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### TN Speaker issues notice to three AIADMK MLAs

CHENNAI, DHNS: The political drama in Tamil Nadu continues, with Assembly Speaker P Dhanapal issuing a show-cause notice under the anti-defection law to three AIADMK MLAs for "anti-party" activities.

Immediately after the notice was issued to the three MLAs, the DMK submitted a petition calling for a no-confidence motion against Dhanapal, accusing him of acting in a "biased manner".

The action by the Speaker comes four days after AIADMK chief whip S Rajendran submitted a petition seeking action against the MLAs - Rathinasabapathy, Kalaiselvan and Prabhu - for indulging in "anti-party" activities.

The MLAs, though still technically with AIADMK, have been supporting Dhinakaran, who now heads the Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK).

The Speaker, in the notice, has asked the MLAs to respond within seven days.

Based on the response, the Speaker will decide on the action. The move comes as four Assembly constituencies are set to go to bypolls on May 19.

Eighteen constituencies went to byelections on April 18 - and the results can have a bearing on the Edappadi K Palaniswami government.

The DMK, which sees a conspiracy by the government to reduce the majority mark by disqualifying the MLAs, moved swiftly by submitting an application to bring a no-confidence motion against the Speaker.

This is the second time in two years that the DMK is moving a no-confidence motion against the Speaker. This is also the second time that the Speaker has issued a notice to "rebel" MLAs under the anti-defection law - in September 2017, he disqualified 18 MLAs who sided with Dhinakaran.