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ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Times of India ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 14/08/2019

**10 of 13 SDF  
MLAs join  
BJP in Sikkim**

In a boost for BJP, 10 of 13 MLAs of Pawan Kumar Chamling-led Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) joined the saffron party on Tuesday making it the main opposition in a state where it had failed to win a single seat in the recent assembly polls. After the defections, SDF is left with three MLAs. Ten lawmakers met BJP working president JP Nadda and joined the party in the presence of its general secretary Ram Madhav. SDF ruled the state for over 25 years before it lost power in recent polls. SDF won 15 seats; while its rival, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha, won 17 seats in the 32-member assembly. P9



**10 of his 13 MLAs desert  
Chamling, flock to BJP**  
Won No Seat, But BJP Largest Oppn Party

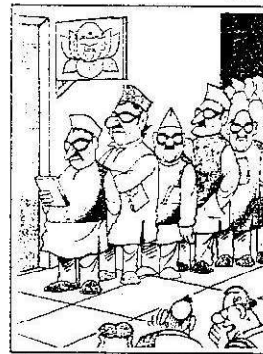
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Gangtok/New Delhi: BJP made more gains in the northeast as 10 of 13 MLAs of Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) joined the saffron party on Tuesday making it the main opposition in a state where it had failed to win a single seat in the recent assembly polls.

After the defections that left SDF chief Pawan Kumar Chamling with just three MLAs in his fold, the ten lawmakers met BJP working president JP Nadda and joined the party in the presence of its general secretary Ram Madhav, who is in charge of the party's affairs in the region.

Madhav told reporters that the SDF had a strength of 13 MLAs and its legislature party decided to merge with the BJP. Two-third or more lawmakers of a party can change sides without vi-

**JUST LIKE THAT**



Join BJP to avoid probes and raids

olating the anti-defection law. BJP will play the role of a constructive opposition in the state, Madhav said. Chamling-led SDF ruled the state for over 25 years before he lost power in the recent elections. SDF won 15 seats while its rival Sikkim Krantikari Morcha won 17 in the 32-member assembly in the

recent polls. Since two of the SDF MLAs had won from two seats, the party's actual strength in the House was reduced to 13. The 10 MLAs who joined BJP include former SDF ministers Dorjee Tshering Lepcha, Ugen Gyatso Bhutia and Narendra Kumar Subba. They had been camping in Delhi since the past several weeks and had met Ram Madhav a week ago. Lepcha said they were impressed with the "look east" policy of the Narendra Modi government.

"Sikkim is a small State with three international borders. We want BJP to win in Sikkim. The youths from the state are with the BJP. We want the BJP leaders should take reformative steps in Sikkim too like in rest of the country," Lepcha said.

This is the first time that MLAs of a regional party in Sikkim joined a national party "en masse", he said.