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# Congress Gets Majority at Centre: Bid to Choose Leader Unanimously

**From Our Special Correspondent**

NEW DELHI, Feb. 26. The Congress has been returned to power at the Centre, but with a greatly reduced majority. With 565 results declared for the 521-member Lok Sabha to-night, the Congress had obtained a lead of 57 over the combined Opposition and Independents. The Party position is: Congress 280, Swatantra 43, Jan Sangh 34, D.M.K. 25, S.S.P. 23, C.P.I. 22, C.P.I.- (Marxist) 19, P.S.P. 10, Republican one, other parties and Independents 48.

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, called on the Congress President, Mr. K. Kamaraj, and discussed with him for an hour the formation of the Congress Government at the Centre, and in the States where the Congress Party has secured an absolute majority. Asked by Pressmen about the question of leadership at the Centre, Mr. Kamaraj expressed the hope that it would be a unanimous choice.

He declined to say anything about the Congress reverses or about his future plans.

The Prime Minister told Pressmen that while all major decisions would be taken at tomorrow's meeting of the Central Parliamentary Board of the party, she had a preliminary discussion to-day with Mr. Kamaraj. She said that the deceased ministers would continue in office until a new Government was formed.

Mr. Morarji Desai met Mr. Kamaraj and had a discussion with him for 45 minutes. Later Mr. Desai met the Prime Minister, a discussion which was held in the presence of the question of the 'lame duck' session of Parliament should be held or not figured in the discussion which Mr. Desai had with the Prime Minister. A decision was taken to-day to hold the session of the Central Parliamentary Board of the Congress Party.

The procedure to be adopted for the election of the leader of the Congress Party was discussed in detail by the Prime Minister, Mr. Kamaraj and Mr. Morarji Desai. In case it is decided not to hold the 'lame duck' session of Parliament, then the election of the leader might take place earlier. The object for which the 'lame duck' session is being called could then be achieved by the President passing an ordinance. This subject is being discussed by the Union Law Ministry.

UNI and P.M. report:

Efforts to avoid a contest for leadership of the Congress Party began when Mr. Kamaraj arrived at the Prime Minister's residence this morning.

The issue was discussed by Mr. Kamaraj in separate meetings with Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Mr. Morarji Desai in the evening.

While Mr. Desai seemed to say that he did not want to be the leader, Mr. Gandhi told newsmen that they had discussed about tomorrow's meeting of the Congress Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board.

After the meeting, Mr. Kamaraj told newsmen that he still held the opinion that a contest for leadership should be avoided as far as possible. He had been trying for it and would continue to try this time also.

Asked how long will it take to elect a leader, Mr. Kamaraj said he could not say just now. He had just arrived in the city and the election of the party was to take place tomorrow to discuss these details.

Mr. Kamaraj gave a similar reply to another question whether the Congress President would prefer the Opposition to form the Government in States where the Congress had been defeated or had not secured absolute majority.

The Congress President did not know what was in Mr. Gandhi's mind when he said in Bombay that the recent reverses suffered by the Congress proved that the organisation deserved a revolutionary change from top to bottom.

When he was first asked by a newsmen about Mr. Kamaraj, "I am going to stay here. We will meet and talk," the Congress President replied.

When Pressmen told the Congress President that the Madras

debacle of the party had come as a surprise to them, Mr. Kamaraj said: "Yes, to everyone." Mr. Kamaraj said that he had been elected from Chattrapur in Orissa.

The Congress President was accorded a warm welcome on his arrival in Delhi this morning from Madras.

The Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi and all the Cabinet Ministers, members of Parliament and others were present to greet him.

Mr. Kamaraj came down the plane with a stick in one hand limping slowly. He was helped to the car.

The Parliamentary Board of the Congress will meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow and the Working Committee later.

At the Madras airport, earlier Mr. Kamaraj's car drove close to the gangway and Mr. Kamaraj stepped down and went into the plane helped by his personal physician, Dr. M. Jayaraman, who also accompanied him to Delhi. Messrs. Krishnamoorti, P. Kakkan, and S. M. A. Majid saw him off at the airport. Mr. O. V. Alagesan, and Mrs. Sundaram Ramachandran, also left for Delhi by the same plane.

## Jagannatha Rao Elected

BOMBAY, Feb. 26. Mr. R. M. Haldani (Congress) was elected to the Lok Sabha from the Chhamb constituency in Maharashtra. He defeated his nearest rival by a margin of 55,243 votes in a narrow contest.

Mr. N. Jagannatha Rao, Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Communication, defeated three rivals—a Swatantra

## Non-Congress Coalition in Bengal Likely

CALCUTTA, Feb. 26. A new non-Congress coalition Ministry in West Bengal, headed by Mr. Joy Kumar Mukherjee, Bengal Congress leader, is likely to assume office by March 7, it was learnt here to-day.

Mr. Mukherjee will call on the Governor, Miss Padmaja Naidu, here to-morrow morning, in response to an invitation for talks for the purpose of forming a non-Congress Ministry in the State.

Mr. Mukherjee was unanimously elected leader of the alliance of parties comprising the Peoples Party, Left Front, the United Left Front, other leftist parties and independent M.L.As. at a joint meeting here yesterday.

The Governor, who returned here this morning after holding talks with the President and the Prime Minister in New Delhi, received a letter from the Opposition alliance informing her of its "willingness and readiness" to form a new and progressive Government in West Bengal.

The letter said that the alliance commanded an absolute majority

## Dy. Speakership: Annadurai's Offer to Congress

MADRAS, Feb. 26. Mr. C. N. Annadurai, the D.M.K. leader, to-day offered the Deputy Speakership of the legislature to the Opposition (Congress) Party.

In his address to the newly elected D.M.K. legislators here, he recalled that during the Speaker's election in the 1957 Assembly session, he had asked the ruling party to give the Deputy Speakership to the Opposition as a friendly gesture in the interest of democracy. "Then the ruling party refused, but now we have an opportunity to implement it," he added.

Mr. Annadurai said he was routing his offer through the Press because he wanted the newspapers to "recommend" to the Congressmen to accept the offer.

**Patil Wants More Experts in the Planning Body**

BOMBAY, Feb. 26. A thorough overhaul of the Planning Commission was to-day demanded by Mr. S. K. Patil, while inaugurating the 4th annual convention of the Institution of Engineers here.

Mr. Patil, who was attending the first public engagement after his recent reverse in the general elections, wanted weightage to be given to technical men and experts in the Planning Commission.

At present the Planning Commission comprised of "too many politicians" and these people should now make way for technicians and experts whose advice would be more useful and practical, he declared.

The Railway Minister heartily congratulated the people for their excellent behaviour in the recent general elections and said: "I have no regret whatsoever for my defeat. I am back to my normal life and will continue in the service of the people," he said.—PTI.

## LOK SABHA

State		Seats	Results	Cong.	Swat.	J.S.	Com.	Com. (M)	R.P.I.	P.S.P.	S.S.P.	D.M.K.	Others	Ind.
Andhra Pradesh	..	41	41	36	3		1							1
Assam	..	14	12	9			1			2				
Bihar	..	53	53	34		1	5			1	1			3
Gujarat	..	24	24	11	12									
Haryana	..	9	9	7		1								
Jammu & Kashmir	..	6	3	3										
Kerala	..	19	19	1			3	9			3		3**	
Maharashtra	..	45	45	37			2			1	2		2	1
Madhya Pradesh	..	37	37	24	1	10								
Madras	..	39	39	3	6			4				25		1
Mysore	..	27	27	18	5					2	1			1
Nagaland	..	1	1											
Orissa	..	20	16	6	7					1	1			1
Punjab	..	13	13	9		1							3	
Rajasthan	..	23	23	10	8	3								2
Uttar Pradesh	..	85	85	47	1	12	5	1	1	2	8			
West Bengal	..	40	40	14			5	5		1	1		2	12
NEFA (Nomination)	..	1												
Union Territories *	..	24	18	11		6								1
Total	..	521	505	280	43	34	22	19	1	10	23	25	14	34

\* UNION TERRITORIES: Andaman and Nicobar Islands 1 Chandigarh 1 Dadra and Nagar Haveli 1 Delhi 7 Goa, Daman and Diu 2 Himachal Pradesh 6 Laccadive Minicoy and Amindivi Islands 1 Manipur 2 Pondicherry 1 Tripura 2.

\* Delhi — Jan Sangh 6 and Congress 1 Chandigarh — Congress 1 Dadra & Nagar Haveli — Cong. 1 Laccadive, Minicoy — Ind. — 1 Andaman — Cong. 1, Himachal Pradesh — Cong. 4, Tripura — Cong. 2, Pondicherry — Cong. 1.

\*\* Muslim League 2, RSP 1.

## Annadurai Calls for Public Co-operation to Run Govt.

MADRAS, Feb. 26. Addressing a mammoth gathering at the Triplicane Beach to-day, Mr. C. N. Annadurai, D.M.K. leader, appealed for public co-operation to run the administration and asked the people to be patient and not to expect quick results.

Mr. C. N. Annadurai, speaking earlier, called the people to give some reasonable time to the D.M.K. to concert measures for bringing down prices and other evils, which had been the result of 20 years of Congress rule.

A DIFFICULT TASK

The partners in the United Front had entrusted the responsibility to one party. Twenty years of mistakes committed by the Congress Government were difficult to be changed quickly. He compared the task of repairing the damage to the country's economy to repairing a house after the vacation of a long-time tenant.

Prices of essential articles had gone up because of the mistakes committed by the Congress Government. Prices could be brought down only if the wrong policies were corrected.

Rajaji said that the Opposition parties had stabilised themselves. The grace of God and the co-operation of the people were essential now to face the future.

People in authority in the Congress were saying before the elections that they would win by remaining in bed. The reason for saying like this was their money power. But the value of money had been considerably reduced, as they had devalued the Rupee. Consequently the value of the Congress had also been diminished, and it now stood at four annas to the Rupee.

Rajaji said that Government spending should be cut down and inflation should be curbed to bring about reduction in the prices of essential commodities to reasonable levels. Corruption should be eradicated. Permits, licences and other evils should be abolished. On the basis of competition and hard work they should aim at bringing down the prices which were now at staggering levels. Towards this end the D.M.K. Government would do whatever could be done.

In this country, whoever asked for a Minister's job, was a fool, Rajaji said. He appealed to the successful D.M.K. candidates not to ask for Minister's jobs. They must concentrate on the work that lay ahead for the next ten years. People should not worry. Mr. Annadurai by such requests, Mr. Kamaraj was a wise man and he managed with eight Ministers. And whenever anybody asked him for a Minister's post, he told him, "Paarkalam." That man was a good one and very effective.

On the dais were seated the leaders of the different parties in the Front. Elaborate bandstand arrangements had been made.

Earlier some crackers were let off by splinters of which evidently fell into the crowd, and there was some stir and excitement. Mr. R. Sambandam, Mayor, who presided, said Mr. V. R. Nedunchezhiyan appealed for more support from the police and the volunteers, the crowds quietened down.

**LESSON FROM ELECTIONS**

In a short speech Mr. Annadurai said that never did he imagine that the people would vote them to power in such an overwhelming fashion and for this he was profoundly grateful. The Congress had been in power for 20 years, but had failed to gauge the aspirations of the people who to-day had become exasperated and swept the Congress out of power.

More than the elation at their victory, the lesson which the election taught, namely, that the people could unseat them from power was foremost in his thoughts. He assured the people that it would be their task to strive for the welfare of the masses.

He would tell the people: You are free to give us your advice and suggestions, and we will be responsive, and try to promote the general welfare.

As for apprehensions voiced in some political quarters that there

## Efforts for Coalition Govt. in U.P. S.S.P. Takes the Initiative

LUCKNOW, Feb. 26. With two more results to be announced the Congress Party in the new State Assembly is trailing behind with 197 seats against the combined Opposition's total of 224.

The election to two seats in the 425-member Assembly had been postponed due to the death of Congress leader, the late Mr. J. B. Puri.

The Jan. Sangh, with 98 and Samyukta Socialist with 41 have emerged as the second and third largest single parties.

Meanwhile, a hectic round of consultations are going on among Opposition leaders to explore the chances of forming a non-Congress Government.

The Samyukta Socialist Party office here has issued invitations to all newly elected Opposition members to meet in Lucknow at an early date.

The shocked Congress leaders are in a hurry to jump into the fray, as one of them said: "Let us wait and watch them fail."

But they are not inactive. Some of the "rebel" Congressmen elected as independents are being sounded to cross the floor to help boost the Congress strength.—PTI

## Completion of Polling

NEW DELHI, Feb. 26. The Election Commission, in a notification yesterday said that wherever elections could not be completed in Uttar Pradesh before February 25, they should be completed by March 2.

In Assam, the Commission said in a similar notification, elections to the State Assembly which could not be completed in some areas by February 25, should be completed by March 1.

The Commission also fixed March 1 as the date by which elections to the State Assembly should be completed in some constituencies of Orissa.

## QUESTION OF JOINT PARLIAMENTARY PARTY

There is difference of opinion on the question of having a joint parliamentary party for all the M.L.As. of the Front. While the C.P.I. (Right) has expressed itself in favour of it, the S.S.P. has received a directive from its central leadership not to commit itself to joining a common legislative party.

All the constituent parties in the Front, except the C.P.I. (Marxist) and the K.T.P. (Right) and the K.T.P. (Left) have already elected their leaders. The two Communist parties are meeting here separately to-morrow for that purpose. The K.T.P. has only two M.L.As. and the K.S.P. one. The C.P.I. (Right) will also be taking a decision on the question of joining the Ministry, according to joining the State Committee and the State Parliamentary Committee of the State Committee.

The decision of the joint meeting of the State Committee and the State Parliamentary Committee of the S.S.P. to join the Ministry is subject to ratification by the Central Parliamentary Board of the S.S.P. which is meeting at Bhopal on March 1 and 2. Mr. K. Chandrasekharan, Chairman of the State Parliamentary Committee, is leaving here on February 28, to attend that meeting. He will be back here on March 4.

**PROSPECTIVE MINISTERS**

Meanwhile, there is speculation about the prospective Ministers. Among the names heard in the United Front circles are, besides Mr. Nambudiripad, who is tipped for the Chief Ministership, those of Mrs. K. R. Gouri and Mr. P. Govinda Pillai (C.P.I.-Marxist), Messrs. P. R. Kurup, C. S. Neelakantham Nair and N. K. Seshan (S.S.P.), M. N. Govindan Nair, E. Chandrasekharan Nair and P. Ravindran (C.P.I.), C. H. Mohamed Koya and Syed Ummer Bafaa (Muslim League), T. K. Diwan (R.S.P.), B. Wellington (K.T.P.) and Mathai Manjooran (K.S.P.).

The M.L.A. Quarters here has after 30 months of quietude, again become a hive of political activity. The United Front M.L.As. are arriving for their party meetings.

The Kerala State Executive of the C.P.I. has, in a resolution, stated that "democracy" in Kerala without Communists or based on anti-Communism was only a "myth" and that as such, the Kerala Congress (rebel) which is opposed to the Congress, should consider its anti-Communist stand. It requested the Kerala Congress to join the United Front.

A spokesman of the C.P.I. (Marxist) party, talking to Pressmen at the end of a meeting of the State Committee of the party, said to-night that the party M.L.As. meeting here to-morrow, would elect Mr. E. M. S. Nambudiripad unanimously as their leader.

The State Committee met in the presence of the members of the Politburo of the party. The Politburo members heard a report from the committee on the elections in Kerala. The Committee adopted a resolution thanking the workers, voters and people of Kerala for returning the United Front to power.

The Politburo, which is meeting here to-morrow and the day after, will review the general elections in the country with particular reference to the performance of the United Front in different States.

All except two members of the Politburo are here for the meeting. The members present are Messrs. P. Ramamurthy, P. Sundararaya, B. T. Ranadive, Pramod Das Gupta, A. K. Gopalan and E. M. S. Nambudiripad. The two absentees are Messrs. Jyoti Basu and Surjit Singh.

## Coalition Govt. at Centre Suggestion by Rajaji

MADRAS, Feb. 26. Addressing a huge public meeting to-day at the Triplicane beach organised by the United Front of seven parties which has won in the general elections in Madras State, Mr. C. N. Annadurai, Founder-Leader of the Swatantra Party, questioned the wisdom of the Congress trying to form a Government at the Centre with a slender majority in Parliament.

Rajaji, presumably making an indirect reference to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, said that if he were to become a 40-year-old woman and Prime Minister he would not venture to form a Cabinet and run the Government with a slender majority. In the circumstances, he would have sought the advice of the President to form a coalition Government.

Those who were in charge of administration at Delhi should ponder over the comfortable majority they had before and the precarious majority they were having now.

Rajaji said Mrs. Indira Gandhi had not consulted him about the formation of the Government at the Centre and the proper thing was for Mrs. Gandhi to have apprised the President about the position and he would have advised her appropriately. There was still time for doing this.

Rajagopalachari said that there were common factors in the policies and programmes of the D.M.K., Swatantra and the Jan Sangh parties and one day they should form a coalition and rule the country. The D.M.K. and the Swatantra wanted more powers to be vested in the State Governments. In the sphere of economic policy, the Swatantra and the Jan Sangh had common ideals and the Jan Sangh believed in giving a fillip to people's initiative.

All the 25 candidates put up by the D.M.K. for the Lok Sabha and the National Assembly had a thing had happened. Only three candidates of the Congress had been elected to the Parliament. It only meant that all the parties should form a coalition and the President should be so advised.

An inescapable responsibility had devolved on Mr. Annadurai's shoulders. The people had to realise his onerous responsibility and extend their whole-hearted co-operation to him.

## Another Peking Protest to Ceylon

COLOMBO, Feb. 26. China has lodged a strong protest with Ceylon over what it described as a "disparaging reference" to Mao Tse-tung in a recent broadcast over Ceylon Broadcasting Corporation entitled "Foreign affairs comment."

China, it is learnt, has objected to this remark as it is "an unfriendly act by the Ceylon Broadcasting Corporation against the Peoples Republic of China."

It is also reported to have said that this would strain the diplomatic relations between China and Ceylon.

Ceylon's External Affairs Ministry has confirmed that a protest had been launched by China over this incident. According to these sources this protest was prior to the recent protest by the Chinese Embassy here against certain statements made by the Minister for Labour, Mr. H. H. Mohamed regarding persecution of Muslims in China.

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