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Party will choose the next president, says Rahul Gandhi  
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**NEARBY**

**AAP may move petition to disqualify more MLAs**

NEW DELHI  
Aam Aadmi Party chief spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj on Thursday said the party may move a petition to disqualify more MLAs who are supporting other political parties.

**CITY PAGE 2**

**All-party meeting soon on NRC**

GUWAHATI  
Assam CM Sarbananda Sonowal will convene an all-party meeting to discuss the fate of people to be left out of the updated National Register of Citizens to be published in July, the CPI(M) said on Wednesday. The CM's Office confirmed the meeting.

**NEWS PAGE 13**

**Leh bribery case: BJP panel gives clean chit**

JAMMU  
Jammu and Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina and two other senior leaders were given clean chit by the party's internal fact-finding commission in the alleged case of offering bribes to journalists in Leh to influence the recently held parliamentary polls in Ladakh.

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**FRIDAY REVIEW 8 PAGES**  
(TABLET)

## Kerala offers to send 20 lakh litres of water by rail to T.N.

After initially declining to accept it, State says it will take decision today

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/CHENNAI**  
Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami will on Friday take a decision on Kerala's offer to supply 20 lakh litres of water by train from Thiruvananthapuram to Chennai to tide over the water crisis, Municipal Administration Minister S.P. Velumani said on Thursday evening.

The Minister's response came after the Kerala Chief Minister's Office posted a statement on Facebook stating that Tamil Nadu had declined its help to supply water (on a one-time basis). "Kerala is willing to assist Tamil Nadu in tackling the crisis caused by water scarcity. We could deliver 20 lakh litres of drinking water through the rail network. In response to our offer, we have been informed that present Tamil Nadu has sufficient supply and doesn't require additional assistance from Kerala," the statement said.



**Bone dry:** Workers collecting water from the Puzhal reservoir on the outskirts of Chennai on Thursday. •AFP

Opposition leader and DMK president M.K. Stalin criticised the Tamil Nadu government for "rejecting" the help from the neighbouring State and urged that the water be accepted. Despite rainfall deficit, the storage in Kerala's reservoirs is much better than in Tamil Nadu. The Tamil Nadu government in the evening released a statement "tweeted by" Mr. Velumani, in which he confirmed that there was an offer through the Secretary to the Kerala Chief Minister to his counterpart in Tamil Nadu seeking to know whether drinking water in 20 wagons could be sent.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**

## President bats for simultaneous polls

Plan will spur growth, says Kovind

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

President Ram Nath Kovind on Thursday asked MPs to seriously ponder over the proposal of simultaneous elections, terming it "development-oriented". In his hour-long address to both Houses of Parliament, he said the people of the country had "demonstrated their wisdom by delivering a clear verdict" in the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

Mr. Kovind also flagged the government's move to push forward with the triple talaq Bill in this session, the decision to implement the National Register of Citizens (NRC) on a priority basis and the strong response to terror after the attack in Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir,



Ram Nath Kovind addressing Parliament. •PTI

on February 14. "One nation, simultaneous election" is the need of the hour, which would facilitate accelerated development, thereby benefiting our countrymen," he said.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**  
**FULL OF PLATITUDES PAGE 12**  
**MISPLACED PRIORITIES**  
EDITORIAL

## Sanjiv Bhatt gets life term in custodial death case

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT AHMEDABAD**

A court in Gujarat on Thursday sentenced the dismissed IPS officer, Sanjiv Bhatt, to life imprisonment in a custodial death case dating back to 1990 when he was the Additional Superintendent of Police in Jamnagar district.

At present, Mr. Bhatt is in jail in a separate case related to drug planting and falsely implicating a lawyer for alleged possession of drugs that goes back to 1996 when he was the Superintendent of Police in Banaskantha district.

Mr. Bhatt, who filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court in 2011 against the role of the then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi in the 2002 riots, was suspended from the Indian Police Service in 2011 and sacked by the Ministry of Home Affairs in August 2015 for "unauthorised absence" from service and on other charges.

D.N. Vyas, judge of the court of sessions in Jamnagar, convicted Mr. Bhatt and constable Pravinshah Zala under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code and sentenced them to life in jail. The court also convicted SIs Dipak Shah and Sailesh Pandya and constables Pravinshah Jadhav, Anopsinh Jethva and Keshubha Jadhav and sentenced them to two years in prison.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**

## Dead cat on the line



**Tragic end:** A leopard hangs from high-tension wires passing below a tree at Mandawar village in Sohna, Gurugram, on Thursday. •ANI (REPORT ON PAGE 2)

## One killed in firing as violence continues in West Bengal

Three others were injured in the Bhatpara-Kakinara area

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA**

At least one person was killed and several others were injured in firing in the Bhatpara-Kakinara area of North 24 Paraganas, about 30 km from Kolkata. The deceased was identified as Dharamveer Shaw.

While the police confirmed the death of Mr. Shaw, a street food vendor, locals said one more person was killed, but this could not be confirmed. At least three more civilians and a few pol-



A rally was taken out in Kolkata on Thursday to seek an end to the violence. •PTI

had been attacked by the locals and "vehicles were vandalised." However, one person, who claimed to be an uncle of Mr. Shaw, said, "The police opened fire without provocation and killed my nephew." His body could be seen lying in a pool of blood, while the bullet that presumably hit him pierced the shutter of a shop. A police officer said they had not "fired and killed civilians".

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**

## Four TDP Rajya Sabha members join BJP

Drawn by Modi's leadership, they say

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

Less than a month after the Lok Sabha and Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections, in which the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) was wiped out, four of its six Rajya Sabha members, including former Union Minister Y.S. Chowdary, on Thursday joined the BJP.

Besides Mr. Chowdary, the others are C.M. Ramesh, T.G. Venkatesh and Garikapati Mohan Rao. The TDP legislature party in the Rajya Sabha passed a resolution as

per the 10th Schedule of the Constitution, according to which two-thirds of a legislature party can shift loyalties without losing their membership.

"Inspired and encouraged by the impeccable leadership of Narendra Modi and developmental policies being pursued by him in the overall interest of the nation, we have decided to merge with the BJP with immediate effect," the resolution read.

**NADDA'S TAKE PAGE 12**

## Pak. told to go beyond cosmetic steps

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

India will not be impressed by some "cosmetic" anti-terror steps from Pakistan, the External Affairs Ministry said on Thursday.

India's response came after Pakistani media reported that Prime Minister Na-

rendra Modi in a letter to Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan had expressed a desire to hold talks with Islamabad.

"The Prime Minister in his letter said India wants a normal and cooperative relationship with countries in South Asia and with other

countries which calls for an environment free of terror and violence. We reiterated our old position in the letter. There is no mention of dialogue with Pakistan in the letter," said official spokesperson Raveesh Kumar.

**DETAILS ON PAGE 13**

## Infant dies after being shunted between hospital wings in U.P.

Treatment delayed for three hours

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT LUCKNOW**

A medical superintendent was suspended and departmental action was initiated against another senior doctor for negligence when a critically ill infant died at a hospital in Bareilly after allegedly being shunted from one wing to another without treatment for more than three hours.

to the OPD of the men's wing of the hospital on Wednesday, where sufficient paediatricians were available, but instead of stabilising the child, her family was turned away to the women's wing.

However, the CMS of the women's hospital, which has a Sick Newborn Care Unit facility, referred the child back to the men's wing.

The infant, born on June 15 at a private hospital in Bareilly, was brought to the hospital by her father and grandmother. The child had developed breathing complications. Kusma Devi, the child's grandmother, said they were made to run around for more than three hours to just get the child admitted.

**'Negligence of duty'**  
Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath ordered the suspension on charges of "negligence of duty". Departmental proceedings would also be initiated against the CMS of the women's wing of the hospital, a government spokesperson said.

The victim was brought

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