

Barbora Takes Firm Line With Dissidents

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By A Staff Reporter
GAUHATI, August 2
—The Chief Minister, Sri Golap Barbora, said here today that he would not hold any talk with the dissident faction unless they first withdrew their reported declaration of formation of Assam Janata Party by resigning the primary membership of the Janata Party.

The Chief Minister, who returned here this morning after holding discussions with the Janata High Command on the Janata Legislature party tangle, told a Press conference at Dispur that he had categorically stated to the Central Party leaders about his stand. He further said that he would not allow those dissidents who declared their intention to form a new party to participate in the proposed meeting of the JLP on August 6 and 7, if they did not withdraw their statement in the meantime.

Sri Barbora observed that it would not serve any purpose by holding discussion with the dissidents who formed a new party unless they changed their attitude, and rejoined the Janata party gracefully.

The Chief Minister, who appeared firm in his stand towards the dissidents, said that he was prepared to face any eventuality, even to sit in the opposition than to give up his principles. But he expressed

his confidence that such a situation would not arise.

Sri Barbora further said that there had been gradual erosion in the strength of the dissidents who earlier claimed that they had the support of 35 JLP members. This proved wrong and only 21 threatened to withdraw support to the Ministry but again four of them rejoined the Chief Minister's camp. Of the remaining 17, eight have already started dialogue with the Chief Minister and pledged their loyalty to the Janata Party. He reiterated that he still commanded majority support and there was no threat to his Government as he had overcome the difficult situation.

The Chief Minister said that there was no apprehension of imposition of President's Rule in the State as the people of Assam would not welcome such a situation. Besides, the recent meeting of the Presidents and Secretaries of the Janata Party unanimously opposed the idea of imposition of President's Rule.

Sri Barbora said that the State Assembly was likely to meet by the end of the September.

Asked about the agenda of the proposed JLP meeting, Sri Barbora said that it would primarily discuss about the situation confronting the Janata Party and ways and means to strengthen the party so that it could function in a more cohesive manner. He further indicated that two or three

Ministers might be appointed soon.

Referring to the relation between the State and the Centre after installation of the Charan Singh Ministry, Sri Barbora hoped that there would be no change in the Centre's attitude towards the State if the Centre was true to its declared principles.

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