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## M.P. Speaker serves notice on 13 rebel MLAs 🦻

SIDHARTH YADAV BHOPAL

Amid the political turmoil in Madhya Pradesh, Assembly Speaker N.P. Prajapati has served notice on 13 rebel MLAs, asking them to appear before him and attest that they had resigned of their own accord as legislators. Six of them in Bengaluru were served notice on Wednesday.

On Thursday, Mr. Prajapati told reporters, "Today, I am going to serve notice on another seven. The Speaker is bound by rules and regulations. And it is his duty to follow them. Accordingly, he is acting." The Speaker has asked the MLAs to verify in person they had submitted their resignations independently and under no duress.

The letters of 19 of the 22 rebel MLAs were carried by former BJP Minister Bhupendra Singh from a Bengaluru resort to the Speaker on Tuesday. Sources in the Assembly said the Speaker would serve notice on the remaining six MLAs on Friday.

Rajya Sabha member Vivek Tankha said, "It's odd that the BJP has brought their

letters, while the MLAs have not appeared themselves. They are being held hostage with their mobile phones off. Even Congress members can't contact them."

He said that if the BJP continued holding Congress MLAs "hostage", the party might take legal recourse.

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