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CLASS / DATE : DEPARTMENT : SUBJECT: Other state matter - Speaker

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HC asks Manipur Speaker to keep 7 Cong. MLAs out

After hearing disqualification petitions against them, the court also directed the Speaker to ensure compliance of the order by all concerned.

The seven MLAs are Sanasam Bira Singh, Ginsuanhau, Oinam Lukhoi Singh, Ngamthang Haokip, Yengkhom Surchandra Singh, Kshetrimayum Bira Singh and Paonam Brojen Singh.

Petitions pending

The court said the Speaker had failed to decide the petitions filed by the petitioners from the Congress party within a reasonable time. It said the Speaker had not disposed of the petitions despite the petitions having been filed on November 8, 2018.

After hearing a similar disqualification petition filed in March by Manipur Congress MLA Keisham Meghachandra, the Supreme Court stripped Minister Thounaojam Shyamkumar of his office and banned his entry into the Assembly. The Speaker had later disqualified him as a member of the Assembly.

Mr. Shyamkumar was

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 elected in the 2017 elections on a Congress ticket but switched to the BJP even before being sworn in as an MLA. Post-disqualification, he was made an advisor to Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh.

Congress leader Kapil Sibal and other senior advocates represented the petitioners from the Congress.

RS impact

"The High Court of Manipur ensured justice. I am sure the Congress will win the Rajya Sabha election from Manipur on June 19. Day by day, the ruling coalition is being weakened numerically and politically in Manipur," Congress spokesperson Ningombam Bupenda Meitei said.

The seven MLAs, as well as Mr. Shyamkumar, will not be able to take part in the voting for the State's lone Rajya Sabha seat because of the court orders. The BJP is fielding the titular king Leishemba Sanajaoba while former MLA T. Mangibabu is the Congress candidate for the seat.

(With inputs from Iboyai
 ma Laithangbam)

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SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 GUWAHATI/IMPHAL

The Manipur High Court on Monday directed Speaker Yumnam Khemchand to "restrain" seven Congress MLAs, who had "defected" to the BJP, from entering the Assembly.

The MLAs had raised the strength of the BJP-led coalition government to 40 in

60-member Assembly. Justice K. Nobin Singh ordered that they "are restrained from entering the Manipur Legislative Assembly, Imphal" unless and until petitions "are disposed of finally" by the Speaker.

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