THE ASSAM

36-Hour Civil Disobedience Ends

Over 700 Volunteers Held

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BY A STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, DEC. 15. THE 36-HOUR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE PROGRAMME WITH CALL FOR TRAVELLING WITHOUT TICKETS IN GOVERNMENT BUSES, FERRIES AND TRAINS AT THE FIRST PHASE, ENDED AT 5 PM TODAY. POLICE AND CRP MADE LATHICHARGE AT A NUMBER OF PLACES AND OVER 700 VOLUNTEERS WERE ARRESTED.

Police and CRP are reported to have let loose a reign of terror in Tihu town in Kamrup district this morning when about 60 volunteers boarded in a State Transport bus without ticket. According to our Tihu correspondent, a six-hour Bandh was observed in Tihu in protest against police and CRP atrocities on unarmed people.

The situation in Assam during the civil disobedience was by and large peaceful and normal, according to reports received here. Reports reaching AAGSP and AASU headquarters indicate that the civil disobedience was a grand success in face of severe atrocities by police and CRP. The AASU has described this phase of civil disobedience as setting up a new record in the country's democratic movement.

The State Government now under President's Rule deployed CRP in large number and intensified patrolling by security forces to ensure that no people can travel without ticket in response to the call given by AASU and AAGSP.

Trains, buses and ferries were provided with CRP escorts and all stations were heavily guarded by the CRP and other para military forces. Wherever the volunteers tried to force their entry into rail and bus stations and ferry ghats were invariably beaten up by CRP. Most of the Government transport ran with very few passengers. Private buses and air transport were, however, exempted from the purview of civil disobedience.

According to an official source, a night bus of the ASTC was heavily stoned near Nowgong town. A bomb exploded at Belsiri near Dhekiajuli last night but none was hurt, the source said.

At Guwahati, S T city buses plied with CRP men and with few passengers. Some of the S T buses reached Guwahati with CRP escorts but without any passengers inside. The Guwahati rail station was heavily guarded.

The civil disobedience programme was a success at Diphu and Bokajan in Karbi Anglong district, according to our Diphu correspondent. Altogether 160 volunteers were arrested at Diphu for trying to travel without ticket. Some of the S T buses ran with police and CRP escorts. But there were very few passengers.

As reported by our Nalbari correspondent, no ticket was sold in the S T bus station at Nalbari. Some of the services were cancelled. Eleven volunteers were arrested for travelling without ticket in train. CRP chased away a crowd that forced their way into the Nalbari Railway station.

Altogether 360 volunteers courted arrest at Goalpara town during 36-hour civil disobedience which passed off peacefully, a report received here said.

Altogether 40 persons were arrested for violation of 144 and for attempting to travel in States buses without ticket, according to our Jorhat correspondent.

According to a government Press release, a mob of picketers, which indulged in heavy brickbatting at the police while preventing a Jorhat bound bus from leaving Nowgong bus station this afternoon, was dispersed by the police after bursting six teargas shells. The bus was allowed to move out of the station after removal of the barricades.

A police constable, the bus driver and a passenger were injured and window panes of some buses were damaged in stone-throwing incidents in Nowgong town and other parts of the district, the release said.

However, bonafide passengers travelled by trains, buses and ferries without inconvenience, the release added.

PTI adds : Sri Bipul Mahanta, Joint Secretary of the Assam Jatiyatabadi Yuva Chhatra Parishad, a constituent of the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad and Sri Jayanta Duara, President of the All Guwahati Students Union (AGSU), were arrested under National Security Act here last night, according to official sources.