

Army to run P & T in Assam

GAUHATI, November 17 (UNI):

THE Assam government tonight ensured that armed forces personnel would man the posts and telegraphs services in the state during the threatened 36-hour statewide bandh on Thursday as concerted efforts were made to persuade the AASU and the AAGSP leaders to drop their move.

The bandh, due to begin at 5 a.m. on November 19, has been called by the AASU and the AAGSP, who spearhead the foreigners issue agitation, as part of their revived movement to compel the Central government to accept their latest 17-point formula to solve the problem.

The chief secretary, Mr. Ramesh Chandra, told UNI that security measures all over the state had been tightened and forces were being adequately deployed to maintain law and order.

The governor, Mr. Prakash Mehrotra, reviewed the security arrangements with his advisers and senior civil, police and army officials at Raj Bhavan during the day.

The chief secretary further said that he had forwarded through a special messenger the Union home secretary, Mr. T. N. Chaturvedi's latest letter to the agitators.

Mr. Chaturvedi was stated to have called upon the agitation leaders to resume negotiations giving up their move for the bandh.

The home secretary in his reply has expressed the inability to come to Gauhati on November 21 for resumption of the adjourned talks and requested the agitation leaders to go to New Delhi.

Meanwhile, the Assam government today declared all services connected with the production, supply and distribution of electricity as essential services under the Maintenance (Assam) Act, 1981, an official notification said.

The government by another notification prohibited strikes in all services connected with the production, supply and distribution of electricity, including other services of the Assam state electricity board constituted under the Electricity Supply Act, 1948.

New Delhi (PTI): The Centre has rejected the demand of the Assam movement leaders that Gauhati should be the venue of the next round of talks on the future of foreign nationals.

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