

36-Hour Assam Bandh Begins Today

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THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

BY A STAFF REPORTER
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—A 36-HOUR ASSAM BUNDH WILL BEGIN FROM 5 A.M. TOMORROW TO 5 P.M. OF NOVEMBER 20 IN RESPONSE TO A JOINT CALL GIVEN BY THE ALL ASSAM STUDENTS UNION AND THE ALL ASSAM GANA SANGRAM PARISHAD IN PROTEST AGAINST THE CENTRE'S APATHY TOWARDS SOLUTION OF THE FOREIGNERS ISSUE WHICH HAS BEEN AGITATING THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE OF ASSAM FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS.

AASU and AAGSP have called upon all Indian citizens residing in Assam to peacefully observe the Bandh and thereby register their protest against the Centre's inability to solve the foreign nationals' problem. The sponsors of the Bandh have also appealed to the people to keep a vigilant eye on the activities of anti-social elements who are out to create trouble.

The next phase of the movement will be launched from November 22 to 29, when State-wide rallies will be held to be followed by a "Rasta Roke" programme on November 30.

The All Gauhati Students Union has called upon all student volunteers, youths, women, workers and employees to keep watch so that anti-social elements cannot create trouble during the Assam Bandh days. A similar appeal has been issued by the Coordination Committees AASU

and Karbi Anglong District SU.

EXEMPTIONS

Several essential services have been exempted from the purview of the Bandh. These are: Workers and employees directly engaged in water supply, production of electricity and its distribution, (2) Newspapers, news agencies and employees and workers directly connected with all India Radio, (3) Workers and employees of the Medical Colleges and Hospitals and pharmacies, (4) Veterinary hospitals and dispensaries, State Zoo employees animals, (5) Telegraph offices connected with feeding the and Telephone Exchanges exempted on November 20 from 5 a.m. onwards, but telegraph sections functioning from Post-offices are not exempted. (6) Final examinations to be held by the Technical Education Directorate are also exempted.

There was a scramble in local markets for purchase of necessary commodities in view of the Bandh.

The vegetable sellers exhausted their stock earlier though the prices of various articles were quoted at high rates than the prevailing ones.

Sri Jogendranath Hazarika, Leader of the Asom Janata Dal Legislature, and Sri Premadhar Bora, MLA, leader of the Progressive Democratic Front have issued the following joint statement on the agitational programmes proposed by the AASU and AAGSP.

"The decision taken by the All Assam Students Union and All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad to launch another phase of movement against the foreign nationals by peaceful and democratic way is justifiably claimed as of right under the fundamental rights of the Constitution. No attempt should be made by the Government to suppress such peaceful movement by deploying armed forces, although normal Police precautionary steps are justified. The Asom Janata Dal and Progressive Democratic Front strongly disapprove the preparation of the army deployment to meet the situation.

"The Asom Janata Dal and Progressive Democratic Front, however, appealed to the movement participants to remain strictly peaceful while they observe the Bandhs and in holding meetings. The parties, nevertheless, request the leaders of the movement to postpone their "Road Bandh" programme which involves the risks of confrontation with the law and order authorities, and as such be avoided. One has to distinguish one's right to do something from the other which is another person's right under the law. Road use is everybody's legal right. To prevent someone to use it will not be a right thing to do."

PROHIBITORY ORDER

The Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Guwahati (Sadar) has today issued fresh orders under Section 144 Cr. PC prohibiting assembly of five or more persons, taking out processions, obstruction, wrongful restraint, carrying of lethal weapons, bursting of explosives, use of loud speakers etc. in the Guwahati sub-division in the following areas: Guwahati Municipal Corporation areas including Jalukbari, Borjhar, Narengi, Khanapara and Bel-tola.

SECURITY MEASURES

The Government of Assam meanwhile made elaborate security arrangements including requisitioning of Army help in a bid to strictly enforce law and order during the Bandh, adds PTI.

Security Forces have started patrolling in sensitive areas and necessary measures taken to maintain normal life.

The State Government has already warned its employees that disciplinary action including pay-cut, suspension or even arrest under Essential Maintenance Act, would be taken if they abstain from duty on the Bandh day, the Chief Secretary, Sri Ramesh Chandra told PTI.

The Government have also sought Army assistance for civil authorities to maintain normal law and order and help run essential services, wherever necessary.

No picketing would be allowed in any place, the Chief Sec

retary said, adding that adequate measures to run all transport services including road, rail, air and water have been taken.

The movement leaders have, however, fanned out to different parts of the State for mobilising the people to observe a "total and peaceful Bandh."

A Shillong report quoting an official release said prohibitory orders under Section 144 Cr PC have been enforced in the East Khasi Hills district in Meghalaya bordering Assam as a precautionary measure to prevent breakdown of public peace and tranquility.

Arrangements have also been made to ensure adequate supply of essential commodities including petrol, diesel and kerosene oil to the people, the release added.

Vital installations are being guarded by Security Forces. Arrangements for ensuring uninterrupted operation of ONGC, Oil India, Indian Oil and AOC have also been completed. Police made many arrests in several places in the State as preventive measures, according to official sources here.

All licensed cotton cloth and yarn dealers in the State have been directed to keep their shops and establishments open on November 19 and 20 to enable the authorised officers to verify their licenses. Contravention of the order will entail punishment as per law, an official release today said.

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