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Gauhati poll
postponed
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Our Staff Correspondent

GAUHATI, July 13—The Assam Government on Tuesday postponed the elections to the Gauhati Municipal Corporation, scheduled for 10 August, "to a convenient date in the coming winter months."

Earlier, on 7 July, the corporation had notified the schedule for the elections according to which they were to be held on 10 August.

It may be recalled that the corporation was superseded by the previous Congress Government in August 1975, taking advantage of the emergency, as the Congress had lost the civic elections.

An official press release on Tuesday said the elections were being postponed because of population increase, waterlogging in certain wards and possible inconvenience to the Muslims during the Ramzan month.

However, the real reason behind this volte face, it is learnt, is the strong pressure put on the State Government by a section of the Janata Party, including some high ups, who fear that the party will do very poorly in the civic poll.

The complete rout of the Janata Party in the Tezpur civic poll last month has also made them panicky.

However, the postponement of the poll has also posed a tricky legal problem for the Government, as has been pointed out by the secretariat of the Assam CPI.

In a strongly worded statement, the secretariat said that according to the provisions of the GMC Act, the maximum period for which the corporation can be taken over by the Government is three years which would expire on 26 July. It is therefore against the provisions of the Act to postpone the election and continue superseding beyond the date, it said. It is also quite illegal on the part of the Government to postpone the elections overriding the provisions of the Act just by a press note without amending it, the statement added.

It said this "unusual method and hurry" was caused by the fear of the Janata Party to face the electorate due to its anti-people policies in general and its utter failure to solve the problems of the city.

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