

36-Hr. Agitation In Assam Ends, 500 Arrested

GAUHATI, Jan. 11.—More than 500 people were arrested for attempting to travel without tickets on public transport, including buses and trains, and for defying prohibitory orders in different parts of Assam as the two-day "civil-disobedience" movement, called by the Assam agitators, ended peacefully today, report PTI and UNI.

Official sources said that four Government employees' union leaders were arrested one under the National Security Act at Jorhat, in view of their "non-cooperation programme" tomorrow.

The sources claimed that all long-distance buses of the Assam State Transport Corporation and all city buses, trains and ferry services ran regularly under police escort.

Police pickets were posted at post offices, which functioned "normally", and at cinema houses, because of the movement leaders' call to the people not to purchase stamps and pay amusement taxes.

At Barpeta, in Kamrup district, the police lathi-charged a group of 300 people who threw stones at the vehicle of the Civil Sub-Divisional Officer, damaging the windowpanes of the vehicle and injuring him. Twenty-four people were arrested.

A case of sabotage was reported from Jhaklabandha, in Nowgong district, where three fishplates and 13 bolts were missing from the railway track.

A bomb was exploded at a building site at Barpeta this morning. No one was injured, an official report received here said.

Another unexploded bomb was recovered from the compound of a school teacher's residence in North-Lakhimpur, Upper Assam, the report added.

A 12-hour bandh was observed in the North-Lakhimpur and Karbi Anglong hill districts of Assam today, in protest against the alleged police atrocities in the State during the current anti-foreigners agitation.

Shops and bazars remained closed and all vehicular traffic, including private buses, went off the road. Some Government offices and schools and colleges were closed.

The indefinite curfew imposed after mob violence in the municipal area of Tezpur, the district headquarters of Darrang, was lifted today as the town returned to normal.

AASU WARNING

The All Assam Students Union tonight warned the Government that its failure to solve the foreigners issue expeditiously would result in gradual extension of the civil disobedience movement to other spheres.

In a statement here, Mr Prafulla Kumar Mahanta and Mr Bhriku Kumar Phukan, AASU president and general secretary, congratulated the people on their "massive participation" in the 36-hour movement which ended today, despite the "reign of terror let loose by the Government".

They demanded the immediate release of the 65 students of Gauhati University, arrested in connexion with the civil disobedience movement.

The All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad today announced that it would resort to a 12-hour "total non-cooperation" if the "present set of legislators elected with foreigners' votes" formed a Ministry in the State.

In a statement, the conveners of the Parishad, Mr Atul Bora and Mr Biraj Sarma, said that the actual date of the "total non-co-

operation would be announced at an appropriate time".

The Parishad today decided to participate in the proposed tripartite talks of foreign nationals issue, to be held at New Delhi on January 18.

The Parishad, at its executive committee meeting held here this afternoon, also decided to send a 10-member delegation to the talks. The names of the delegation members are yet to be finalized.

Gogoi New Assam Cong-I Leader

GAUHATI, Jan. 11.—After a four-hour meeting, the former Assam Finance Minister, Mr Keshab Chandra Gogoi, was tonight elected unanimously the leader of the Congress (I) Legislature Party, report UNI and PTI.

Mr Gogoi's name was proposed by the former Chief Minister, Mrs Anwara Taimur, and seconded by the former Education and Supply Minister, Mr Hiteswar Saikia. The AICC (I) observers, Mr N. D. Tiwari, Union Labour Minister, and the AICC (I) general secretary, Mrs Rajendra Kumari Bajpai, attended.

Altogether 36 members were present at the Congress (I) Legislature Party meeting.

The meeting, scheduled to be held at 1 p.m. here today to elect a new leader to replace Mrs Anwara Taimur, was deferred till 6 p.m. due to the sudden resignation of four party MLAs.

Mr A. F. Golam Osman, Mr Azalur Rahman and Mr Lilamoy Das, all former Ministers, and Mr Abdus Soban, in a joint letter of resignation to the Governor this morning, said that they did not feel any useful purpose would be served by changing the leadership of the party at this time.

"Nonetheless, Mrs Taimur has been removed from the leadership of the party without any reasons", they added.

The four MLAs, in a communication to the Speaker of the Assembly, now in suspended animation, requested him to take necessary steps to allot them seats among Independent members in the House.

They also informed Mr Tiwari and Mrs Bajpai of their resignation and have conveyed their decision to the Prime Minister.

Immediately after the meeting was postponed, most of the Congress (I) legislators rushed to Circuit House and began discussion with Mr Tiwari and Mrs Bajpai on a formula to bring back the MLAs to the party fold.

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