

# Assam Ministry's Fate Hangs In The Balance

GAUHATI, July 18.—The fate of the five-day-old reconstituted Janata Ministry, headed by Mr Golap Borbora, in Assam hangs in the balance with the resignation of two senior Ministers from the Cabinet, report UNI and PTL.

Of the two, the Labour Minister, Mr Jagannath Sinha, resigned today. The other Minister, Mr Keshab Gogoi, had resigned on Monday. Mr Sinha said the administrative system in the State had deteriorated and all development work was stalled.

Both Mr Sinha and Mr Gogoi said they would not leave the Janata Party but would work for the formation of an alternative Government.

Meanwhile, Mr Samar Brahma Choudhury was sworn in as a Cabinet Minister in the reconstituted Borbora Ministry at the Janata Bhavan here today.

The Governor, Mr L. P. Singh, administered the oath of office and secrecy. The swearing-in ceremony was attended by the Chief Minister, his Cabinet colleagues and high officials.

Mr Brahma Choudhury, a representative of the Plains Tribal Council of Assam, an ally of the Janata Party, did not take the oath on Saturday as the PTCA had asked him to keep a watch on the political situation for some time. The PTCA has four members in the Assam Assembly.

Mr Borbora called on the Governor today. He is understood to have reiterated that he still enjoyed the majority support.

Mr Borbora apprised the Governor of the resignation of two Ministers from his Ministry and of four Janata MLAs, including two former Ministers, from the Janata Legislature Party.

Several Assam Ministers also called on the Governor and were reported to have assured him of their support to the Chief Minister.

Official sources said the Governor today accepted the resignation of Mr Gogoi on the advice of Mr Borbora.

Addressing a Press conference here, Mr Nagen Baruah, leader of the JLP, today said the Congress (I) and the CPI did not extend

support to the dissident faction of the Janata Party.

He criticized Mr Gogoi and Mr Sinha for their resignation from the Ministry. He said their resignation "has proved that they wanted to malign Mr Borbora, obviously not satisfied with the portfolios allocated to them in the Cabinet".

Mr Baruah wondered how Mr Gogoi could claim that he was in a position to form an alternative Government.

He said the Janata leadership had not asked Mr Gogoi or anybody to form an alternative Government.

Mr Baruah appealed to all Janata members, progressive and democratic forces to extend support to the Chief Minister.

The Assam unit of the CPI today denied that it made any commitment to anyone on the formation of an alternative Ministry.

A Press release issued by the State council here said the issue had not come up for discussion at any forum of the party. It said "we want to state that all such reports are misleading and mischievous".

The dissident Janata MLAs today gave an ultimatum to the Chief Minister to step down by 4 p.m. tomorrow to uphold the cause of democracy and maintain the unity of the party.

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