

BJP rejects Govt. invitation

From Our Special
Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Nov. 6.

The Bharatiya Janata Party today rejected the invitation to participate in the meeting of Opposition leaders, called by the Government on Monday to discuss Assam.

The Home Minister, Mr. Zail Singh, is to brief party representatives on the situation, in the wake of the latest abortive round of talks with the State's agitation leaders.

The BJP President, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, today wrote to the Parliamentary

Affairs Minister, Mr. Bishma Narain Singh, that there was no point in having discussions on Assam in the absence of the Prime Minister. Besides, he said, the date did not suit him.

Mr. Vajpayee regretted that the Government had not accepted the suggestion by the Opposition parties for a tripartite dialogue, involving them, the Government and the agitation leaders.

He did not think the proposed meeting was intended to be utilised for consultation. The Government would merely be giving its version, he said, implying that this was not the BJP's concept

of meaningful discussion.

Mr. Vajpayee was also sore on the Government's indifference to a suggestion made by some Opposition parties for a discussion on Punjab, in the context of the situation created by the Khalistan demand and the terrorist activities of extremists. According to him, there was a greater urgency to evolve a national approach on this issue.

The Government, however, went ahead with preparations for the meeting. Mr. Zail Singh had detailed discussion with the officials on the line to be taken in the discussion with the Opposition.

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