

ANOTHER MINISTER IN ASSAM RESIGNS

GAUHATI, Aug. 31.—The crisis in the 18-month-old Janata Ministry in Assam, headed by Mr Golap Borbora, deepened today with the resignation of Mr Abdul Latif from the Cabinet and the ruling party, report UNI and PTI.

Mr Latif, who was designated as Minister of State for Water Supply in the reconstituted Ministry last month, said that he had joined the newly-formed Assam Janata Dal formed by dissidents.

Mr Borbora told reporters that there was no question of his resignation and he would face the Assembly. The party still had a strength of 49 MLAs, including four associate members and three Independents. He had received the resignation of 20 members, including the four who had formed the Janata (S). Moreover, the Left parties, including the CPI(M), were still supporting the Ministry.

The dissident Janata legislators, who formed the Assam Janata Dal with the intention of forming an alternative Government, claimed that their strength had increased to 21 with Mr Latif joining the party.

A spokesman said that two more Ministers would resign from the Ministry in a day or two and their strength then would be at least 30.

The Congress and Congress (I) have already given notices of a no-confidence motion against the Ministry. The motions will be moved by the respective party leaders when the Assembly meets on September 3.

Mr Latif, who was sworn in as a Minister of State in the reconstituted Borbora Ministry on July 14, is the third Minister to have resigned.

Earlier, two Cabinet Ministers, Mr K. C. Gogoi and Mr Jagannath Sinha, resigned from both the Ministry and the party.

Mr Latif told reporters that he had sent his resignation letter to the Chief Minister with copies to the Governor and the Speaker.

He said in his resignation letter that the department he was given was not at all in existence. "The way junior Ministers, like myself, are treated in your Ministry, no person with self-respect can work under you", he added.

Mr Borbora, who is also the Assam Janata Party president, today said that he and some other Janata leaders had initiated dialogues with Left and other progressive parties for support to the Ministry for a stable Government.

Mr Borbora told reporters here that he would boldly face the no-confidence motion against his Ministry in the ensuing Assam Assembly as he was confident of a comfortable majority. He denied reports that he would tender his resignation on the eve of the Assembly session.

He said four Plains Tribal Council members of Assam, 11 CPI(M), four RCPI and three Independents of the Assembly had given their support in writing on the eve of the formation of the Assam Janata Ministry after the last general Assembly elections.

He said that the PTCA, CPI(M), RCPI and the Independents had not withdrawn their support to the JLP so far.

Mr Borbora was confident that these parties would continue to extend their support to the Ministry.

A 15-day session of the Assam Assembly will begin at Dispur, temporarily capital of Assam, here on September 3.

The Assam Congress (I) and the Assam Janata Dal would sup-

port the formation of a new Government in the State, according to Mrs Anwara Timur, the Assam Congress (I) leader, in Shillong today.

Mrs Timur and three other MLAs today called on the Governor, Mr L. P. Singh, and said that the solution to the current political stalemate was an alternative Government. The delegation expressed confidence that an alternative Government to the present Borbora Ministry would be "stable".

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