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Cong(I) May Form Govt By Week-End

P2

FROM OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE
NEW DELHI, DEC. 2—
IF THINGS PROCEED ACCORDING TO SCHEDULE A CONGRESS (I) MINISTRY IN ASSAM IS LIKELY TO BE INSTALLED BY THIS WEEK-END. CONGRESS (I) LEADERS FROM ASSAM NOW HERE APPEAR TO BE QUITE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE PARTY FORMING A STABLE MINISTRY IN THE STATE.

According to present information the party has so far received the assurance from thirteen other members from different parties to join them with the provision that Syeda Anwara Taimur is dropped from leadership. This would take them to fifty eight members in a House with an effective strength of 119. They will then need two more members to attain absolute majority which they are confident of getting from some Independent members.

Sri Narain Dutt Tiwari, Union Industries Minister, who had been deputed by the High Command to talk to different groups about their possibility of joining the ruling party assessed the members'

opinion about the leadership also. He is understood to have found an overwhelming number of members supporting a change in the present leadership of the ACLP (I). Most of the members refrained from giving their preference, but left it to the Congress High Command to select one to replace Srimati Taimur.

Sri Tiwari's sudden departure for Cachar is quite significant. It is mentioned here that one Assembly seat from Cachar—that is Katlicherra constituency—is lying vacant. In case the High Command wants to select a non-MLA for the leadership it might not be difficult to get him elected from this seat which is a Congress (I) stronghold. It is presumed that Sri Tiwari's visit to Cachar is in this connection. He is accompanied by the Cachar MP, Sri S. M. Dev who has a firm hold on the electorate in the district and more particularly in the Katlicherra constituency.

Srimati Anwara Taimur's threat if she is removed from the leadership a chunk of the present members of the party might leave it, meaning that she and some more of the Muslim members of the party would leave it turned out to be completely hollow. None of the Muslim MLAs of the party supposed to be close to Srimati Taimur support this view. They assured Sri Tiwari that they would be with the leader selected by the High Command and the leader of the party, Srimati Indira Gandhi.

Sri Tiwari is expected here this afternoon. He will immediately meet the Prime Minister to give his assessment and suggestion on the leadership of the party.

PTI adds from Guwahati: The prospect of the Congress (I) forming a Ministry in Assam (now under President's Rule), 'in the near future' is 'bright', according to Sri N. D. Tiwari, Union Minister for Labour and Industry.

The Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) and the five-member tea garden labour group had assured the Congress (I) of their support in forming the Ministry, he told Pressmen at Guwahati today before his departure for Delhi at the end of a four-day visit to the State.

He said that all the 51 legislators, including 'some Independents', whom he met here, assured him that they would abide by the decision of the Party President and Prime Minister, Srimati Indira Gandhi on the question of leadership of the Congress (I) Legislative Party.

Sri Tiwari, who was here as an emissary of the Congress (I) High Command to assess the political situation in the State, said despite their divergent opinions on the leadership issue, the legislators were all unanimous in leaving the matter to be decided by Srimati Gandhi.

The Union Minister said that he had discussed with most of the legislators individually, while the tea garden legislators met him in a group.

Sri Tiwari said his discussion with the four-member Assam Janata Dal, led by Sri Jogendra Nath Hazarika, is continuing.

He is expected to submit his report to the party High Command by tomorrow on the basis of which the decision regarding the Ministry formation would be announced from Delhi.

Meanwhile, Sri Joy Chandra Nagbanshi, a prominent member of the tea garden labour group said here that he would leave for New Delhi tomorrow to meet the Central Congress (I) leaders.

3
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