

The Statesman, 14/Dec/1981

Centre's Move To Consult Assam Minorities

GAUHATI, Dec. 13.—The Centre and Opposition leaders would elicit the views of minority organizations in Assam while negotiating a settlement on the foreigners' issue with the agitation leaders during the tripartite talks planned in Delhi, report UNI and PTI.

A communication to this effect had been delivered to the leaders of All Assam Students Union and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad, a top Government official told reporters here today.

He said the date for the talks would be communicated to the movement leaders later.

According to the communication, the decision to consult minority groups was taken during the Prime Minister's meeting with Opposition leaders in Parliament on December 10.

Meanwhile, AASU and the AAG-SP have called a 26-hour State-wide civil disobedience programme to press the Government to solve the issue on the basis of their 17-point draft proposal. They urged the people to travel by train, Government buses and water transport vessels without paying fares during the period.

The AASU general secretary, Mr Ehrigu Kumar Phukan, earlier said

that their executive body would meet here on December 22 and discuss the matter of the Prime Minister and the Opposition leader's tripartite talks on the issue.

The Assam Government has mobilized its forces to ensure that bona fide passengers on State-owned transport buses, ferries and trains can travel safely during the first phase of the "civil disobedience" movement, called by the All Assam Students Union and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad.

Under the detailed plan worked out by the Government people would not be allowed to board State Transport buses, inland water transport ferries or trains without buying valid tickets. It was officially announced here today. If anyone did so without a ticket he would be taken off en route and dealt with according to the law.

Mr R. V. Subramanian, advisor to the Governor of Assam, told reporters here that the Government's objective was to see that normal life was not disrupted.