

Youth Cong-I in ferment

Our Staff Reporter

THE re-emergence of the Sanjay factor on the Youth Cong-I scene of Delhi may have far-reaching repercussions

Mr Gandhi's acrobatics have already set in motion a process of division in the Youth Cong-I all those vehemently opposed to his dabbling in politics have started rallying behind Mr Prem Swaroop Nayyar.

The genesis of the present developments goes back seven-eight months when Mr Sanjay Gandhi thrust his Emergency crony, Jagdish Tytler, on the Youth Cong-I of Delhi.

After the 1977 Parliamentary elections when the Janata Party swept the polls, acute demoralisation set into the Youth Cong-I. But as popular anger against the Congress Party and its youth wing began to subside with the passage of time, the Youth Congress was revived in a subdued manner. Even at this stage the process of division in the organisation had become obvious, following the pattern in the parent organisation.

While Mr Dev Kant Barooan nominated Mr P R Das Munshi president of the All-India YC the National Council of the AIYC chose Mr Janardan Singh Ghelot its president. The YC thus had the dubious distinction of having had two presidents simultaneously for a time period extending about six months.

This anomaly, however, ended before the Congress Party split on 2 January, 1978, and when Mr Brahmananda Reddi was elected Congress president.

After the split, Mr Prem Swaroop Nayyar and Lalit Makan convened a conference in the Capital of all former State Youth Congress presidents owing allegiance to Mrs Gandhi, and formed the Congress Youth Forum. Nayyar became its Delhi unit president, and Ram Chandra Rath, its All-India president. Later, Tytler was approached to become president of the forum's Delhi unit — an offer that he reportedly declined on the plea that he was running an educational institu-

tion in Delhi and that any active participation on his part in politics would invite trouble for his institution.

Seven-eight months ago, the Cong-I decided to revive the Youth Congress, superseding the Youth Forum. The understanding was that Mr Ram Chandra Rath, MP, was to be its all-India president, and Nayyar, its Delhi boss. But Mr Sanjay Gandhi put his foot down. He wanted Tytler as the Delhi unit chief. Tytler being a crony of his the YC-I affairs could be better manipulated with him at the helm of affairs in the Capital. Strangely enough, Tytler saw no harm now in any active political participation.

Mr Gandhi's will prevailed. Tytler was nominated president, and Nayyar relegated to the post of joint secretary.

YC-I members resented the development as Tytler had more or less remained in the background in the post-Emergency period, while Nayyar had been participating actively in all political activity. To pacify Nayyar and his supporters, IYCI president Rath held out the assurance that Nayyar's supporters would be given 50 per cent representation in Delhi YC-I executive. PPI-5

But when the executive as constituted 26 of the total 30 berths went to Tytler's men. Nayyar's men, could manage only four. The Sanjay factor had asserted itself again. As part of Sanjay's systematic campaign, Nayyar's men began to be ignored in most YC-I programmes.

When the YC-I, for instance, was invited to send a team to the Moscow youth meet, out of the eight men sent, six were from Delhi alone — all said to be Tytler's camp followers. The remaining two represented the rest of the organisation in the country. This was again Sanjay showing his muscle.

The national training camp of the YC-I, held at Nagaurinsagar from 7 to 11 April, precipitated the crisis that had been plaguing the organisation all this time.

According to a circular issued, the Delhi YC-I was to send 10 members to this camp. For eligibility, a member had to have five years' standing in the youth organisation and was to be a matriculate. Six of the members, reportedly sponsored by Tytler, did not fulfil the requirements.

Tytler, a man with so much say in the affairs of the YC-I, incidentally, joined the Youth Congress during the Emergency, in 1976. He therefore himself is a member with less than five years' standing.

When Nayyar protested the move to send six of Tytler's men to the training camp, YC-I president Rath offered to send five of his men — an offer that Nayyar declined.

On 15 April, Nayyar and others called a conference of Delhi YC-I workers to discuss, among other things, the Special Courts Bill and the Janata budget. It would appear that Nayyar's followers had planned to thrash out the Delhi YC-I affairs at this meeting. They threw out Tytler unceremoniously, and made Nayyar, by a resolution adopted at the meeting, the Delhi unit chief.

The Sanjay camp is seething with fury. By way of retaliation Tytler has "expelled" Nayyar and four others. Though the scales seem weighed in favour of Nayyar, the support to him is still not very vocal and militant.

While Cong-I members in the municipal corporation and the metropolitan council have already started grumbling against Sanjay's political acrobatics and the undesirability of his presence in the political arena, two MPs, Mrs Margret Alva and Mr B P Murty, have made themselves abundantly clear on the Sanjay issue.

The Delhi YC-I affairs are also likely to figure at Saturday's AICC-I convention in the Capital.

No dramatic developments are anticipated right away. But the simmering resentment now is likely to grow with time, till things reach an explosion point. Events might then move very fast.