

Army Asked To Stand By In Assam

GAUHATI, Jan. 16.—The Army has been asked to stand by in aid of the civil authorities in Assam on January 18, the day of the proposed 12-hour "total non-cooperation" reports PTI. Called by the movement leaders, the "non-cooperation" is in protest against what they called "illegal installation of a Government in the State with defectors and legislators elected on the foreigners votes".

An official spokesman said here that the State Government had directed the law-enforcing authorities to be ready to meet any situation. The district and Sub-divisional Officers have been asked to take precautionary steps.

The coordination body of the All-Assam Employees' Action Committee (Karmachari Parishad) representing six organizations of employees of State and Central Governments, banks, power and private sector establishments today extended "full support" to the non-cooperation programme.

The All-Assam Students Union tonight criticized the imposition of a "minority" Government in the State, ignoring the opinion of "indigenous people".

In a statement, Mr Prafulla Kumar Mahanta and Mr Bhriku Kumar Phukan, AASU president and general secretary, respectively, said the ministry-making process had indicated the intention of the Central leaders about the type of Government they wanted in power in Assam. By nature, they said, there was no difference between the present Ministry and the previous Government. They alleged that the Governor was "working as an agent of the ruling party".

DELHI TALKS

An 18-member delegation—eight from the All Assam Students Union and 10 from the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad—will participate in the tripartite talks on the foreign nationals issue in New Delhi on January 18.

The AASU leaders said that they would insist that the basis for the talks for solving the issue should be the 17-point draft proposals submitted to the Government by the Assam movement leaders at the last round of official-level talks.

According to UNI, the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Mr Bishma Narain Singh, has invited the new Law Minister, Mr Jagannath Kaushal, to join the talks.

Our Special Representative In Delhi adds: The Lok Dal President, Mr Charan Singh, today turned down an invitation from the Government requesting him to participate in the impending talks on the Assam situation. "Now it is for the ruling party to sleep on the bed which it has made for itself", he stated.

Releasing the text of his letter to Mr Bishma Narain Singh, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, the Lok Dal leader said that the Assam imbroglio was a creation of the Congress party which, guided by ulterior considerations, would not take the steps that the situation demanded. National interest has been ignored throughout; infiltration continues as usual.

Mr Charan Singh said that in the scheme of the Prime Minister the Opposition had no place in "the polity or public life of our country". This is clear from her reaction to the recent move on the part of the Opposition groups to come closer to each other. Instead of welcoming the move, she asked her partymen and the people to ensure that the move was frustrated.

Four members of the Citizen Rights Preservation Committee (Assam) demanded here today that the Union Government must also hold discussions with their representatives before arriving at a settlement on the foreign nationals issue in the State.