

# Assam leaders brief Opposition

Free Press News Service

NEW DELHI, Jan. 17: On the eve of the crucial talks between the Government of India and the Assam agitators along with the Opposition leaders in Parliament, the advance party of the All-Assam Students Union and the All-Assam Gana Sangram Parishad today met the Opposition leaders and briefed them on their stand.

The talks, the 20th round, begins here tomorrow in a peculiar situation, because as the talks will be resumed to find a solution of the foreigners issue there will be a 12-hour complete non-cooperation tomorrow in Assam, called by the AASU and the AAGSP.

The call has been given to protest against the installation of a Ministry, the members of which were elected with the votes of "foreigners".

The five-member delegation of AASU and AAGSP met Mr Rajeswar Rao, general secretary of the CPI, and Mr Harkishan Singh Surjeet of the CPM polit-bureau. The delegation also

## Gogoi in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Jan. 17 (UNI): Assam Chief Minister Keshab Chandra Gogoi arrived here tonight to consult the Congress (I) high command about the composition of his yet-to-be-appointed Council of Ministers.

Mr Gogoi was sworn in as Chief Minister on January 13 after Governor Prakash Mehrotra accepted his claim of having the support of 63 members in the 126-strong State Assembly.

However, no other Minister was appointed or sworn in with Mr Gogoi.

The Assam Chief Minister will meet Prime Minister Indira Gandhi tomorrow. Earlier, he will meet Industry and Steel & Mines Minister N D Tiwari, who was closely associated with the formation of the Gogoi Ministry.

met Mr Ravindra Varma, deputy leader of the Janata Parliamentary Party, and Mr Biju Patnaik, who is neither in nor out of the Lok Dal. (Mr Patnaik reportedly has resigned from the Dal, but it has neither been confirmed nor denied).

While all the Opposition representatives will participate in the meeting tomorrow, Mr Charan Singh, president of the Lok Dal, has declined to join the meeting.

Meanwhile, the representatives of the citizens' right preservation committee, Assam — an organisation opposed to the movement — are camping here. In a statement here today, they warned the Government that "wooing the agitators will only indulge the secessionists in the North-Eastern region and if the floodgate of disintegration is thus allowed to open once, it will ultimately lead to the dismemberment of the country."

**PTI, UNI add:** The movement leaders did not respond favourably to the appeal made by the

Government to suspend their agitation in view of the resumption of talks. They accused the Government of trying to prolong the talks to "tire us out" and said the agitation would not be suspended unless the Government withdrew all the "repressive measures" in the State.

The Government, however, maintained that it could not disregard national commitment and humanitarian considerations in regard to the persons displaced from East Pakistan.

**Gauhati:** Strict security measures have been taken all over Assam to maintain law and order during the state-wide total non-cooperation, according to official sources.

Troops have been kept in readiness to meet any situation during the period, the sources said.

Chief Minister Keshab Chandra Gogoi told newsmen today that he had instructed the law enforcing authorities to maintain law and order firmly and fearlessly. But at the same time, he said innocent people should not be unnecessarily harassed.

He also said that he was prepared for a trial of strength in the Assembly, which would be summoned within the next four to five weeks.

In another development, today, former Assam Pradesh Congress (I) general secretary and AICC (I) member Dhruva Narayan Barua resigned from the party.

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