

ANURITA BAZAR PATRIKA

# 17 dissidents withdraw support to Borbora

GAUHATI, July 19 (PTI): The stalemate in the 6-day-old Assam Ministry, headed by Mr Golap Borbora, further deepened this evening as 17 dissident Janata MLAs withdrew support to the Chief Minister.

Dr Tarini Mohan Baruah, leader of the dissident faction of Janata MLAs, announced here that this decision was intimated to the Governor of north-eastern States, Mr L. P. Singh in writing shortly after the deadline of the ultimatum given to Mr Borbora to step down ended at 1600 hrs today.

Dr Baruah said the decision was also intimated to the Speaker of the Assam Assembly, Mr J. N. Hazarika.

Earlier in the day, the Chief Minister is reported to have told his Cabinet colleagues that he commanded a "comfortable majority" with support from several legislators who are Independent or representing other political parties. His decision not to respond to the dissidents' ultimatum ruled firm.

The present party-position in the 126-member Assam Assembly is as follows:

Janata — 57; Congress — 23;  
CPI (M) — 11; Cong (I) — 8;  
CPI — 6; Janata (S) — 4. RCPI — 4; PTCA — 4; SUCI — 2; CPI-ML — 1; Independents — 6.

The Janata Party was supported by CPI (M), PTCA and some Independents.

The dissidents are understood to have decided to request the Speaker of the Assembly, Mr. J. N. Hazarika, to allow them to sit as a separate group in the Assembly.

Mr. Sarat Chandra Sinha, leader of the Opposition, assured the dissidents that the Congress group with 23 would lend them support to form an alternative Government.

Mr. Sinha also called on the Governor, Mr. Singh and intimated that Mr. Borbora lost confidence and, hence he should resign immediately or advise the Governor to summon the Assembly to prove his strength in the floor of the House.

The Assam Ministry, reconstituted by Mr. Borbora on Saturday, was facing a serious crisis when two senior Ministers of his Cabinet resigned from the Ministry after taking the Oath of Office and Secrecy.

Besides, four Janata MLAs, including two former Ministers have also resigned from the Janata Party and joined Janata (S) party. Three out of five Ministers taken from dissidents in the reconstituted Ministry have also not taken oath so far. The Chief Minister had re-

constituted the Ministry as per directives of the Janata high command following persistent demand of dissidents that the Chief Minister should seek a vote of confidence as he lost majority in the party.

Hectic political activities were being witnessed here for the last few days with the arrival of almost all the members of the Janata Legislature Party. Also busy in group discussions were other political parties who kept a close watch on the developments in the Janata Ministry.

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Anurita Bazar Patrika.