

# Assam Janata offer to form Govt.

Our Staff Correspondent

GAUHATI, March 1.

**T**HE Janata Legislature Party, which has emerged as the largest single party in the Assembly securing 53 seats, would meet here on 6 March to elect its leader, a party spokesman told newsmen today. Steel Minister Biju Patnaik and party general secretary Ramkrishna Hegde will be present as observers. The State executive will meet on 3 March.

Mr Golap Borbora, president of the Janata Party has said that the party was prepared to form an alternative government with the support of the progressive and democratic elements.

Three rebel Janata candidates are among those elected as Independents defeating the official Janata Party nominees. They are Mr Atul Goswami from Kaliabor, Mr Ramesh Chandra Saha from Panary and Mr Manik Das from Chapaguri.

The Congress Legislature Party will meet on 4 March, says an APCC press note.

The Congress suffered unprecedented reverses and could only retain 25 seats which included those of the Chief Minister and five of his Cabinet colleagues. The remaining 10 Ministers of the 15-member Assam Ministry were unseated.

The Plains Tribal Council

which has an electoral adjustment with the Janata, won four out of nine seats it had contested, while the CPI-M in its debut in the poll fray in the State bagged 11 seats. CPI-M also in the electoral battle for the first time secured one seat.

Of 115 candidates, fielded by the Congress-I, only eight were returned.

The CPI won five seats, RCPI four, SUCI two while the rest 12 seats went to Independents.

In the 1972 Assembly elections, the Congress had secured an overwhelming majority with 95 seats in the 116-member House. The Socialist Party had won 4 seats, CPI 3, Swatantra and PTCA one seat each and Independents 10.

There are over 100 new faces who will be entering the Assembly for the first time. Out of 92 sitting MLAs who contested, 69 have been unseated and 23 returned.

There will be only one woman member in the new Assembly—former Minister Mrs Syeda Anwar Taimur, who has won on the Congress-I ticket.

A remarkable and encouraging feature of the election results in Assam is the emergence of a strong left: From five in the present Assembly, its strength has gone up to 22 in the new Assembly—a more than four-fold increase.

Although the left parties could not arrive at any alliance or understanding or adjustment of seats—the CPI's appeal to avoid mutual contest between the left parties went unheeded—the people have opted for the left wherever they could. And this in spite of the vicious and venomous anti-Communist propaganda by some regional parties and forces.

A scanning of the election results indicates that it was well within the realm of possibility to have a left front government in Assam this time, if the left parties could unite.

The splitting of the Communist votes helped the Janata Party in many constituencies. For example, the Dudhnoi constituency, in Goalpara district, the CPI and the CP-M candidates polled 8286 and 8319 votes, respectively. The total Communist vote was over 16,000. But the division helped the Janata candidate to win with only 9,990 votes.

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