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New Akali-Sangh Govt. Takes Office in Punjab: Stress on Hindu-Sikh Amity

CHANDIGARH, March 27.

A three-member Punjab Ministry headed by Mr. Prakash Singh Badal, the Akali (Sant Group) leader was sworn in here this evening. The Governor, Dr. D. C. Pavate, administered the oath of office and secrecy to the Ministers.

Mr. Badal, said in a policy statement that the "sheet-anchor" of his Government would be Hindu-Sikh unity as expounded by Sant Fateh Singh. Mr. Badal said the first task of his Government would be to "restore communal harmony in the State and re-establish complete Hindu-Sikh amity."

Mr. Badal also pledged to "fight" for the retention of Fazilka and Bahawalpur areas in the State, which were awarded to Haryana under the Centre's decision on the future of Chandigarh announced in January last.

Besides the Chief Minister, the other two Ministers sworn in are Mr. Balramdas Tandon (Jan Sangh) and Mr. Balwant Singh (Akali Sant) (both Cabinet rank).

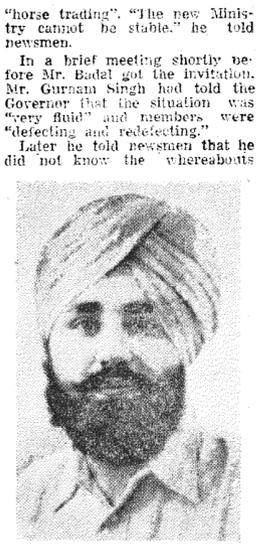
Mr. Badal, Mr. Balwant Singh, Mr. Tandon and the Sant were

Rich Farmer Turned Politician

CHANDIGARH, March 27. Mr. Prakash Singh Badal, the new Chief Minister of Punjab, is a rich farmer turned politician.

Forty-four-year-old Mr. Badal belongs to a landlord family of Ferozepore district. A close associate of the Akali leader Sant Fateh Singh, he made his political debut in 1957, when he was elected to the Punjab Vidhan Sabha on a Congress party ticket in the general elections from Malout constituency of Ferozepore district.

Later he left the Congress Party and joined the Akali Dal. He was returned to the Vidhan Sabha in the 1969 mid-term poll on the Akali ticket. Mr. Badal was a Cabinet Minister in the outgoing Gurnam Singh Ministry. He was in charge of Community Development, Panchayati Raj, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries.—PTI.



PARKASH SINGH BADAL

of several of his supporters, including Mr. Manjinder Singh Behla and Sant Sadhu Singh. Sant Sadhu Singh's wife had earlier in the morning alleged that her husband was missing and had said that she had informed the Inspector-General of Police. Mr. Gurnam Singh, however, said he would continue to function as an Akali in the Assembly. He accused Sant Fateh Singh, Pre-

sident of the Akali Dal, of using "dictatorial methods" and disputing the Sant's statement that he (Gurnam Singh) was a defector. Those who opposed the Appropriations Bill in the Vidhan Sabha and toppled the Ministry, were the defectors. Mr. Gurnam Singh contended.

Accusing Sant Fateh Singh and Sant Chaman Singh of following "dictatorial methods", Mr. Gurnam Singh said that they had adopted deceitful means to topple his Ministry. "If they had no confidence in me, they should have called a meeting of the party and decided the issue there. I did not have the slightest hint that Akalis themselves would topple their Ministry," he added.

Alongside several Central Opposition leaders, including Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, Jan Sangh, Mr. Madhu Limaye, S.S.P., and Mr. Asoka Mehta (Congress O) called on the Governor and had lunch with him.

Gurnam's Second Fall

Differences between Sant Fateh Singh and Mr. Gurnam Singh had plunged the State into a political crisis on Wednesday when a majority of Akali M.L.As. opposed the Appropriations Bill on the instructions of the Sant.

Nine of the 18 Akali M.L.As. who had earlier sided with Mr. Gurnam Singh have now switched loyalty to the Sant Akali Group leader, Prakash Singh Badal. This the second time Mr. Gurnam Singh was voted out by his own party members. His United Front Government fell on November 22, 1967, when the late Lachman Singh Gill had defeated along with 16 Akali supporters.—PTI and UNI.

garlanded and showered with flower-petals by a large group of slogan-shouting supporters of the Akali Dal, after the swearing-in ceremony.

Sant Fateh Singh had earlier announced that the State Ministry would be expanded after the current budget session of the Vidhan Sabha.

Sant Fateh Singh also said that top priority would be given to the promotion of Hindu-Sikh unity in the Punjab.

Mr. Badal said after taking office that he would strive to give a clean and efficient administration to the State.

Outlining the policies of the new coalition government in a 11-point programme released to the press, Mr. Badal said he would work for the development of Punjab as the State language and Hindi as the national language.

Not a New Govt.

Mr. Badal said his Government was "in a sense not a new Government." It was the "same Akali-Jan Sangh alliance" in which the people of the Punjab had "repeatedly reposed their confidence."

Of course the Chief Minister said, during the last few days, it had been "purged of the extremist elements." "On account of these elements," there have been some misgivings in the minds of the people, and indeed there has been some communal tension," he added.

The Governor this morning formally invited Mr. Badal to form a new Government.

Mr. Badal, who was Development Minister in the Gurnam Singh Ministry, now claims the support of 55 legislators, excluding the Speaker, in the 104-member Vidhan Sabha.

The Governor's invitation to Mr. Badal brought a sharp reaction from the outgoing Chief Minister, Mr. Gurnam Singh who criticised the invitation as "hasty" and said it would encourage

'Hindu' Printed In Bangalore In Facsimile

BANGALORE, March 27. THE HINDU of Madras started bringing out its facsimile edition from Bangalore this morning.

According to THE HINDU, the Bangalore facsimile edition would help to bring to their readers in Mysore State and adjoining areas of Andhra Pradesh more up-to-the-minute news than it was hitherto possible by printing copies at the paper's headquarters in Madras and flying them to Bangalore by the paper's own fleet of planes.

THE HINDU started its first facsimile edition from Coimbatore in July last year.—PTI.

Rajya Sabha Poll Results Awaited with Anxiety

From G. K. Reddy

NEW DELHI, March 27. The leaders of the Ruling Congress are keeping their fingers crossed and hoping for the best as 12 States and two Union Territories go to polls to-morrow to elect 57 members to the Rajya Sabha in the biennial election.

Eighteen out of the 73 vacancies caused by the retirement of one-third of the total membership of the House, have already been filled by the completion of the election on March 25 in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and the Punjab.

If the first instalment of this biennial election is any indication, the second one might be having even bigger surprises in store. So some frantic last-minute efforts were being made to-night to prevent cross-voting on a substantial scale in the States controlled by the New Congress—or its new-found allies—so that the Maharashtra experience is not repeated elsewhere.

In the elections to the 18 seats already completed in four States the Ruling Congress has lost for seats. It expects to lose another eight to ten seats in the other States and Union Territories which go to polls to-morrow. The over-all strength of the New

Congress which has already been reduced to 98 in a house of 240 is likely to be brought down further by this extreme step. But Mrs. Gandhi and her colleagues will be happy if they don't lose more than ten or twelve seats in all.

Though Mr. I. K. Gujral has won with an impressive majority in Punjab, the fact of his victory with 37 first preference votes as against the Congress strength of only 28 in the State Assembly—and the help the Congress extended to the Chief Minister, Mr. Gurnam Singh in defeating one of the two official Akali candidates in the process of electing a rebel Akali leader—triggered off a political crisis which toppled the State Government.

Similarly, in a solid Congress State like Maharashtra, the Syndicate has been unable to break into Mr. Chavan's monolith and secure as many as 45 first preference votes for its candidate, Mr. Babubhai Chinal, although the Old Congress has only a strength of 12 in the State Legislature. This has given a jolt not only to the Maharashtra Congress but also the Central leaders of the party who never expected that Mr. S. K. Patil and his friends in Bombay would be able to hit the bull's eye in this fashion.

So Mrs. Gandhi and her colleagues are impatiently awaiting

the result of the polling in Tamil Nadu where Mr. C. Subramaniam is contesting in the face of strong opposition by Mr. Kamaraj, in Orissa where the New Congress has denied the nomination to Mr. B. Patnaik who is striving hard to get the party's official candidate, Mr. Narayan Patra elected, and in Andhra where Mr. D. Sanjivayya has been assured of support by the Chief Minister.

In other States like U.P., Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand and Kashmir, the Central Parliamentary Board of the New Congress has put up candidates who are the nominees of the local leaders. In Gujarat, Mysore and West Bengal, it is going through the motions of contesting without any high expectations of springing surprises on the Old Congress, the Marxists and their leftist allies.

The other parties like the Jan Sangh, the Swatantra, the D.M.K., Communists, the P.S.P. and the S.S.P. are primarily interested in retaining as far as possible the seats vacated by them, although in a few marginal cases they have tried to enter into limited electoral alliances with either of the two congress parties to get their nominees elected—as was done in the case of the P.S.P. leader, Mr. N. G. Goray, in Maharashtra.

Cauvery: Tamil Nadu Stand Welcomed

From Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, March 27. The statement made by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, on the Cauvery waters issue to the effect that he was hopeful of an accord with Mysore has been welcomed by sources close to the Union Irrigation Ministry here.

Though the Tamil Nadu Government has asked for reference of the issue to a tribunal under the Inter-State River Waters Disputes Act, the Union Government is not particularly anxious to take recourse to this extreme step. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and the Union Irrigation Minister, Dr. K. L. Rao, would like to make another effort to bring about reconciliation between the two States and it is in this context only that a meeting of the two Chief Ministers has been arranged for April 17 in Delhi. A fresh attempt will be made to settle the dispute out of court. The Prime Minister, incidentally, wants to remove the impression that politics is being injected into the entire issue as has been made out by some legislators of Mysore when they were in Delhi recently.

Actually, the compromise formula suggested by the Centre to both Mysore and Tamil Nadu are economically viable and have the qualifications for being financed out of the revolving fund.

Earth Tremors at Koynanagar

BOMBAY, March 27. Four mild tremors were felt at Koynanagar during the 24 hours ending at 7.30 a.m. yesterday. Police said today that no damage to life or property was reported.—UNI.

Trunk Calls: Ministers' Huge Bills

JAIPUR, March 27. A sum of Rs. 6 lakhs was spent on trunk calls and local calls by Ministers, Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers of Rajasthan during 1969.

This information was given by Mr. Mohanlal Sukhadia, Chief Minister, in a written reply in the State Assembly to-day.

The highest expenditure was by Mr. Mathuradas Mathur, Finance Minister, whose bill amounted to Rs. 63,352. The Chief Minister's bill came to Rs. 37,580. The lowest expenditure of Rs. 6,611 was incurred by Mr. Gurdeep Singh, Deputy Minister.—PTI.

Viet Cong Attack on Cambodian Troops

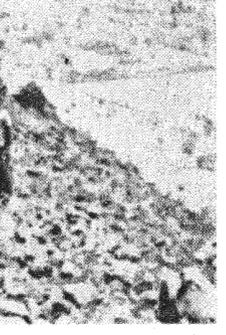
PHNOM PENH (Cambodia), March 27. The Indo-China war spilled into Cambodia to-day as Viet Cong forces launched direct assaults against Cambodian troops, the nation's provisional head of State declared.

In a nation-wide broadcast, Cheng Heng said since yesterday, "The Viet Cong have begun actions against the Cambodian people and our soldiers, especially in provinces near the border."

Tension was evident in this capital, where tanks raced through downtown streets in the early morning and took up positions on all major roads leading in and out of the city.



Photographs taken on the occasion of the blasting of iron ore rocks at Kanjamalai (Salem district) for the second pilot mine on Thursday by officials of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation. Picture at top shows site of the pilot mine before the explosion and (bottom) after the explosion.



SALEM, March 27. The second pilot mine in Kanjamalai, the proposed site for the Salem steel plant, was cut open yesterday by a massive explosion on the slopes of the hills at a height of 700 ft. Many thousand tonnes of iron-ore rocks were dislodged by the explosion. The officials of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation cut open the mine by simultaneously exploding explosives in 48 different holes and it is estimated that the total volume of iron-ore bearing rock, dislodged by the explosion to-day was about 150 cubic metres, weighing about 10,000 tonnes.

The first pilot mine was completed about six weeks back when an estimated amount of 8,000 tonnes of rocks were removed from a height of 400 ft.

The main purpose of cutting open the two pilot mines is to find modes and cost of transporting iron ore-bearing rocks from various parts of Kanjamalai to the proposed steel plant site to select the best type of explosive and assess the quality of iron ore bands at different heights.

A Governor's Concern for A Citizen

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT
CALCUTTA, March 27. A Governor's concern for an offended citizen was brought to light here to-day by Mr. S. S. Dhavan, Governor of West Bengal.

It all happened on March 25 when after seeing off the King of Nepal at Dum Dum airport, Mr. Dhavan was returning to Raj Bhavan escorted by police. At the crossing of Vivekananda Road a young cyclist got in the way of the motorcycle pilot who in anger lashed out a kick at the cyclist.

Narrating the incident the Governor told your correspondent that he immediately stopped his car and got out and asked his A.D.C. Capt. S. K. Talwar, to fetch the boy who had fallen down from the cycle.

When the boy stood before the Governor with folded hands fearing punishment, Mr. Dhavan led the boy by his hand to the motorcycle and asked the latter sternly why he kicked the boy.

The latter replied: "Sir, he had come in my way." The Governor rebuked him and said: "You had no business to kick a citizen. Now in my presence apologise to the boy."

The motorcyclist apologised to the boy in the presence of a large crowd which had gathered there.

Asking the motorcyclist not to do it again the Governor patted the boy in the cheek and said "Go home now. This will not be done again. But be careful of the traffic in the city."

Bangla Cong. Against Mid-term Poll P-9

Basu on Dialogue with S.S.P.

NEW DELHI, March 27. The C.P.M. leader, Mr. Jyoti Basu, has expressed the hope that a dialogue between his party and the S.S.P. would take place in the near future on Kerala, West Bengal and other issues of mutual interest.

Mr. Basu and his politbureau colleague, Mr. P. Ramamurti, M.P., had talks with the S.S.P. General Secretary, Mr. George Fernandes on March 25.—PTI.

Dhavan Desires Implementation of U.F. Plan

From Our Correspondent

CALCUTTA, March 27. The West Bengal Governor, Mr. S. S. Dhavan, in an exclusive interview to "The Hindu", to-day said there were three major problems facing the State, which would need his immediate attention.

The Governor said his prime concern was the restoration of law and order and also the removal of a feeling of panic and fear among the citizens of West Bengal. The second task was to create a feeling in the minds of the working class and peasants that the rights conferred on them by the United Front Government by law shall remain intact.

Mr. Dhavan added that under the guidance and subject to the approval of the Central Government he would like to formulate and carry out schemes of national reconstruction which were included in the 32-point programme of the United Front Government and which could not be implemented

because that Government due to internal dissensions or other reasons could not do so.

Answering a question, the Governor said that he would leave for Burdwan for an on-the-spot study within the next few days.

The Governor also said that he would be attending the West Bengal Secretariat daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from next Monday. "Actually I thought of moving out to-day but to-day being holiday I postponed it to Monday," he said.

INSRUCTION ON USE OF FORCE BY OFFICIALS

PTI Reports: The West Bengal Governor, Mr. S. S. Dhavan, said to-day that strict instructions had been issued to the officials enforcing law and order that the use of force must be "equal to the occasion and no more."

He had also warned all officials that cases of "arbitrary or vindictive violence" would be punished. The Governor gave this assurance in reply to a telegram received from Mr. B. Sen Gupta, President of North Hooghly District Committee of the West Bengal College and University Teachers' Association, alleging police excesses and urging the Governor to intervene.

Both the telegram and the Governor's reply were released to the press to-day.

Mr. Dhavan said in his reply that "use of force becomes inevitable on occasions. Officials have complained to the Governor that many persons against whom warrants have been issued for complicity in murder or assault or arson cases, have absconded and are being hidden by C.P.M. workers or sympathisers and, therefore, searches have become necessary."

The Governor said he would appreciate if Mr. Sen Gupta issued directions to his followers that fugitives from justice should not be given shelter but handed over to the authorities for trial according to law.

Earth Tremors at Koynanagar

BOMBAY, March 27. Four mild tremors were felt at Koynanagar during the 24 hours ending at 7.30 a.m. yesterday. Police said today that no damage to life or property was reported.—UNI.

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