

Janata Ministry In Assam P2 Assumes Office

GAUHATI, March 12.—The first non-Congress Ministry in Assam, headed by the Janata Party leader, Mr Golap Borbora, was installed here today, reports Samachar. The swearing-in of 12 Ministers of the 14-member Council was held at Dispur, the temporary capital of the State.

The Governor, Mr L. P. Singh, administered the oath of office and secrecy to the Ministers at a simple ceremony. Two Ministers of State—Mr Ramesh Mohan Kouli and Mr Sona Ram Thaosan—were absent during the ceremony.

The Governor left for Shillong immediately after the swearing-in was over. Later, speaking to reporters, the Chief Minister announced the portfolios of his Council of Ministers.

Mr Borbora will hold the portfolios of Home, Information and Public Relations, General Administration, Planning and Development, Elections, Civil Defence Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Secretariat Administration, Minority Affairs, Freedom Fighters, Welfare of Plains, Tribals and Backward Classes, Sericulture and Weaving, Flood Control, Hill Areas Development, Printing and Stationery, Social Welfare, Khadi and Village Industries.

Besides these, the Chief Minister will look after the departments which have not yet been allocated.

The following is the list of portfolios of the other Ministers:

Cabinet Ministers: Mr Dural Chandra Baruah: PWD (R and B), Supply, Trade and Commerce, Parliamentary Affairs and Jails;

Mr Keshab Chandra Gogoi: Finance, Judicial, Students and Youth Welfare, Sports and Tourism;

Mr Lakhadhar Choudhury: Education and Cultural Affairs;

Mr Soneswar Bora: Agriculture and Cooperation;

Mr Samar Brahma Choudhury: Forests, Livestock, Veterinary and Animal Husbandry;

Mr A. F. Golam Osmani: Irrigation, Power, Mines and Minerals and Wakf;

Mr Jagannath Singh: Labour, Industries and Public Enterprises;

Mr Laksheswar Gohain: Revenue, Land Reforms and Soil Conservation; and Mr Zahirul Islam: Transport, Panchayat, Community Development, Municipal Administration, Town and Country Planning.

Among the Ministers of State are Dr Kosheswar Bora: Health, Family Welfare and Excise; and Mr Lilamoy Das: Fishery, and Relief and Rehabilitation.

After the swearing-in, the Chief Minister, accompanied by the other Ministers, went to the Secretariat and held his first Cabinet meeting.

All but one of the 14 Ministers in the Ministry are new faces. Mr Jagannath Singh, who was a member of the Chaliha Ministry in the State after the 1967 Assembly elections, is the only exception.

In the new Ministry, the youngest member is Mr Zahirul Islam (43) while the oldest is Mr Lakshyadhar Choudhury (62).

Mr K. K. Bishaya, president of the Assam Scheduled Castes Development Council, today regretted that there was no Scheduled Caste member in the new State Cabinet.

He said this amounted to a violation of the "safeguards" for the Scheduled Castes guaranteed under the Constitution.

Mr Borbora tonight expressed his gratitude to the people of Assam for their "generous support and cooperation" for electing the Janata Party candidates in the Assembly elections.

In a broadcast, he hoped that the Janata Government would continue to receive their support and cooperation in future.

The Chief Minister said that after 30 years of Congress rule the people "have entrusted us with the responsibility of bringing back Assam to the proper path of development".

He said: "With unflinching determination to carry out this mandate, we have assumed office this morning".

Mr Borbora asked officials to cooperate with the new Government and do away with red tapism.

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the Statesman.