these few words, Sir, I conclude my observations. Thank you.

\***Shri MOHI KANTA DAS (Barchalla)**: মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, আমার সদনত যিটো বিষয় উঠিছে সেইটো অত্যন্ত আৱশ্যকীয় বিষয়। বস্তৰ দাম সম্পৰ্কে বছৰৰ আলোচনা হৈ গৈছে। সেই আলোচনাত মিসকল মাননীয় সদস্যই পৰামৰ্শ দিছিল সেইবিলাকৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰি State Trading স্থাপন কৰি আমাৰ অৰ্থ-সম্পদ যাতে আমাৰ দেশতে থাকে আৰু আমাৰ দেশৰ উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি হয় তাৰ নিমিত্তে বহুত আঁচনি চৰকাৰে গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে আৰু সেইবিলাক কাৰ্য্যকৰী কৰিবৰ নিমিত্তে বিভিন্ন সংস্থানৰ জৰিয়তে চেষ্টা কৰা হৈছে। এতিয়া lean period ৰ সময়ত ধানৰ দাম সকলো ঠাইতে বাঢ়িব। যিখন State Trading Trade Enquiry Committee, M. L. A. সকলৰ জৰিয়তে কৰিছিল সেই কমিটিয়েও মত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে যে lean period ৰ সময়ত ধানৰ দাম বাঢ়ে আৰু সেই কমিটিয়ে এই বৃদ্ধি দূৰ কৰিবৰ বাবে পৰামৰ্শও দিছে। কমিটিৰ পৰামৰ্শ হৈছে যে আমাৰ buffer stock ৰাখিব লাগে আৰু lean period ত সেই ধান deficit এৰিয়ালৈ Service Co-operative ৰ জৰিয়তে পঠাই বাইজক সঙ্কটাপন্ন অৱস্থাৰ পৰা ৰক্ষা কৰিব লাগে। ইয়াকো কওঁ যে মানুহে উৎকট দাম দি চাউল কিনি পৰিয়াল ভৰণ-পোষণ দিবলগীয়া হয়—সেই কাৰণে চৰকাৰে কিছুমান Fair price দোকান খুলি দি চাউলৰ দাম যাতে বাঢ়িব নোৱাৰে তাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিবৰ বাবে পৰামৰ্শ আগ বঢ়ালে।

চাউলৰ দাম যাতে বৃদ্ধি হব নোৱাৰে তাৰ কাৰণে শীঘ্ৰে বাবতীয় ব্যৱস্থা লবৰ কাৰণে মই দুটা পৰামৰ্শ আগবঢ়াইছো।

প্ৰথমতে চৰকাৰে এটা Buffer Stock তৈয়াৰ কৰিব লাগে। ঠায়ে ঠায়ে সস্তীয়া ধান চাউলৰ দোকান খুলি অভাৱগ্ৰস্ত লোকক সকাহ দিলে লাহে লাহে বজাৰৰ চাউলৰ দাম কমি যাব।

তাৰ পিচত বস্তৰ দামৰ হ্রাস-বৃদ্ধিটো এটা Relative কথা— গতিকে ধান চাউলৰ দামৰ আন বস্তৰ দামৰ লগত নিগুঢ় সম্বন্ধ আছে। দামটো Supply আৰু Demand ৰ ওপৰত বেচিকৈ নিৰ্ভৰ কৰে। আমাৰ ধান-চাউলৰ উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি হলেই Supply বেচি হব আৰু দাম কমি যাব। ইয়াৰ নিমিত্তে আমি চেষ্টা কৰিব লাগিব।

বিশেষকৈ আমাৰ ৰাজ্যখন খেতি প্ৰধান দেশ গতিকে খেতিৰ শস্য উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধিৰ কাৰণে চেষ্টা কৰা উচিত। সেই মৰ্মে গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণকৈ যিবিলাক আঁচনি গ্ৰহণ কৰে সেইবিলাক যাতে কাৰ্য্যকৰী হয় তাৰ কাৰণে আমাৰ সকলো সদস্যই সহযোগ কৰিব লাগে আৰু তেনে এটা আবহাৱাৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিব লাগিব। জাপানত বিষৰ মাটিত ২৫ মৌন ধান হয় এনে ধৰণৰ আঁচনিৰ জৰিয়তে। এনে ধৰণৰ আঁচনিৰ যোগেদি আমাৰ গাঁওবিলাককো প্ৰেৰণা যোগাব লাগিব।

আমাৰ উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি হলেই অনাটন দূৰ হ'ব। মোৰ পৰামৰ্শ হল, আমাৰ Field Management Committee আদিৰ জৰিয়তে আমাৰ গাওঁ অঞ্চল উন্নত কৰিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰিব লাগিব।

যাৰতীয় কাৰবাৰ, শিল্প যাতে আমাৰ মানুহৰ হাতলৈ আহে তাৰ চেষ্টা কৰিব লাগিব। ব্যৱসায় আমাৰ হাতলৈ আনিবলৈ State Trading ৰ জৰিয়তে যি আঁচনি লোৱা হৈছে তাত আমাৰ মানহক সুবিধা আদি আগবঢ়োৱাৰ দিহা কৰা হৈছে। ইয়াৰ উপৰিও শিল্পৰ উন্নয়ন কৰি আমাৰ দেশৰ শিল্প-সম্পদ বৃদ্ধি কৰিব লাগিব। আমাৰ এই সকলোবিলাক প্ৰচেষ্টা সমবায়ৰ জৰিয়তে আৰম্ভ কৰা হৈছে। ইতিমধ্যে Co-operative Sugar Mill, মৰাপাটৰ কল আদি খোলাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰা হৈছেই।

এতিয়া মই চৰকাৰকো অনুৰোধ কৰো যাতে এই Co-operative ৰ যোগেদি এই শিল্পবিলাক যাতে আমাৰ মানুহে ল'ব পাৰে—তাৰ দ্বাৰা যাতে আমাৰ দেশৰ মানুহৰ উপকাৰ হয়, তাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰে।

তাৰ পিচত আমি দেশী বিদেশী বুলি বক্তৃতা কৰি থাকিলে সমস্যাব সমাধান নহয়। এসময়ত আচাৰ্য্য পিঃ চিঃ বায়েও কৈছিল যে নানা বাহিৰৰ মানুহে আমাৰ দেশ শোষণ কৰিলে—তেতিয়া তেখেতে কৈছিল যে দান্ধাহাজাৰৰ দ্বাৰা বিদেশী দূৰ কৰা নাযায় শিল্পৰ জৰিয়তে নিজ নিজ কামত লাগি সেই কামৰ যোগেদি শিল্প প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰি খেদাহে প্ৰধান উপায়।

দেখা যায় আজি কলিকতাই শিল্পৰ জৰিয়তেই নিজক প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিছে। গতিকে অসমীয়া আৰু অনা-অসমীয়া ইত্যাদি কথা উধা-পন নকৰি কুটীৰশিল্প আৰু বৃহৎ শিল্পৰ যোগেদি যাতে আমাৰ বাইজক একত্ৰিত কৰিব পাৰো, উঠিঅহা লৰা-ছোৱালীবিলাকক স্ম-পৰামৰ্শ দি আগ-বঢ়াই আনিব পাৰো তাৰ চেষ্টা কৰিব লাগিব আৰু তেতিয়াহে আমাৰ দেশৰ সমৃদ্ধ হ'ব। এইটোহে সামৰ্শ কথ। সেই মৰ্শে আমাৰ সকলো সদস্যই সহযোগিতা কৰিব বুলি আশা কৰো।

ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ মতে অসম চৰকাৰক আৱশ্যকীয় অনুদান দিয়ে তাৰো ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব লাগিব। বৰ্তমান বহুতো বস্ত্ৰ আন ঠাইৰ পৰা আনিবলগা হোৱাত সেই বস্ত্ৰ বিলাকৰ দাম বৃদ্ধি হয়। গতিকে আমাৰ যিবিলাক কুটীৰ-শিল্প আৰু বৃহৎ শিল্প গঠন কৰিলে সেই বস্ত্ৰবিলাকৰ দাম কমে, তেনে শিল্প প্ৰথমতে কৰিব লাগিব। আমাৰ ইয়ালৈ বেলৰ অসুবিধাই আৰু আন আন যিবিলাক অসুবিধা সেই সকলোবিলাক মন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ে জনাব। এই অসুবিধা বিলাক দূৰ কৰিবলৈ অসম চৰকাৰে আজি বহুদিনৰ পৰা ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ লগত যুদ্ধ কৰি আছে। কিন্তু তাৰ পৰা কোনো কাম হোৱা নাই। আমাৰ সকলো বাইজে আৰু চৰকাৰে ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ ওচৰত দাবী কৰিব লাগিব যাতে বেচিকৈ Wagon place কৰি হলেও আমাৰ Cement, চেনি, আদি অহা অসুবিধা দূৰ কৰিব লাগিব।

এতেকে আজি এই বিষয়ত যিবিলাক অসুবিধা আহি পৰিছে সেইবিলাক চৰকাৰে দূৰ কৰিব লাগে। আজি আন ঠাইতকৈ আমাৰ ইয়াত নিমখৰ দাম বেচি। তাৰ কাৰণ হৈছে নিমখ আমাৰ ইয়াত কৰিব নোৱাৰি আৰু অন্য ঠাইৰ পৰা ইয়ালৈ আহোতে বাটৰ খৰচ বেচি পৰে আৰু আমাৰ ৰাজ্যলৈ যিটো

**Transport bottleneck** আছে সেইটোৰ কাৰণেহে হৈছে। এই অসুবিধা দূৰ কৰিব লাগে। তাৰোপৰি, কলিকতাৰ বেলৰ উৰা সহজে পোৱা নাযায়। টকা দিলেহে বোলে পায়। এইবিলাক অসুবিধা আমাৰ চৰকাৰে দূৰকৰি ৰাজ্যত বস্তু অনা-নিয়াত সুবিধা কৰি দিব লাগে। দাক্ষিণাত্যৰ ফালে নিমখৰ দাম কম আৰু তাৰ পৰা কেনেকৈ আমাৰ ইয়ালৈ নিমখ আনিব পাৰি তাৰ ব্যৱস্থা চৰকাৰে কৰিব লাগে। তেতিয়া হলে নিমখৰ দাম কমিব।

কৃষি বিভাগ সম্পৰ্কত এই কথাই কওঁ যে, সকলো প্ৰকাৰৰ খেতি ইটোৰ পিচত সিটোকৈ কৰিব পৰাৰ নিৰ্দেশাৱলী সহ উচিত মতে অভিযান চলাব লাগে যাতে তাৰ পৰা আমাৰ মানুহে অধিক উৎপাদন কৰিব পাৰে। আমাৰ ৰাজ্যত মছৰ, অৰহৰ আদিৰ খেতি মানুহে নকৰে ফলত সমস্ত ৰাজ্যৰ কাৰণে দাইল বাহিবৰ পৰা আনিবলগা হয় আৰু **Transport bottleneck** ৰ কাৰণে অধিক দাম পৰি যায়। এই-বিলাকৰ খেতিও আমাৰ ইয়াত কৰিব পৰা ব্যৱস্থা কৃষি বিভাগে কৰি মানুহক বুজাই দিব লাগে। তেতিয়া হলে এহাতে আমাৰ মানুহৰ উপাৰ্জন বৃদ্ধি হয় আৰু আনহাতে আমি আনৰ ওচৰত হাত পাতিবলগা নহব।

তাৰ পিচত কওঁ, আমাৰ ইয়াত সবিসয় খেতি প্ৰচুৰ পৰিমাণে হয়। মিলো আছে তথাপি মিঠাতেলৰ দাম চৰা আৰু সেই তেল ভেজাল। খাটি তেল পাবলৈ বুলি চৰকাৰে লোৱা ঘাৰিৰ আঁচনিখন কাৰ্য্যকৰী কৰিব লাগে তেতিয়া হলে আমাৰ জনসাধাৰণে খাটি তেল পাব। অৱশ্য এই 'ঘাৰি' সংক্ৰান্তত নিমিলাক অসুবিধা আছে সেই বিলাক চৰকাৰে দূৰ কৰি দিব লাগিব। নহলে মেলৰ ভেজাল তেল ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি মানুহে পেটৰ বেমাৰ বালাকৰ পৰা ৰক্ষা নাপাব।

আন এটা আমাৰ আৱশ্যকীয় বস্তু হৈছে মাছ। মাছ আমাৰ খাদ্য আৰু আজি ৰাজ্যত মাছ নোহোৱা হৈছে আৰু মানুহে মাছ খাবলৈ নোপোৱা হৈছে। এই ক্ষেত্ৰতো, অতি চৰা দামৰ কাৰণে মানুহে মাছ খাব নোৱাৰা হৈছে। মাছৰ সমস্যা সমাধান কৰিবলৈ হলে, প্ৰথমতে চৰকাৰে, চৰকাৰী বিভাগৰ জৰিয়তে মাছ উৎপাদনৰ ব্যৱস্থা হাতত লব লাগে। তাৰ পিচত যি বিলাক প্ৰাকৃতিক মাছৰ বিল বা নদী আছে, সেইবিলাক সদায়ে মহলত বনদি মাজে মাজে জিৰণি দিব লাগে যাতে নতুনকৈ মাছৰ বংশ বৃদ্ধি হব পাৰে। মীন মহলৰ লগতেই এই কথাও মই চৰকাৰক জনাওঁ যেন, কিছুমান বিল মহলত নিদি আমাৰ বাইজক ধৰি খাবলৈ সুবিধা দিব লাগে। আমাৰ জাতীয় উৎসৰ বিহত বাইজে মাছ-কাছ মাৰি সকলোৱে মিলি ৰাজহুৱা ভোজ খোৱা প্ৰথা আছে আৰু সেই উৎসবিলাক বাইজে পালন কৰিব পৰাকৈ এই ৰকমৰ কিছুমান বিল বা পুখুৰী ৰাখি দিব লাগে। আনহাতে পূৰ্বকলীয়া কিছুমান পুখুৰী আছে য'ত পৰিষ্কাৰ কৰি নতুনকৈ মাছ পুহিব পাৰি। সেইবিলাক কামত লগাবলৈ দিহা কৰি দিব লাগে। এই মাছ পোহা আৰু বৃদ্ধি অভিযানতো বাইজক ইয়াৰ কাৰণে ঋণ ঠিকমতে ঠিক সময়ত দিব লাগে। তাৰ পিচত এই কথা সদনত জনাওঁ যে, কণাৰ দাম আজি টকাত ৪টা হৈছে। কণাও মানুহৰ উৎকৃষ্ট খাদ্য। মাছ, কণা, মঙহ আজি মানুহে খাবলৈ নোপোৱা হৈছে। ইয়াৰ বৃদ্ধিৰ কাৰণে চৰকাৰে প্ৰচুৰ সন্যোগ দিব লাগে।

তাৰ পিচত আজি আমাৰ দেশত প্ৰৱলবেগে বাঢ়ি অহা নিবনুৱা সমস্যা সমাধান কৰিবৰ কাৰণে ডেকা লৰা আৰু ছোৱালী লোককো বিভিন্ন শিল্পা-নুষ্ঠানবিলাকত খাপখোৱাকৈ শিক্ষা দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব লাগে। তেওঁলোকক বিভিন্ন ক্ষেত্ৰত বৰঙণি যোগাব পাবিলেহে আমাৰ জাতীয় সম্পদবিলাক বাঢ়ি আহিব। ইয়াৰ লগে লগে ফলাহাৰবিলাকৰ উৎপাদনলৈও আমি মন কৰিব লাগিব। এই বাবে হৰটিকালচাৰ বিভাগটোৱে বিশেষ বৰঙণি যোগাব পাৰে।

**Mr. SPEAKER:** মিঃ দাস, আমি আজি ইয়াত বস্ত্ৰৰ চৰা দামৰ বিষয়ে আলোচনা কৰিছো।

**Shri MOHI KANTA DAS (Barchalla):** হয় চাৰ, সেই সম্পৰ্কতেই এইবিলাক আহি পৰে। সেই কাৰণে এইবিলাকৰ উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধিৰ পথত যিবিলাক বাধা আমি পাইছো। সেইবিলাক চৰকাৰে অভিজ্ঞতাৰ পৰা দূৰ কৰিবলৈ অহোপকসাধ কৰক আৰু সকলো প্ৰকাৰৰ জিনিচ-পত্ৰৰ উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি কৰাত সহায় কৰক আৰু বস্ত্ৰৰ চৰা দাম বন্ধ কৰক। সৰ্বশেষত মই শ্ৰীযুত বৰবৰুৱা ডাঙৰীয়াৰ উক্তিৰ প্ৰতি আঙুলিয়াই এই কথাও কওঁ যে তেখেতে নানান শিল্পানুষ্ঠানবিলাক জাতীয়কৰণ কৰিবলৈ কৈছে। কিন্তু ক'তা, কেবেলাৰ কমিউনিষ্ট চৰকাৰৰ ন মইয়া শাসনৰ ফলত তেওঁলোকৰ কোনোকপ আঁচনি গ্ৰহণ কৰিব নোৱাৰিলে। সেই কাৰণে মই খাদ্যসমস্যাৰ আৰু চৰা দামৰ সমাধানৰ যিবিলাক কথা কৈ আহিলো। সেইবিলাক কাৰ্য্যকৰী কৰিবলৈ চৰকাৰক টানি অনুৰোধ কৰি মোৰ বক্তব্য শেষ কৰিলোঁ।

**Shri MAHAMMED UMARUDDIN (Dhubri):** I thank, Sir, Mrs Dulal Chandra Barua for having brought up this matter of rising price before this House for discussion. Sir, this problem of price and price structure is one which cannot be considered effectively in isolation of the various programmes we have undertaken under the plans. It is very interesting to hear the difficulties caused by the high price of certain commodities as prevailing in Assam. Moreover, Mr. Mohikanta Das has given a comprehensive picture of the matter with suggestion by which rising prices can be controlled. But, Sir, if we really want to examine the basic causes which go to determine the price of commodities in a planned economy we have to go a little deeper into the whole matter. Why there is a rising trend of price in this country today? Mr. Barbarua said that in 1950 certain things were very cheap because an article available then at one rupee has come to cost Rs.3 now; the cause, Sir, is that in the first 5-year plan period beginning from the year 1950-51 we put into investment for national development Rs. 2,500 crores. In Assam it was Rs. 20 crores. Our whole emphasis was then to augment agricultural production because it has been considered necessary by the planners that unless we strengthen the base of agricultural economy we cannot build up a sound industrial economy. The foundation on which the whole economy can be built up is agriculture. Therefore, in the First Five-Year Plan a great deal of emphasis was laid on agricultural production through a scheme known as "Grow More Food Campaign". Then in the Second Five-Year Plan we put in Rs. 4,500 crores, the emphasis was laid on industrial development. We have made some progress and the hon. Members are aware of the industrial policy adopted by our country that certain industries have been exclusively allotted to the public sector, some in

which both the private sector and public sector can participate and certain other industries which have been relegated to the private sector. Now, Sir, if we put in more money into circulation naturally it has some effect on prices. Now, there are two main types of development schemes—some are short-term maturing schemes and some are long-term maturing schemes. The short-term maturing schemes give quick return on a short-term period. Therefore, rising prices can be checked to some extent by higher production but there are projects involving crores of rupees and it takes a longer period to produce results. The question of higher investment and higher prices go side by side. There are economic forces at work over which human agency has little control. Now, Sir, what is our policy in the matter of economic development? There are two different systems—one is the *Laissez-faire*—or free economy and the other is a regimented or a fully controlled system of economy which is obtaining in the Communist countries to which my Friend, Mr. Barbarua, has referred. There the whole economy is controlled by the State—everybody works for the State and the entire production and distribution system is controlled by the State, but we have embarked on a system of economic development which is known as the 'democratic system of planning'—envisaging partial control. The whole matter has been discussed in Chapter 7 at page 119 of the Third Five Year Plan. The price problems have been very fully discussed therein and it has been recognised that the most important thing to do is to strengthen our agricultural economy—increasing food production to attain self-sufficiency. The food production target of 80 million tons should be enhanced and there must be an over-all increase of 25 per cent of food production to attain the target of 100 to 110 million tons at the end of the Third Five Year Plan for the whole country. What is the position in Assam today? The other day it was indicated by some Members that our food production has been more or less constant for the last few years. The investments which we have made in agriculture has had very little impact on the agricultural production but we cannot blame the Government policy alone that prices at all levels have not been kept under check in our State; therefore, we must also fix a higher target of agricultural production particularly in the matter of food and also in respect of other agricultural commodities which form some of the important items of our consumption. Therefore, for every bit of difficulty we cannot blame the Government. We have got many difficulties—of which the most important is the transport bottle-neck. Many essential commodities like cement, C.I. sheets and many other articles of food are imported from outside Assam and Assam is a State which suffers from its peculiar geographical position and has got to pay the highest freight charges of all places in India.

Therefore, we have to bear in mind that the freight charges for commodities coming to Assam are the highest in India. Secondly, the population in our State is growing very rapidly and Government also has undertaken many developmental and industrial activities which attract many people from outside. It is natural that prices are going up. Therefore as our population is going up, we have got to do something to meet the situation by higher production. If we are to save our community from the difficulties caused by high prices, we have to develop both agricultural and industrial sectors. The food position must be improved within as short a time as possible. Therefore, my idea is that we must develop the industrial sector as well as the agricultural sector. So, people should not blame Government for the high prices of commodities. It will take a long

time to stabilise the food prices. There are certain circumstances under which food price can be stabilised. We have to take into account the gradual rise of population and of the short-fall in the production of food. I agree that in the matter of food production we have got to adopt improved methods of agriculture. I also agree that we have to shift from the *laissez faire* system to the socialistic pattern of economy. In adopting this system we have to take into account the disturbing influence the change over will bring about. Some people who are engaged in trade will be adversely affected and there will be conflict of interests. It is therefore essential to adjust our trade policies in such a way that minimum dislocation is caused in the transitional period—so as to reduce the hardship of those liable to be displaced from the trade.

Again, Sir, some of our friends said that co-operative system was not working properly in the matter of procurement of food-grains. I like to mention here, Sir, unless we have adequate buffer stock, we will not be in a position to control or stabilise the food price. Government of India has also directed that foodgrains should be kept in stock in adequate quantities for the stabilisation of price. For this purpose, Government of India has already entered into an agreement with the Government of U. S. A for the supply of wheat as buffer stock worth Rs. 600 crores for the Third Five Year Plan period under P. L. 480. So far as supply of rice is concerned, the overall production of rice in the world is not very satisfactory. So buffer stocks of rice must be built up by internal procurement. In Japan the area for rice production is only 15 per cent of the total area, but you will be surprised to hear that with this small percentage of area under cultivation, Japan is surplus in respect of rice. There in Japan rice production varies from 25 to 30 maunds per bigha, whereas in our country the rice production per bigha is only 4 to 5 maunds. It sounds as if Japanese cultivators are wizards. But they are not so—they are very hard working people and their agricultural methods are one of the most scientific and advanced in the world. Therefore, Sir, I agree with Mr. Das that the most important thing in this respect is to have a sound policy which offers sufficient incentives to the cultivators for more production. Procurement prices must give an incentive to the growers and then only they will produce more food and price will be stabilised. At present a grower is offered only Rs. 9.50 nP per maund of paddy in a surplus zone. This is considered to be insufficient. Government is giving only Rs. 9.50 nP. per maund to a grower which, more or less, represents the cost of production, and unless a higher price is offered a cultivator will take to other more remunerative crops. Therefore, Sir, I request the hon. Member to study the whole price situation in the context of agricultural and industrial productions. Unless in both the sectors productions do not match the money in circulation, the price level will not come down under any circumstances. I appreciate the anxiety which has been expressed in this connection by many Members. The price line can be held in food if the buffer stock is evenly distributed in the deficit areas, so that when there is an emergency, sufficient foodgrains may be released to meet the rising demand. This is how stable prices can be maintained. Therefore, Sir, there has been a complaint that paddy was not distributed properly for want of a proper machinery of distribution in the rural areas in times of need. The policy adopted by Government in respect of procurement and distribution should be rational and effective and price trends should be kept constantly under review and remedial measures taken when price tends to increase beyond a certain limit, Sir, that is why it



has not been thought necessary to fix the retail price statutorily. The retail price of rice and paddy has also not been fixed on this ground. Then the question of controlling the retail price is very difficult—in fact it will entail complete rationing. Therefore, only by creating buffer stocks the price level can be held up to a certain reasonable level. In addition to assuring a reasonable price to growers to stimulate higher production there is the responsibility of Government to maintain a fair price for consumers also.

Sir, if the food price is not controlled, it will have repercussion on the cost of industrial production. Higher cost of living for industrial workers will raise the price of consumer goods, and thus a vicious circle will set in. Therefore, it will be proper to control the food prices both for producers and consumers in a rational manner. Proper remedy will be, according to my opinion,—(i) to control the price structure and (ii) to augment the food production, and (iii) an efficient system of distribution. Government machinery should be so designed as to keep strict vigilance on the rising of prices of other essential commodities also which have their impact on the cost of living. Government should set up a separate department to watch constantly the price trends in respect of all commodities so that any upward trends may be checked with suitable steps. The normal law of supply and demands will continue to determine prices, and short supply at any time may be due to lower production locally as well as less import due to transport bottle-neck. Transport bottle-neck is an important cause for rising prices and unless the transport facilities are improved and free flow of goods ensured consumers will have to face occasional difficulties. Some of our friends blame the Government for rising prices, but Government cannot alone control the prices. What the Government can do is to make all possible facilities available by way of transport. Now Mr. Sen from Cachar also said that they were suffering from transport bottle-neck. The Minister in-charge, Industries has said that the railway system in the Hill Section would be improved providing for a larger number of wagons for movement of goods to and from Cachar in greater volume.

Therefore, Sir, we must not confuse things. It must be remembered that in certain fields only Government can control and in others where there is free economy competition is the best corrective but freedom of movement is the most important factor to ensure fluidity in the market. Therefore, Sir, we should remove the transport difficulties that are there, but it will take some time. What we can do is that we should have a close study of the whole problem and see how we can tackle the problem. There I find some deficiency in the Governmental machinery and I think, Sir, all these problems—production and procurement of food and its distribution, etc., will call for a comprehensive examination so that a sound policy can be evolved and the people who are suffering from high cost of living may be saved from undue financial strains. Coupled with all these, Sir, we must also take steps to improve our earning capacity with productive investment. Unless all these things are combined, prices cannot be brought down. It will have its usual effect under the forces of economic law. The matter is of very great importance and I feel there should be a Committee of the House which should examine all these matters and advise the Government as to the measures to be adopted from time to time. We must also have an agency to examine these problems at the district level and Government apprised of the situation so that remedial measures may follow. When the local difficulties take place, we hear all kinds of grievance from the

people. So, Sir, there must be a sort of comprehensive scheme by which the whole position can be kept under close observation and necessary steps taken as the situation demands. I therefore, say, Sir, that it is no good to blame the Government alone, or merely condemn the rising prices. It is a very complicated economic problem. Therefore, it is good that we have got an opportunity of discussing this problem at this stage and the observations and suggestions that have been made by the hon. Members would be taken into consideration by the Government and necessary steps taken to remove the grievances of the people as far as possible.

**Shri LAKSHMI PRASAD GOSWAMI (Laharighat):** Sir, nobody can deny that price condition in the State is very erratic and at the same time irritating. It frequently goes up and frequently comes down. All the Members here have dwelt upon the points from various aspects, but it has a close relation with the purchasing capacity of the people, because when we see that the prices of essential commodities are on the increase, the purchasing capacity of our people are on the decrease. So, unless we find out some means to make both these ends meet, we cannot solve this problem. Our friends here have given suggestions that we should encourage our peasants to take to cultivation. That is really a very important point, Assam being a State of agriculturists. We have enough waste lands and there are waste lands in the tea gardens also which are not fit for tea plantation. We have enough lands in the villages also. Unless we can bring them together lands to the people and the people to plough on them, this problem cannot be solved.

As regards industrialisation, Sir, our friends have spoken many things about it. We were really sorry to hear the Minister for Industries yesterday that the Government has committed mistake regarding the Sugar Mill at Dergaon. He did not explain what were the mistakes committed by the Government in the Sugar Mills and I expected a reply from him whether the Sugar Mill is going to function or not.

As regards housing materials, Sir, about four years back, there was a talk of a cement factory in United Khasi and Jaintia Hills. But this cement factory has not yet come up and we do not know whether it is actually coming up.

As regards clothing, Sir, as a part of the Plan of the Government of Assam a Spun-Silk Factory was established at Jagi Road in my district. I can here caution the hon. Members that a day is soon to come when we will have the painful necessity of hearing from our Government that this Spun Silk Mill is also not working, because due to the mistakes in the selection of site. The factory requires twenty thousand gallons of water per day to feed the machinery, but now, it appears that only six thousand gallons of water is available and Government has already invested one lakh of rupees to find out water. Now, another sum of Rs.50,000 is going to be invested there to find out water even after investing this one and half lakh of rupees, as things stand today, one cannot hope that sufficient water required for the purpose, *i.e.*, twenty thousand gallons.....

**Mr. Speaker:** What bearing this Spun Silk Mill has on the rising price of the commodities. It is too far fetched.

**Shri LAKSHMI PRASAD GOSWAMI (Laharighat)**: It has some relation. What I want to impress upon the Members is that every scheme taken up by the Government to improve the requirements of the State has failed and we are always to hear sad explanations and unconvincing explanations from the Government side. So, Sir, as I say, production has something to do rather production is the only thing which should be considered before we consider the rising prices. Unless we put our heads together to increase production, this price problem can never be solved. That is why I say that our Government during the last two Plan periods, failed miserably to bring production up-to-date. It failed because it failed to utilise human materials and other natural resources available in the country to increase food production. That is what I want to say, Sir.

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister, Supply)**: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am indeed thankful to our young friend, Shriman Dulal Chandra Barua for moving this motion relating to an important matter regarding rise in prices of the essential commodities. I am also thankful to hon. Members who have taken keen interest in the discussion and given constructive suggestions to improve the situation, so far as rise in prices is concerned. But I am sorry that neither in the speech of Shriman Barua, the mover of this motion, nor in speeches of the hon. Members, specific instance has been pointed out. The main point for discussion was the rise in prices of essential commodities. But nobody has pointed out any specific instance in respect of any particular commodity that there has been any rise in prices at all if there be any and no area was pointed out.

**\*Shri RATHINDRA NATH SEN (Kaimganj North)**: Sir, the Minister, Supply missed the point. Sugar shortage, mustard oil, etc.,—these commodities have been mentioned by the hon. Members from this side.

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA**: Sir, it has been said by my friend, Shri Umaruddin, that this is not an isolated phenomenon here in Assam. It is an all-India phenomenon and the main reasons for such a rise in prices are the inflationary tendencies generated by the heavy industrial development expenditure and also the high price at the production centres and the transport cost involved in importing these essential commodities from the production centres to the consuming areas. It has been pointed out by my friend, Mr. Mohi Kanta Das, what great difficulties we have to face regarding import of these commodities from outside. We have to depend on other States for sugar, salt, mustard oil, soojee, atta, pulses and different grains. Regarding transport bottle-neck, it is well known to the hon. Members. We have only one rail link and its capacity is limited, and due to the expansion of the industries and consequent heavy movement of traffic great strain has been put on this link and it is always not possible to have a regular flow of essential commodities from different places outside our State. Unless there is a regular flow of these essential commodities and unless the supplies are replenished constantly, the scarcity is bound to happen resulting in the rise in prices. But we cannot expect to have a regular flow from outside due to this difficulty, namely, the transport difficulty which is well known to the hon. Members. We have been able to improve the situation a little but much remains to be done. The number of wagons has been increased and we have been taking up the matter with the railway authorities for making more wagons available.

\*Speech not corrected.

So far as the question of rise in prices in our State in respect of the essential commodities is concerned, we have collected the figures from different districts and on the analysis of these reports obtained from the district officers, I can inform the hon. Members that in fact there has not been any abnormal and sudden rise in the price of essential commodities except mustard oil and rice. But even in respect of these two commodities also, the reason is due to the transport difficulties and in some case it is seasonal. Regarding the prices of sugar, atta, soojee and salt, I am glad to inform the hon. Members that there has not been any increase in the prices. The prices are more or less steady and stable. So, Sir, I can say this much, that there is no cause for any anxiety, and if there be any upward trend in prices of different commodities, we will certainly see that they are stabilised and do not go up. We are no less anxious to see that prices are stabilised.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** What about rising in prices of paddy in Barpeta Sub-division about which Mr. Madhusudhan Das referred ?

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister, Supply):** Yes, Sir, Barpeta was specially referred to by my friend, Mr. Madhusudhan Das. So far as Barpeta Subdivision is concerned, from the figures available with me, the present market price of Ahu paddy is Rs.20.50 nP., per maund and Sali paddy at Rs.22 per maund.

**Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS (Barpeta):** Sir, but we are purchasing at Rs.26 per maund.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Brahma, have you got any seed grain shops there ?

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA:** No, Sir.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Then, are you quoting the market price ?

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA:** The present market price, Sir. There is a suggestion from some of the hon. Members that if there be any scarcity of rice and paddy anywhere, the Government should see that some fair price shops are opened by releasing paddy from the buffer stock which we have now. This is a good suggestion. But up till now, we have received no such complaint from any quarter that there is scarcity of rice and paddy except in one district, *i.e.*, the district of Goalpara in Lakhipur thana area which was referred to me by my friend, Mr. Khagendra Nath Nath. If a complaint is received from any quarter, steps will be taken to release the buffer stock.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** But Mr. Das has given a report that the price of Abu paddy has gone up by Rs.13 and Sali paddy by Rs.14.

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA:** I have quoted the price from the figures supplied by office on the basis of the present market price. But if that is the position as reported by Mr. Das, we will see that some paddy is released to meet the situation.

So far as the transport bottle-neck is concerned, it has been stated by many of the hon. Members. The transport bottle-neck is there. On this score also, we have been trying our best to ease the situation and we are taking steps for making more wagons available. Unless more wagons are available and the railway line is strengthened, it will be very difficult for us to import required quantities of goods from outside our State.

So, we shall take up the matter with the authorities concerned, and as a matter of fact we have been doing that from time to time and we shall make all possible attempts to make more wagons available for the purpose. Sir, even within the State due to heavy accumulation of traffic it is not possible to have regular flow of commodities even from one district to the other. There are so many restrictions put and some times the wagons are held up at Amingaon and it takes long time to take them to south bank. Even there is difficulty in inter-district movements of goods. We are, however, trying our best to solve all the difficulties as far as possible. As I have already stated, Sir, at the moment there is no cause for anxiety so far as the rise of prices of essential commodities are concerned. Whenever we find that there is a tendency for the prices to go up, we shall take all possible steps to ease the situation.

**\*Shri KHOGENDRA NATH BARBARUAH (Amguri):** Sir, on a point of information. Just now the Minister has said that due to transport bottle-neck there is difficulty in movement of goods. Is the Minister aware that very recently the Chamber of Commerce has not released some wagons of sugar and as a result Government had to release sugar from our sugar mill and Government had to release the wagons paying demurrage charges? As a result of non-release of the wagons by the Chamber of Commerce there was rise in price of sugar in Tinsukia, and this was done by the Chamber of Commerce deliberately.

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister, Supply):** I am not aware of it, Sir. However, I shall look into it.

Now, Sir, it was reported by my hon. friend Shri Madhusudhan Das that there is scarcity of iron rods at Barpeta. So far as this commodity is concerned, it is a controlled commodity and the prices of the controlled commodities are determined according to the price structure regulated by the Government of India and we have no hand there. There is no chance of rise in the prices of controlled commodities. Regarding the availability of iron rods, so far as my information goes, we have got sufficient materials available in many places. But I do not know whether this particular material is available in Barpeta or not.

**\*Shri MADHUSUDHAN DAS (Barpeta):** On a point of information Sir. The price of cement in Barpeta has risen from 7.20 to 7.85 in course of less than one year. If it is a controlled commodity, what is the reason for the rise in price?

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister, Supply):** I cannot say anything off-hand unless the matter is looked into.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If you go on putting questions like this, how can the Minister reply?

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA:** Sir, I have tried to reply to all the points raised by the hon. Members excepting one point raised by Shri Bhattacharjee from Katigora. He said that people did not get proper price for their agricultural produce. According to him the paddy was

sold at Rs. 7 per maund. I do not know whether it was Sali paddy or Ahu paddy. He also could not give the name of the place where the paddy was sold at that price. He may supply the information to me later on and I shall look into it.

Sir, so far as the procurement of paddy through the Co operative Marketing Societies is concerned, the main object of adopting this policy is to give proper price to our cultivators and it is with that end in view we have adopted this system of procurement. But I do not know how the system is working, and so I shall have to study the whole thing. Sir, as you know, I have taken up the subject only a few days back and I will take some time to go into it deeply. I hope that if the hon. Members co-operate fully with the Government it will not be very difficult for us to put the policy of ours into action and it will really benefit our cultivators. Moreover, it will help in stabilising the price level of the commodities in our State. Sir, I have tried to reply to all the points raised by the hon. Members.

**Mr. SPEAKER** : I think you have not replied to some of the points raised by the hon. Members. Have you got anything to say with regard to the point raised by Mr. Umaruddin? Mr. Umaruddin suggested that there should be a Sub-Committee of this House to go into the question of rise in prices, etc.

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister, Supply)** : I have noted down all the constructive suggestions made by the hon. Members. Mr. Umaruddin's suggestion for a Sub-Committee seems to be good and I shall certainly consider this and see what can be done. This is really a helpful suggestion.

**Shri TAJUDDIN AHMED (Tarabari)** : Whether the Government is aware that no C. I. Sheet was supplied to Barpeta Subdivision?

**Mr. SPEAKER** : How can the Minister reply to this question without prior notice? It is not question hour. His reply is that he has supplied information all the points raised. Therefore, if you want any further information you may give it to the Minister and he will look into it.

Now item No.4—Shri Dulal Chandra Barua.

#### **Motion regarding food adulteration prevailing in the State**

**Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Jorhat)** : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now take into consideration the food adulteration prevailing in the State.

Sir, I think all the hon. Members of this House will agree with me that this serious problem has been facing by the people of Assam in general. Therefore, I appeal to the House through you, Sir, to take serious notice of this man-made calamity. Some recent reports that have been published in the different newspapers have been brought to the notice of the Government also but no action to check such criminal motive on the part of some interested section of the community has been taken up till now. Sir, in almost all the essential foodstuffs there is adulteration, specially mustard oil detected to contain mixture of castor oil. Of course I do not know in what percentage castor oil has been mixed up with mustard oil but the percentage is high. In turmeric, there is adulteration too.

You know, Sir, milk which is generally supplied in urban areas is fully adulterated. The milk that is being supplied from Government farms such as the one in Upper Shillong is very limited. The poor people have not been able to get milk for their children. Our children have been forced to take adulterated milk and as a result they are suffering from many diseases. In other items of food, such as Suji, atta, flour, etc., too there is adulteration. I want to draw the attention of the House to the fact that even the flour mill that has been established at Gauhati is indulging in adulteration as most of its commodities are reported to be adulterated to a great extent. These foreign materials mixed with foodstuffs are often dangerous and may even cause cancer according to medical experts. The colouring matter such as the one mixed with lemonade is also dangerous. The percentage in food adulteration in comparison with other States is the highest in Assam; in Assam it is 53·3% while in other States it is 30% only. It is not understood why Government is indifferent about this matter which greatly concerns the health of the people of Assam. Government should take serious action about this. In this connection let me refer to one case which took place at Laitumkhrab, Shillong. The Chemist who examined the sample found that it contained a very dangerous substance known as Coalter dye but Government has not taken any action against the culprit who was caught red-handed. When such a serious matter which greatly concerns and affect the interest of the people and the health of our future generation in this State, it is not understood why Government should be indifferent about it. I have come to know that some shops at Gauhati-Shillong Road which supplied the adulterated foodstuff has been seized and a case is also under investigation at Gauhati. But what I fail to understand is that even after submission of the Chemical Examiner's report, no action has been taken. It is clear that there is some alliance between these people of the Administrative machinery. I am not going to say, Sir, that the Government is corrupt but there is every reason to believe that they are having an unholy alliance with those murderers who are killing people slowly and slowly. These culprits must be brought to book because there is no difference between a murderer and a food adulterator. For the sake of profit, these food adulterators are doing a lot of harm to the people in very many ways. Government is not taking any action even when it was brought to the notice of the proper authority. It is quite surprising how Government can keep silent over such a vital matter. Therefore, it is my earnest appeal to all my friends to take this matter in all its seriousness. If necessary there should be a legislation to check such kind of notorious things done by the businessmen. I have come to know that these people have been allowed to go free because there are some defects in the Pure Food Act. If necessary, we should amend the Act. The food adulterators should be convicted as murderers.

**Mr. SPEAKER.** Instead of waiting for the Government, you can bring a Bill yourself. Private Members are entitled to bring Bills but Government should not sleep over it.

**Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Jorhat):** Therefore, my earnest appeal to all Members is that as guardians of law, the Government should look into this matter. This is a question in which the safety of our very life is involved. I leave this matter to the House to consider it seriously and to find out ways and means as to how can this adulteration of foodstuffs be stopped and if the situation demands to make necessary legislation to prevent further recurrence of such things. Thank you.

**Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister, Medical):** I would like to have one information, Sir. The hon. Member has cited the name of a particular place where some person was caught red-handed. I would like to have the full particulars so that I can give my replies. I am not going to reply on these vague allegations.

**Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Jorhat):** I have got these documents, Sir. I can give.

**Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister, Medical):** He is to take full responsibility of the documents.

(Disturbance)

**Mr. SPEAKER :** Order, order.

**Dr. GHANASHYAM DAS [North-Salmara (Reserved)]:** I thank Shri Barua for bringing this motion for discussion again though this House is aware that in every session this vital problem is discussed and whenever such discussion was made, very valuable suggestions were advanced forward in the past. But personally I am not happy at all because things have not improved and statistics show that the percentage of adulteration in foodstuff has increased from 47% to 54%. I endorse the views expressed by Shri Barua and would add that to some extent there is failure of the Government to check this adulteration in foodstuff. I think Shri Barua is not aware of the fact.

**Mr. SPEAKER :** How long will you take please ?

**Dr. GHANASHYAM DAS:** About five minutes only. We have the Food Act also and rules thereunder have been framed both by the Government of India and by this State also. But in spite of this, steps taken are not adequate. The cause of the failure may be due to the fact that the propaganda machinery is defective which should be re-organised. The Health Inspectors also are not very mindful of their duties and they do not perform their duties in the way they should do. I suggest that whole time inspecting officers are necessary to look and investigate all these things. Sir, I suggested last time and I am also suggesting this time that there should be a separate set-up with proper propaganda machinery so that they will be able to discharge their duties properly and play their important part as far as adulterated foods are concerned. So far I find no propaganda has been done and so adulterated food business is going on merrily. About the legal aspect of the matter, many cases have been brought to the court but it is surprising to see that in almost all the cases accuseds are acquitted by the court on the ground that they do not find any fault with the food adulterators who were prosecuted before the court and so almost all the cases have been acquitted. I would, therefore, suggest the Government to examine this aspect of the matter by the Law Department or the Secretary of the law Department, because this is a very very important matter. I request that Government should not neglect this for the interest of the health of the people. The milk supply in the towns generally is always mixed with water, though water is not injurious, why should adulterated milk be supplied to the people. If you go to bazar you will surely find many adulterated food, but I am surprised that the



officers of the department concerned are not taking strong measures to prosecute the offenders. I request Government to pay more attention to this matter so that the offenders may be prosecuted and adequately punished. Sir, I find the Local Bodies also are callous, they are not paying attention to this most important matter which concerns the health and energy of our people. Here in Shillong in Assembly Hostel the milk supplied is mixed with water. Last year it was detected to be adulterated but no steps were taken. When I was a Deputy Minister I had this experience that due to shortage of hands and illpaid staff of the Public Health Laboratory, volume of works could not be coped with. The food samples should be frequently and largely examined. I request Government to give more attention to these things in order that the things may be improved.

Now, Sir, another point about the approved colours by Government. I do not know anything nor have I seen in the official Gazette what are those approved colours. Sir, the people should know certain colours which are approved by Government, otherwise the dealers in foodstuffs may use any colour they like in the foods they are supplying to the public. It is reported that the colour used in chocolate is found to be injurious, even the colour used in Am-sandesh is also injurious. It is better that we should know of the colours approved by the Government. I would therefore, request the Government to examine this aspect of the matter thoroughly so that any and every colour which are injurious to the health of our people should not be used. Sir, we have been discussing this subject matter for the last few years but things have not improved. For the interest of the health of our people and since this is one of the most important matter, I would appeal to the Government to give serious attention to this matter again.

#### Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 9 A.M. on Friday, the 30th March, 1962.

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