

Das

**Speech of the Hon'ble Srijut
Biswanath Das, Chief Minister, Orissa,
in introducing the Budget Estimates
of the Province of Orissa for the year
1938-39.**

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SIR,

BEFORE I rise to present the Budget for 1938-39 I apologise to honourable members for not having supplied them with printed copies of the speech. This is due to political reasons so well known to honourable friends. Printed copy will be supplied in the evening. It is an irony of fate that I should have been called upon to present two budgets before this assembly in the course of six months. After the budget for 1937-38 was printed and before its presentation we had to face a serious flood which was unprecedented in its character. Mahanadi had broken its record at Sambalpur. The most curious feature of the incident was that we had to suffer from floods at a time when there was little rain in Orissa. Sudden and severe rain in the Central Provinces brought misery on us, with the result that about 1,500 square miles were affected by this occurrence.

A succession of Deficit Budgets.—Hon'ble members are aware of the fact that the official budget presented by His Excellency to the Advisory Committee with the approval of the Government of India was really a deficit budget, if the over-estimation of a lakh of rupees in Excise made by the Government of India, is eliminated. The budget that I presented for 1937-38 was also a deficit budget by Rs. 4,000. The subsequent figures revealed a deficit of Rs. 41,000, as has already been mentioned in the Communiqué issued soon after. A succession of deficit budgets are enough to mar the credit of a province. A serious attempt was therefore made to restore the credit of the province to cover the deficit. We hope, therefore, to close the year with a surplus owing to the following reasons :—

- (a) Putting off certain useful and necessary activities provided in the Budget.
- (b) Increased income from jute duty.
- (c) Increased income from stamps, registration and excise.
- (d) Decision of the Government of India upholding our claim on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Company to make good the amount spent in extra police aid during the last strike.

(e) Rigid control on the authorised expenditure and retrenchment.

(f) Reduced contribution to certain institutions in Bihar.

The deficit budget will thus, we hope, end in a surplus closing balance of Rs. 6.90 lakhs, which is however less than the the opening balance.

Budget for 1938-39.—To a casual reader, the budget for the year appears balanced. But close scrutiny reveals a different state of existence.

	Rs.
The estimate of expenditure for 1938-39 is	194.56 lakhs.
The estimate of income for 1938-39 is	192.08 „
Deficit	2.48 „

We have provided to contribute only Rs. 35,000 to the Famine Insurance Fund as against an annual contribution of Rs. 1.25 lakhs fixed under the Famine Relief Fund Regulation of 1937 passed by His Excellency the Governor General of India, as the fund itself is expected to reach the prescribed sum of Rs. 10 lakhs. None of our schemes regarding the development of partially-excluded areas, as a result of the conferences I had with officials responsible for the administration of such areas has been provided for. The deficit of Rs. 2.48 lakhs is made good from the surplus of Rs. 6.90 lakhs, closing balance for 1937-38 shown above.

The Finance Member of the Government of India, in the conference of Finance Ministers from Provinces, announced that he hoped to find a sum of Rs. 1.65 crores out of the proceeds of Income-tax for distribution among the various provinces, from which Orissa gets Rs. 3.30 lakhs calculated at 2 per cent on the basis of the Order in Council passed on the Niemeyer Award. The sum of Rs. 3.30 lakhs has unfortunately been reduced to Rs. 2.76 lakhs by a later telegram from the Central India. This sum is not taken into account in framing the Budget but will be utilized to meet the needs of a good number of schemes awaiting funds. Our thanks are due to the Hon'ble Sir James Grigg for having included in the agenda of the Finance Ministers' Conference the question of the special claims of Orissa to develop her partially-excluded areas and of finding a solution for the flood problem in Orissa. The Government of India have promised to help us to obtain expert advice to tackle the flood problem and I hope and believe that I have also persuaded

the Government of India to undertake at an early date a geological survey of the more promising parts of Orissa. Let us hope that the finances of the Central Government will improve in the near future so as to enable us to press on them the weighty claims of our partially-excluded areas covering over 20,000 square miles, most of which lie in the ex-Madras area, and have for one reason or another been somewhat neglected for a number of years.

General situation.—When we entered upon office it was not possible in a number of places for people to hold meetings nor lead even ordinary marriage processions without licence from the police. Prosecutions were being launched against Congress workers and restraint orders were in force under Bihar and Orissa Emergency Powers Act. A number of books and leaflets were banned. We released political prisoners and withdrew all political prosecutions which were in actual operation or under contemplation. Freedom of holding public meetings and leading of processions without any licence or permission was proclaimed and ban on books, except one which was thought to design communal disharmony, was removed. Whatever security we had from the press was refunded. Bihar and Orissa Public Safety Act which conferred emergency powers on the Executive is now repealed. Thus the restoration of civil liberty in the province was given a strong impetus to.

Floods.—Orissa can never hope to have a satisfactory budget unless the flood problem is solved. Floods recur during the rainy season long after the budget is framed. It is not left, therefore, to human imagination to gauge the possibility of a flood which, if it recurs, is enough to upset the budget and sap away the vitality, not to speak of the taxable capacity of the people. I, therefore, stated in my last budget speech that we stand to face the flood problem. We have accordingly approached Mahatma Gandhi and have also drawn the attention of the Government of India to this vital question. Through the blessings of Mahatmajī we have been able to secure the services of that eminent Engineer Sir Viswaswaraya, who has been advising us from time to time on this question. Government of India, as has been already stated, are willing to help us with their free expert advice.

Professor Mahalanabis has undertaken a great research and is preparing a very interesting account with the help of which the Orissa Government will be better able to prepare in advance for the recurrence of floods. Attempts are being made

to introduce flood-resisting crops in these areas and to introduce the system of lift irrigation and tube-wells to enable people to raise fresh crops after the floods.

The Orissa Flood Committee of 1928 while outlining the broad policies with regard to action to be taken had recommended that detailed investigations should be undertaken with regard to the rivers and their basins before launching upon any particular work and in that connection had recommended that at least two Executive Engineers' division as well as a Superintending Engineer's circle should be established to carry on the work. Due to lack of funds nothing was done in this connection. We have created the nucleus of a division with an experienced officer at the head to examine and formulate schemes for works to be undertaken.

Sir M. Viswaswaraya has given us a preliminary report, in accordance with which essential data are being collected for enabling experts to render useful advice. Thus we are in the midst of our spade-work which is likely to be finished in a month or so after which we will be able to get the opinion of Consulting Engineers.

In the meantime legislation for controlling the water-courses and obstructions thereto are under preparation and will be placed before the Assembly which will give powers to Government to remove obstructions to the beneficent drainage of the country.

For years to come we shall have to be prepared to face devastating floods and emergent measures connected therewith at any moment. To face such situations in a systematic manner and co-ordinate the work of all available men in the services of Government as well as the work of voluntary organisations, a code is being drafted and will be adopted after obtaining public opinion thereon.

We have felt that the problem caused by floods, that is the loss of the main rice crop, can be solved to a great extent if facilities for irrigation could be provided which will enable people to grow winter and summer crops. Before embarking upon any ambitious scheme it is necessary to decide upon the type of irrigation that could be provided at the least cost. Experiments in tube-wells and wind-mills will be undertaken this year and, if found successful, will be extended as much as possible.

Irrigation.—Orissa is an agricultural country; and an agricultural country always depends on irrigation. We must

admit that there is scanty irrigation in this province. Time has come when the rivers and water-falls of this province have to be harnessed to the best advantage of the people. We are now exploring the possibility of diverting Mahanadi water for purposes of irrigation which, if found feasible, will be useful both in increasing the productivity of the soil and minimizing floods. Attempts are also being made to repair old irrigation tanks which are in a miserable state of disrepair in the Khasmahal and temporarily-settled zamindari areas and to start new irrigation works. A lakh of rupees has been allotted for this purpose. Suitable legislation will be undertaken to make it convenient for zamindars to invest money to improve existing irrigation works and also to take up new works. Government would consider the question with sympathy to advance money at easy rates of interest and to realise the same in convenient instalments, if landholders propose to take up construction of irrigation work. I have already asked some of the big landlords to put in applications, and I now appeal to the landholders to make use of this opportunity which will confer permanent benefit on their estates and benefit themselves and their tenants. We are exploring the possibility of lift irrigation in this province. The budget provides Rs. 25,000 for sinking tube-wells as an experiment. If the Hydro Electric scheme at Bogra, Koraput district, is found successful, the possibilities of lift irrigation on large scale will be realised.

We feel that the existing water-rates in North Orissa are high. In view of the insufficiency of water, Government have examined this question and have decided to reduce water cess in North Orissa by twenty-five per cent per acre, resulting in a reduction of our income by Rs. 1.38 lakhs a year. An extra sum of Rs. 65,000 has been provided in the budget for repairing the canal system in Orissa which has long been kept out of repairs. The repairs, it is hoped, would increase the irrigation capacity of our canal system adding to the permanent prosperity of a few villages and increasing the income on the outturn. We have opened a special section to examine the possibilities of major irrigation works and also the possibilities of harnessing the river courses.

Industries.—Government have decided to utilize the machinery of the All-India Village Industries Association in starting or developing our village industries and crafts. Our attempts to produce *gur* from palmyra juice and date trees have been successful. From next year this will be undertaken.

on a large scale. Seventy-five workers, who are now receiving training, will be ready to tour in the province, to instruct the villagers in this respect. This will add to the permanent prosperity of the province by utilizing millions of palmyra and date trees to contribute to the life and living of the people. Similarly hand-made paper will contribute to the existing income of the villagers and will also go some way in relieving unemployment. Government have decided to start a village industries institute at Cuttack to train up 40 workers in a variety of crafts such as dyeing, printing, etc. We will stop the contribution to Bihar that we were hitherto paying to train a few hands at their institute at Gulzarbagh. And we hope to contribute about Rs. 50,000 this year for this Institute, of which Rs. 21,000 has already been budgetted and the rest may be provided for in a supplementary demand out of our share of the income-tax to be received from the Government of India before 31st of March. Government offer of a reward for improved pounding machine would provide employment for the cottagers and also keep hand-pounding rice alive as against machine-milled. The All-India Village Industries Association will take up smaller industries that were hitherto neglected such as local oil-crushers, pottery, etc., and will try to improve them both in their quality and outlook.

Forest resources are proposed to be developed by exploring the possibilities of extracting oil from waste timber. Further they will be utilized for silk-rearing. Attempts are also made to improve and develop horn industry and filigree works in Orissa along with the tanning industry. Government are thus pledged to improve village industries and develop handicrafts by all possible means. They have provided to give State aid to small industries which have possibilities in this province.

Bigger industries have not escaped our attention. Earnest endeavour is being made to get a sugar factory started in the flood-affected area to encourage cultivation of sugarcane proved to be flood-resisting. The opening of a paper factory in the Sambalpur district by Birla Brothers and a factory for manufacturing chemicals at Cuttack will no doubt absorb many an unemployed hand and give impetus to industrialisation. The possibilities of extracting iodine from sea-weeds and weeds of the Chilka lake were examined and found impossible. We propose to employ an expert with national outlook to go round Orissa and explore the possibility of industrial development. He will begin work as soon as possible. Attempts are also made to examine certain kinds of soil which

could be utilized for soap-making so as to make the use of soap cheap and bring it within the easy reach of the poor. Steps have been taken to develop coir-making as also fruit preservation as an industry in Orissa. All these have been attempted and the possibilities are under examination.

Salt industry was the mainstay of Orissa in the past. Government are planning to develop that industry in the province by taking up manufacture of salt in certain areas, specially in the Astrang area, in the district of Puri. Pandit Jagannath Misra, Parliamentary Secretary and an officer are deputed to go and study the manufacture of salt in Bengal and Madras. This could not be done earlier as the Madras Government, who were managing the salt factories in Orissa, as agent of the Government of India pointed out that it was no use before the coming April. It is hoped that a definite step would be taken in this direction early next year. A marketing officer will shortly be appointed to find marketing facilities for products of our small industries.

Veterinary.—An agricultural country such as ours is to take special care of her animal husbandry. Her poverty stands in the way of a highly qualified staff to be made available to the ordinary villagers. Government therefore decided to co-ordinate the activities of the existing *gosalas* in the province with those of the veterinary department, and also the cattle show. A conference of all such workers was convened and details of the co ordination were discussed. The Associations having agreed to get themselves registered as public institutions, Government have to provide financial help for them in the supplementary budget. A school is soon to be started in the *gosala* at Cuttack to train up 24 workers for a period of 9 months in improved breeding, treatment both in indigenous and allopathy and also preservation of fodder. This institution, if found useful, will be made permanent. The pracharakas, under the guidance of the veterinary department and control of the *gosalas*, will train village cowherds in the ordinary methods of treatment and preach to the people the method of treatment and preservation of fodder. The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research have on the motion of this Government agreed to ask the Governing Body to prepare a scheme for the development of indigenous treatment. This Government will also encourage to publish useful literature on the indigenous system of treatment and also such literature as would carry results of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research in its animal husbandry section to the thresholds of the villagers.

Co-operative activities.—The co-operative activities were at a standstill when we took charge of the office. We gave up the idea of paying the Provincial Co-operative Bank of Bihar and Orissa alone without meeting at the same time the demands of the depositors. The matter is still under discussion. An enquiry is being conducted by Diwan Bahadur Deivasikhamani Mudaliyar with the help of persons connected with co-operative movement in each district. His report is awaited. The department will be reorganised soon after the report is ready. We are in the meanwhile negotiating with the Government of Bihar and the depositors of Central Banks how best to adjust ourselves so that the depositors will get their invested money to the extent possible without forcing the Central Banks into liquidation which is injurious to the interests of both the debtors and the creditors concerned and a great calamity to the country. Attempts are also being made to start grain *godas* on an improved basis which will provide something in seasons of stress and necessity and serve as an insurance against famine. The Land Mortgage Bank Bill has now passed into law. A loan of Rs. 50,000 will be provided by a supplementary demand to start a Land Mortgage Bank as soon as possible to help debtors in discharge of their previous loans. After reorganisation Government propose to extend the scope of co-operative enterprise to sale and purchase of agricultural produce through co-operative societies and banks so as to keep the benefits of these activities for the agriculturists. Government have stopped execution of decrees and award of the co-operative societies against the agriculturists between September and January. Relief measures in this direction will be considered by the Government after they get full picture regarding the conditions of the societies and banks from the report of the enquiry.

It is the desire of the Government that co-operative work in Orissa as it is elsewhere be undertaken by non-official agency under the strict vigilance of the Government officials to impress on the people their own responsibility in the matter.

Education.—In my last Budget speech I stressed the necessity of reorganising primary, middle and secondary education in the province so as to develop the highest and the best in the nation. These steps are also necessary leading as they do to that great hall of learning, the University. In spite of his ill-health, Mahatmaji has taken upon himself this great work of inaugurating a scheme of national education which is expected to be cheap, efficient and useful. I attended the conference at Wardha. The Committees appointed by the conference has

submitted its report. A detailed scheme and syllabus will, it is expected, be available very early. It will be a new model and orientation of the entire system of education. Government of Orissa are therefore waiting for the results of these activities without taking any further step in this direction during the interval. Ground has been, however, cleared by abolishing fees realised from students reading in elementary schools in North Orissa from 1938 to 1939 making elementary education free. A Committee regarding the reorganisation of the secondary education including the deprovincialisation of zilla schools was appointed and its report is awaited. Hon'ble members will be consulted before Government finally decides the question of deprovincialisation and relieve the zilla schools from their management. Savings effected under this head will be utilized in improving the existing high schools.

Attempts have also been made to give an agricultural bias to the students of middle and high schools by training teachers in agriculture. And then the managing bodies of schools will be encouraged to have a small farm subsidised partly by Government to give the students instructions in agriculture and horticulture. Similar attempts are also being made to train up teachers in handicrafts to impart instructions to the students in the subjects. The Director of Development is instructed to approach managers of schools to find out if they are willing to undertake the work. A Committee was also appointed to revise the Education Code in relation to the question of students and politics. Final orders will soon be passed by Government. Provision has been made in the Budget to start a middle school at Rayagada in the district of Koraput and to raise two girls' schools to the status of middle English schools in Sambalpur and Puri temporarily for two years pending final decision in the question of the management of such institutions. Ten thousand rupees have been provided for the encouragement of Oriya learning and research.

University.—Our agitation for the formation of a separate province always included within itself the cry for a separate university. Serious inconvenience is felt by the fact of our being under two different universities—Patna and Andhra—having widely different courses of study, syllabus, etc. It becomes therefore difficult for people of ex-Madras area to have the advantages of higher education in North Orissa. The Order-in-Council fixed Patna as the University for Orissa. The difficulty at one time felt was so grave that the Government of India came forward with a Bill of their own. Orissa has now to choose between Patna University

and a separate university of her own. The situation becomes serious when the Patna University vernacularises her courses of study. Government of Orissa consulted various shades of public opinion and education experts on the question of constituting a university for Orissa. A sub-committee was appointed with Pandit Nilakantha Das, M.L.A. (Central) as Chairman, to prepare the frame work of the proposed university.

Universities depend mostly on the benefaction of private persons or institutions. The Government of Orissa are quite willing to do all that is possible for them under the existing circumstances and appeal to the Rulers of States, the landed aristocracy, Matbadhipatis and the generous public to help.

Orissa and the Orissan States.—British Orissa adjoins the Orissa States in such a way that the economic and cultural developments of both are inseparably linked. It was therefore in the fitness of things that the Simon Commission in Volume II of its report made a clear recommendation that nation-building activities of both these parts could usefully be taken up by joint efforts which would not only lessen the cost of administration but also co-ordinate the activities to the mutual advantage of both. The Ministry is alive to the fact and had endeavoured to clear the ground in every possible way for its accomplishment. The latest decision of the Government fully and thoroughly clears the ground by opening all institutions in British Orissa for the students and scholars from the States. In the matter of public service the State subjects to-day enjoy equal rights and privileges with the people of British Orissa. I had a discussion with Colonel Robson, and the Government of Orissa are willing to make joint efforts in fighting against leprosy, malaria, kala-azar and all epidemics and would be willing to give the States the benefit of the advice of their experts if and when required. The cultural co-ordination of States is more necessary to-day than it was in the past. I appeal to the Rulers of the States to co-operate with us in inaugurating a University in Orissa for the development of culture as also to improve and increase the study of post-graduate course and research.

Medical aid and Public Health.—The people of Orissa have suffered much from a neglect of these activities in the past. The existence of a wide area of partially-excluded tracts with increasing demand for such activities, adds to the difficulties of this problem. In fixing the subvention for Orissa provision was not made for improved medical aid either for the normal or for the partially-excluded areas. Our district

hospitals at Sambalpur, Balasore and Puri have suffered from age-long neglect. It now falls to our lot to attend to these pressing and immediate needs. Government is therefore striving to reorganise the Medical Department, and to abolish the duplication of work done by separate police hospitals in certain districts. The money thus saved will be utilized to improve the district hospitals. We have stopped our contribution to Bihar and have started a bacteriological laboratory which is so useful and necessary for the province. Leprosy and malaria are our worst enemies. A Malaria Officer will soon be appointed to investigate into this problem of malaria in collaboration with the Special Medical Officer of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Company. Proposals to entertain honorary physicians and surgeons in every Government hospital are under examination. The Sambalpur Hospital which is in a dilapidated state of existence is proposed to be shifted to a new place and provision has been made both for the purchase of a site and construction of a building thereon. The question of improving and increasing the number of beds, etc., in the General Hospital at Cuttack and the Report of the Hospital Committee are under examination. A statutory committee will soon be constituted to register and issue certificate to nurses and *dhais* on completion of a prescribed period of training.

An impetus is being given to the study of Ayurveda by improving instructions in the Ayurveda section of the Puri Sanskrit College. We are anxious to have as early as possible a board for registration of Ayurvedic practitioners as is being done in provinces like Madras. A Hindu Religious Endowments Board has been started for South Orissa. If they also follow the policy inaugurated by the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Board in diverting surplus funds for Sanskrit and Ayurvedic studies, it will be convenient to start schools in every district where Ayurvedic practitioners could be trained and be induced to settle in villages. Government on their part are willing to help such endeavours and some provision has already been made for the same.

Orissa is worst affected by leprosy. We invited Dr. Santra, the renowned Leper Specialist, being the Officer in charge of Empire Leprosy Relief Association in India. A programme has been drawn up in consultation with him to fight against this fell disease and the same will be provided for in the Supplementary Budget.

Rural Developments.—The village is not only the main but the only stay in Orissa. We are not callous to the various needs and difficulties of the villagers and specially of the water scarcity. A three-year programme has been chalked out to provide annually 1,000 wells. Necessary provision has been made in the budget. It is our earnest hope that public-spirited men in the villages will fully co-operate to make this a success. The question of reviving village services and putting them on a statutory basis is under examination. A step has been taken to train village cow-herds for improving the animal husbandry in rural areas. The chaukidari system is also under examination. It is the desire of Government to see that the smallest unit of village administration is ascertained and the same is vested with the responsibilities of village welfare, sanitation, and upkeep of village services. Time has come when important villages should have village courts to dispose of small claims and disputes among themselves. Legislation in this behalf will be taken in due course.

Agriculture.—Agriculture is the only source of living of the people in the Province. In the absence of an alternative industry of any importance there has been a great scramble for land. The economic condition of the people does not enable them to take to intensive cultivation. We appointed an agricultural Marketing Officer. His report revealed that our people are practically purchasers of all necessities of life excluding paddy and a few seedlings. Methods of cultivation, plan of raising crops, as also rotation of crops and raising of commercial crops are not brought home to the people. The slender finances of the Province do not enable us to start experimental and administrative farms in important places. It was therefore decided to have a subsidised system of farms by which Government would give technical advice and certain concessions if farmers agree to start small farms for cultivation and raising of crops on the advice of the department. This enlarged activity requires employment of a large number of kamdars and overseers which has been sanctioned. Under the new scheme an overseer and not less than 3 kamdars are appointed for every subdivision both for propaganda and demonstration work. In a press communiqué the agricultural programme of the Government was indicated and potato, roots and seedlings for a second potato crop in the Province were distributed. The department is doing experimental cultivation in 8 different places. Provision is also made to distribute double the quantity of potato

seedlings and *potala* roots for the next year for the second potato crop. It has also been decided to utilize the existing farms for producing seedlings for the use of the agriculturists which may be distributed free or at the cost price or market price whichever is less. Enquiries of the Marketing Officer has shown that we are large purchasers of banana, onions, tobacco, *gur*, potato, etc., from other provinces. Provision is made in the present budget for encouraging a number of these crops to be extensively cultivated. Big programme for a period of 3 years is being worked out for fruit cultivation by raising two lakhs of orange, mango, sapota, sweet lemon, lemon, golapjam, guava and Batavian orange grafts and selling to the people in the province either at the cost price or at the nominal price to those who purchase. With a view to improve the seed quality it is proposed to put up 10,000 coconut plants to be distributed in the coastal areas of North Orissa. Similarly provision is made for the extension of the cultivation of the betel-nut, raising of tobacco crop and of second and third paddy crops. Government has investigated the causes of higher prices of production of jaggery in Orissa, as Bihar is able to sell us at a price cheaper than our own. To bring down the cost of production Government also hope to provide in the Supplementary Budget a sum of Rs. 25,000 for supply of cane-crushers at the cheapest rate. Arrangements are also made to start analytical work in connexion with the agricultural problems such as sugarcane. An additional well-boring staff is appointed to help agriculturists to take to lift irrigation, and a demonstration is provided to be started at Jeypore with contributions from the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research and the Maharaja of Jeypore. Provision has also been made for grant of foreign scholarships.

Local Self-Government.—Hon'ble members are aware of the fact that we have three different Acts for local boards and also for municipalities in this province. With a view to consolidate the law and effect necessary changes in administration of local boards a Special Officer has been appointed. The Conference of the representatives of the local bodies that met at Cuttack had its deliberations, and its recommendations are now under examination. Government propose to give local bodies greater freedom to manage their affairs in their own way. I have announced in the local and municipal conference that we propose to experiment in adult suffrage in municipal areas and introduce a suitable system by which the system of nominations may be modified and probably abolished. The question of

further grants to local bodies is also engaging the attention of the Government. The extent of the grants to local bodies will be determined after we received our share of the income-tax from the Government of India.

Excise.—Prohibition is the ultimate goal to which we are wedded. I announced last year that we will first take up the prohibition of opium. As per budget estimates of 1936-37 the income from opium is Rs. 18,56,121, of which the district of Balasore, small though it is, accounts for Rs. 4,09,000 exceeding *per capita* all the other districts. The Bihar and Orissa Act has to be amended and we propose to take legislation as soon as possible, with a view to the early introduction of prohibition of opium in Balasore. In the meanwhile all necessary administrative preparations are being undertaken. The Province of Assam at the instance of the Government of India fought against this evil successfully. We have therefore decided to send two persons, Sriyukt Rajakrishna Bose, Parliamentary Secretary and an officer of the Excise Department to study the steps taken. Added to this a provision of Rs. 12,000 will be made by a supplementary demand to carry on a ceaseless propaganda in the country side against liquor and opium evils which will also include improvement of the village sanitation and public health.

A few months are needed to introduce the prohibition programme. We have therefore reduced the estimate under opium by one lakh of rupees during 1938-39.

Reduction of rent and taxes.—The Congress Ministry is pledged to a policy of reduction of taxes as far as possible. With this end in view tenancy legislation was undertaken at the earliest possible opportunity. The amending Bill to the Estates Land Act passed by the Orissa Assembly in this January session will greatly relieve distress of the zamindari raiyats in South Orissa on the one hand and the amendments to the Orissa Tenancy Bill will give relief to a certain extent to the raiyats of North Orissa on the other. Agitation was afoot as the irrigation cess was heavy. I promised an examination of this question in my last budget speech. Government are reducing the irrigation cess which affects the existing income from irrigation in North Orissa by Rs. 1,38,000. We propose to reduce the grazing fees throughout the province by half. The question of fixing the fee once in a period of two or three years will also be gone into to relieve the worry and inconvenience incidental to the annual fixation of such fees. School fees in all elementary schools in North Orissa will be abolished so as to make primary education free.

Communications.—The budget for 1938-39 provides a sum of Rs. 5 lakhs for communications though the ultimate expenses far exceed the amount. The following are the works that are proposed to be undertaken :—

- (1) Jajpur and Jajpur Railway Station Road.
- (2) Koraput to Rayagada (fully bridged road).
- (3) Sohila to Nawapara (Road).
- (4) Sambalpur-Cuttack Main Road (via Angul).
- (5) Malaguni Bridge (Submersible Bridge), on Madras-Calcutta trunk road.
- (6) Gandanala Bridge (Balasore).

It may thus be seen that over two-thirds of this sum is spent in partially-excluded areas. The sum of Rs. 5 lakhs includes Rs. 3.5 lakhs, contribution from the Road Fund, Rs. 95,000 our share of the Road Development Fund and Rs. 35,000 from the ordinary revenues.

Committees—Hon'ble members are aware of the fact that a number of committees were constituted by the Government on important questions such as the reorganisation of the Secretariat, an enquiry on the condition of co-operative banks and societies, the reform of the land law in Sambalpur, reorganisation of the secondary education, the administration of forest rules and by-laws, revision of the Education Code regarding students and politics, Khurda Forest Enquiry Committee, Hospital Committee and Retrenchment Committee. The report of four of these Committees were just received by Government and will be taken up for consideration as early as possible.

A Standing Advisory Committee for agriculture, forest and veterinary has also been constituted and another such committee will soon be appointed for industries. The Retrenchment Committee is busy with its pruning knife. The field of enquiry is so extensive that it was not possible for them to submit an interim report in spite of my request and their earnest endeavours. The Budget presented has not therefore taken any account of the possible retrenchments to be proposed by the Committee.

Three Committees are proposed to be constituted in the course of these few months. The first is to consider the regulations now in operation in the partially-excluded areas. The second is to enquire into the land laws, etc., and the third relates to the revision of the Jail Code.

It behoves me to record the services and sacrifices rendered by the members of these Committees in discharging these onerous responsibilities cast on them. I have already stated that in course of these seven months the Finance Secretary had to attend to two budgets besides his ordinary work. I will be failing in my duty if I do not place on record the valuable services rendered by him and the department.

Conclusion.—Thus we have tried in our humble way to give effect to the constructive programme that was laid down by the Congress in the course of these six months. The difficulties of the problems in Orissa are inherent in themselves having areas from three different provinces, administered by different laws, rules and regulations under different systems of administration altogether. Our Secretariat cannot boast of having the staff and equipment which provinces, long established, are fortunate to have. Our wants are many while our resources are limited. The evolution of a new system of administration under widely different conditions requires careful thinking. Added to these, the tremendous political awakening in the country combined with mass consciousness puts immense strain on the wheel of administration. This again, in its turn, throws a heavy responsibility on the Ministry. It is their hard lot to reconcile these two conflicting outlooks, the politically-minded masses surging with hopes and aspirations and the officials with their old outlook. A popular Ministry has necessarily to welcome the awakening of the masses whose representatives they happen to be in the Cabinet. Nor is it their desire to disown the officials but to secure and make use of their full co-operation in carrying out their popular programme. The Ministry has therefore to overcome every-day conflicting cries from opposite directions. While one feels that an action taken is radical, the other feels that it is too moderate.

Unfortunately, however, in Orissa we have got a major section of the press who are instead of being useful and helpful in these critical times are out to create mountains out of mole hills. Insidious and false propaganda both in news columns and in editorials are carried on against us with the aid of interested classes and sections. Our consolation, however, is that our party and the country and our conscience are with us.

It is therefore our earnest prayer that our Almighty Father may help and lead us in our journey that we may reach the goal of liberty and freedom sooner than we expect.

