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Janata Rule in Assam: Criticism and Claim

A section of the members of the ruling Janata Legislature Party in Assam seems to be dissatisfied with the performance of the State Government. This dissatisfaction has just come to the surface with 21 of them urging the Chief Minister "to take a bold stand to reorganise the administration and also the State Cabinet."

In a memorandum submitted to the Chief Minister, Mr. Golap Borbora, recently, these MLAs said that if the present type of administration was allowed to continue, then it would be "very difficult to face the public" as well as to develop the Janata Party in the State.

The memorandum, is understood to have expressed resentment that the Janata Government has not been able to make any appreciable headway in respect of implementation of its commitments.

The Janata Party came to power in the State eight months ago. The eight-month period might be too short to produce any effective

result, the memorandum said, but "the Government must direct its resources toward positive implementation of its declared policies," so that the "people's expectations from the new regime are not shaken."

The memorandum lamented that the Janata Government was "toeing the same old path as the administration and has not shown any marked deviation from the set pattern of the Congress rule." Corruption, nepotism and favouritism were still rampant in the functioning of the departments and "lethargy seems to have already crept into the administration."

Appreciating the difficulties in the process of radical changes and viable economic growth in the State, the memorandum said that "there appear some most unhealthy symptoms in the body politic of Assam which might break out into a serious problem."

No doubt there were some forces like extremists, anti-social elements and communals which were "working behind the same" exploiting the fertile

soil of unemployment, rising prices, etc. but due to lack of proper co-ordination of the Janata Government these forces were "gaining ground day by day," the memorandum said.

While pointing out several "lapses" on the part of the State Government, the memorandum alleged that the concept of collective responsibility was lacking in the Government and that there was no co-ordination and co-operation among the members of the Cabinet and no co-ordination between the Ministers and the MLAs of the party.

It is also alleged that the Government has failed to check the heavy influx into the State and that the majority of the Ministers have developed "class consciousness". The administration "has also failed to stop the high-handedness of a section of the bureaucrats."

On the other hand, in a pamphlet published on November 2 last, the State Government had claimed that during the 200 days of the Janata Government in Assam "a number of bold

measures that accelerate Assam's progress at a rate much faster than what it witnessed ever since independence" have been initiated.

It further claimed that "a new thrust has been laid on the economic front to regenerate the rural economy in particular, for giving relief to the poorer sections of the society, as 75 per cent of the State's population still live below the poverty line."

The Government "has spared no time in embarking upon a concrete line of action embodying in it proper priorities on specific areas of development."

The sectors to which the Government has given topmost priorities are stated to be land reforms, agriculture, irrigation, power and industries, health, education and also supply and transport, besides the solution of unemployment problem and the development of the rural sector "where 40 per cent of the current year's budgeted amount has been earmarked."

Immediately after assumption of office, the Janata Government in Assam had undertaken both long-term and short-term measures of "all round upliftment of the vast majority of suffering masses."

Bustling activities of economic reconstruction" are claimed to have been started "throughout the entire length and breadth" of the State, "surged with renewed vigour and confidence to make good for the lost time of 31 years squandered during the previous regime."

The present Government which "has taken a down-to-earth realistic approach towards solving the massive problems confronted by the State" claims to have "clearly sorted out" the problems and taken "appropriate" measures for their remedy.

Yet, it is pointed out, "it is just a humble beginning of the process". Only the "initial spade-work is now on". The Government would require some time to "clear the debris of the previous regime" for setting the things in order to place the State "on the proper rails of progress and prosperity."

Our Gauhati Correspondent