

# Govt won't relent on impractical demands

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NEW DELHI, Nov. 19 — The Assam bandh which, according to reports reaching here, was only partially successful, has not softened the Government's opposition to the "impractical" demands of the agitators.

The Government expects the All Assam Students Union (AASU) and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) to give up the agitation and resume negotiations on the foreigners issue.

The situation in the State in the light of the 36-hour bandh, which began this morning, was today discussed by Union Home Minister Zail Singh with senior officials of his Ministry.

It was felt that the situation was much better than before and that the State Government offices had functioned normally. The train services, the air services and the city bus services were also normal. The Cachar district, as also the two hill districts, Karbi Anglong and North Cachar had also not been affected by the bandh.

The Centre had requisitioned a sizeable number of Central Reserve Police and the BSF personnel to protect Government installations and also provide escort to buses and trains during the bandh. If the Assam leaders decide to intensify their agitation, more reinforcement will be rushed to the State since the Government is determined to fully maintain law and order.

The Central Government is hopeful that the State leaders will

respond to the latest invitation for talks sent by the Union Home Secretary and communicate the date which would be convenient to them.

It is pointed out that the stalemate at the last round of talks arose because the AASU and the AAGSP leaders went back on their previous commitments. They had refused to accept the proposal for identification of the foreigners on the basis of the existing laws, land records etc. On the other hand, they had suggested amendment to the existing laws to suit their purpose. This was not acceptable to the Centre under any circumstance.

Meanwhile, the State's Governor has not so far sent any report to the Centre on the question of Ministry formation. Although he has reportedly been handed a list of 64 MLAs by the Opposition parties led by Mr Sarat Chandra Sinha, he is reportedly not satisfied about its veracity. In the next few days he is expected to call all the 64 legislators, whose names have been mentioned in the letter addressed to him, and ascertain from them whether they had really

pledged their support to Mr Sinha.

Meanwhile, at the level of the Congress-I efforts are continuing to form a Government in the State. It is understood that some of the State leaders, as also some Central leaders, who recently visited Assam have reportedly told Congress-I president Indira Gandhi that unless Mrs Anwara Tamur was removed from the post of the leader of the legislature party there was no chance of Congress-I being able to form a Ministry.

One of the Ministers is understood to have reported that more than a dozen legislators now in non-Congress-I parties had told him that in the event of a change in the leadership, they would join Congress-I and enable it to form a stable Government.

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