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Cong caught napping, BJP plays 'upper' cut in RS polls

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The Congress has been caught napping again as the ruling BJP moved ahead with its new edition of Operation Lotus at the "upper" level, throwing the Rajya Sabha election plans of the main opposition party haywire.

The Congress 'sleep' act is shocking and is happening in states which it won recently halting BJP's progress. Within years, the party finds itself in disarray here.

Within three months, eight Congress MLAs in Gujarat - a state in which it restricted the BJP to double digits (99) in the 2017 assembly polls - have deserted it and now may help the BJP win a third Rajya Sabha seat from the state where, according to its strength, it could have won just two.

In Gujarat, the Congress is down to 65 after having won 81 seats in the last Assembly polls while the BJP is up to 103. According to the current strength, both the BJP and the Congress could win two

seats each but by fielding Congress turncoat Narhari Amin as the third candidate, the BJP has made it clear that it will push the envelope as far as possible. Thirty-seven MLA votes could fetch one seat in the Upper House. As such, the BJP will be left with 29 votes after winning its quota of two while it will be left with 28 after eight desertions.

In 2017, Congress' ace strategist Ahmed Patel, the political advisor of Sonia Gandhi, could scrape through as six Congress MLAs resigned just before the Rajya Sabha polls, only because the Election Commission invalidated votes of two rebel Congress MLAs. In 2018 again, two more Congress MLAs, including its much touted OBC face Alpesh Thakore resigned.

In Madhya Pradesh where former minister in the UPA government Jyotiraditya Scindia is a Rajya Sabha candidate from the BJP, the saffron party is slated to make a deeper dent in Congress strength, having already ensured the desertion of 22 Congress MLAs.

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