

‘Many MLAs are in my touch too,’ claims Bengal BJP chief Dilip Ghosh

Siliguri: Supporting the claim of party leader Mukul Roy that as many as 107 MLAs of Congress, TMC and CPM will join BJP, State BJP unit president Dilip Ghosh on Sunday said that many of the MLAs are also in touch with him and with the Central leadership.

“Many MLAs are in the line. They are old friends of Mukul Da and he knows many more. They are in contact with him. They are in touch with me too and with the Central leadership also,” said Ghosh.

Mukul Roy on Saturday claimed that as many as 107 MLAs of Congress, TMC and CPM will join the BJP. “A total of 107 West Bengal MLAs from CPM, Congress, and TMC will join the BJP,” Roy had said.

Gosh said the list of these MLAs who would be joining the BJP has been prepared and the legislators are in touch with the state BJP leadership.

The change of sides by MLAs in Karnataka and Goa has created a kind of political upheaval in the two states.

At least 10 Congress MLAs from Goa were inducted into the BJP in the presence of working party president JP Nadda and Chief Minister Pramod Sawant in New Delhi. An identical political situation has gripped Karnataka as well.

The ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) won 211 of 294 seats in the 2016 Assembly polls.

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Veteran back with RSS, BJP wants 'more loyal' leader

New Delhi: In a significant restructuring of the partnership between the BJP and its ideological parent, the RSS, the national general secretary (organisation) Ramlal has been moved back to the Sangh as its Akhil Bharatiya Sah Sampark Pramukh.

Mr Ramlal, who was the national general secretary (organisation) of the BJP since 2005, will now be part of RSS and conduct the Sangh's ambitious outreach programme, sources said. It is understood that Ramlal's removal comes as the top BJP leadership wants someone in the position who is "more loyal" to the present dispensation. Party sources stated that another thing that went against Ramlal was that "he had a mind of his own".

The talk of Mr Ramlal being shifted out of the organisation to a newer role in the Sangh was being speculated upon for several months. Given the fact that he had looked after organisation for over a decade, the BJP top brass decided to let him continue for the Lok Sabha elections. "It was felt that change of guard at that time could upset the power equations within the party and this would impact the structure at the state level as well. The change was waiting to happen," a senior BJP leader said.

Sources stated that there are three frontrunners for the post

– V. Satish, joint general secretary organisation in the party; Shivprakash, the BJP's national general secretary and an old RSS hand who was credited with being part of the team that successfully conquered the Trinamul bastion in West Bengal; and the third contender is B.L. Santosh, national joint general secretary of the BJP.

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Maldives seeks India's support in improving civil-military ties

The Maldives, whose relations with India have been on an upswing since Ibu Solih took over as its President last September, has sought Delhi's assistance in improving the civil-military ties in the archipelago nation.

Maldives defence chief Abdullah Shamaal has discussed the issue with Indian officials during a visit to Delhi last week. The Maldives is seeking to replicate the Indian model in improving the relations between its defence forces and the civilian leadership.

During a visit of the Maldivian defence minister to Delhi earlier this year, Shamaal had taken a back seat, enabling the minister to engage with his interlocutors on all issues, the people said. Even during the Yameen regime, when the Maldives'

ties with India were lukewarm, its military had maintained a cordial relationship with Delhi and the armed forces here.

Shamaal, an alumnus of the Indian Defence Staff College, also explored new dimensions of counter-terror partnership, including close monitoring of the movement of citizens between the two countries. Since the April 21 Easter bombings in Sri Lanka, India and the Maldives are partnering closely to track down the radicals, monitor their movements and launch de-radicalisation initiatives. Southern Indian states are vulnerable to the presence of radicals in Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

During his visit to Delhi, Shamaal also delivered a lecture on 'National Security Vulnerabilities: Issues for the Small States'.

India has been providing swift help to its neighbours at times of natural calamities and security threats, and it is all set to play the key role of a "security guarantor" for peace and stability within the greater Indian Ocean region, Shamaal said on Friday amid China's growing presence in the region.

"India has been (providing) customary security guaranteeing architecture for decades if not centuries. This is quite evident by the prompt and swift response of Indian Army services on various occasions," he said.

Calling the Indo-Pacific region an economically and socially dynamic area, Shamaal said India is set to play the key role of a "security guarantor" for peace and stability within the greater Indian Ocean region.

On Thursday, Shamaal met defence minister Rajnath Singh and Indian Air Force chief BS Dhanoa and discussed ways to step up military and security cooperation through more structured and planned programmes. During his trip to Male on June 8, the first foreign visit in his second term, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Solih expanded defence partnerships by

jointly inaugurating a coastal surveillance radar system and a composite training centre for the Maldives defence forces – both supported by India.

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PM Modi launches BJP's membership drive from his LS constituency

VARANASI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the membership drive of the ruling BJP from his Lok Sabha constituency here on Saturday, noting that it will further connect people from all walks of life with the saffron party.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion, the prime minister also talked about the Union budget 2019-20 and his thoughts on India's growth trajectory in the coming years.

"From the soil of Kashi, I greet each dedicated worker of the party. Today, I got an opportunity to launch the BJP's membership campaign from Kashi," he said, pointing out that it will strengthen the saffron party.

The launch of the membership drive coincided with the 118th birth anniversary of the party's founder, Syama Prasad Mookerjee.

Referring to the provisions in the Union budget, Modi said a "new India" was on the threshold of racing ahead.

"It is important to know about the USD 5 trillion economy because some people were casting doubts over the competency of

Indians, saying that achieving the target is very difficult," he added.

The prime minister slammed the critics, saying, "These people are professional pessimists."

Earlier, soon after his arrival here on a day-long visit, Modi unveiled a statue of former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri at the airport.

The prime minister was accompanied by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) working president JP Nadda and the state unit chief of the saffron party, Mahendra Nath Pandey.

Anil Shastri and Sunil Shastri, sons of late Lal Bahadur Shastri, were present at the venue as also Uttar Pradesh minister Siddharth Nath Singh, a kin of the former prime minister.

This is Modi's second visit to his constituency after winning the parliamentary polls held in April-May.

He had visited Varanasi on May 27 to thank the voters after winning the Lok Sabha seat for the second consecutive time by a huge margin of 4.79 lakh votes.

Modi not only retained his seat, but also saw his victory margin rise by nearly one lakh votes, compared to the 2014 Lok Sabha polls when he had defeated Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by over three lakh votes.

After unveiling the statue of Shastri, the prime minister proceeded to launch a tree-plantation campaign – "Anand Kanan" – in the temple city.

He paid tributes to Mookerjee, the Jana Sangh founder, on his 118th birth anniversary, saying his contribution to national integration will always be remembered.

In a tweet, Modi described Mookerjee as a great educationist and a bright nationalist thinker.

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Outpost acquires iconic Bali co-living property, expanding lifestyle network for digital nomads

Bali is a tropical haven for paradise-seeking, location-independent workers especially in Ubud and Canggu, where most of the island's coworking spaces are based.

Hospitality brand, Outpost, launches a fourth coliving/coworking destination. The expansion solidifies Outpost as the frontrunner in creating a hospitality network geared towards Millennials. The new location opens September 2019.

Outpost's third hub in Bali – the iconic former Roam coliving property is honored as one of the six best coliving properties in the world. The 24-key property was purposely built to meet the needs of location independent professionals with coliving and coworking existing under the same roof. Outpost will offer its custom packages for groups and individuals while guests will have access to rooftop coworking space, curated fitness classes, a communal kitchen and pool.

'Kumaraswamy has lost his mental balance': BJP minister Pralhad Joshi

New Delhi: Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs on Thursday attacked Karnataka Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy for asking employees of thermal power plant to take their grievances to PM Modi.

On Wednesday, HD Kumaraswamy shouted at the employees of the Yermarus Thermal Power Station. The employees raised slogans against him when was on his way to Karegudda in Raichur district as part of his village visits programme.

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"People didn't vote for him (Karnataka CM HD Kumaraswamy) to be the CM. Why is he the CM? With an unhealthy alliance with Congress, he became the CM. Now, he has lost his mental balance, particularly because his son lost in the polls," Pralhad Joshi said, according to news agency ANI.

"This is how our CM @hd_kumaraswamy reacted when asked for basic amenities. Is he CM for the entire state or only for JDS voters?" Joshi had written on Twitter.

The employees of the power plant were protesting to push for their demands, including the unfulfilled 'promise' of jobs in exchange for the land taken over for the power project.

The BJP won 25 out of 28 seats in the state.

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