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Congress Strength In Rajya Sabha Dwindles

RIGHTIST GROUP MAY BE MAIN OPPOSITION

NEW DELHI, March 30.

THE Congress has secured 52 out of the 72 seats in the Rajya Sabha for which biennial elections have so far been completed. The party lost ten seats.

The other 20 seats are shared as follows: Communist five (including two Communist-supported independents), Praja-Socialist Party three, Swatantra three, Jan Sangh two, Socialists, Republican, Jharkhand and DMK one each and independents three.

Two more seats, one from Delhi and another from Jammu and Kashmir, have to be filled in the biennial

elections. Four members are to be nominated.

The Jan Sangh and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam will be represented in the Rajya Sabha for the first time. The P.-S. P. which suffered major reverses in the Lok Sabha elections, has been able to increase its strength from ten to 12. Its leader, Mr. Ganga Saran Sinha, has been re-elected from Bihar. The Communist Party has gained three seats. But in the ranks of independents, Dr. H. N. Kunzru, who had been a prominent member, failed to get re-elected.

Though the Congress has won only 52 seats against its 62 members who retired, the party hopes to retain the Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir seats and secure almost all the nine seats for which by-elections are to be held soon.

The by-elections have been caused by the election of one Democrat, one Communist and seven Congress members to the Lok Sabha or State Assemblies. Three seats will be from U.P. and one each from Orissa, Andhra, Rajasthan, Assam, West Bengal and Madras.

PARTY POSITION

Despite its expectation of securing almost all the nine seats in the by-elections, the Congress may find its strength reduced from 178 to 170 when the Rajya Sabha meets next month. This figure, however, does not take into account the nominated members, many among whom sit and vote with Congressmen.

The Opposition parties and independents will share the remaining 54 elective seats. Communists are expected to number 13 and Praja-Socialists 12, while the Jan Sangh, the Socialist, the Republican and Jharkhand parties will have two seats each. One D.M.K. and three Swatantra members have also been elected but the actual strength of the Swatantra Party will be higher because the Democrat group of ten includes some Swatantra members. There will be about seven independents.

The P.-S. P. replaced the Communist Party as the main Opposition group in the House two years ago. The latter has now improved its position but it is considered possible that a group made up of supporters of rightist parties might emerge and claim the role of principal Opposition.—P.T.I.

Handwritten notes:
P.S.P. group
H.S.P.
S.P.
Jharkhand