

ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ಪುಟಗಳು
PAPER CLIPPINGS

ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ: DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Speaker

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Deccan Herald

ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 12/07/2019

SC tells Speaker to decide on rebel MLAs' resignations

Hours later, it turns down Speaker's plea to recall the order

NEW DELHI: In the on-going political turmoil in Karnataka, the Supreme Court was on Thursday turned into a battlefield as the 10 rebel MLAs secured an upper hand with the top court asking Assembly Speaker K R Ramesh Kumar to take a decision on their resignation by 6 pm "or in any case in the course of the remaining part of the day".

Hours later, when the Speaker urged the court to recall the order, the plea was turned down.

He contended that the time was not sufficient to conduct an inquiry mandated under the Constitution into the resignations of the MLAs and that he was already seized of the disqualification proceedings against them.

But a three-judge bench presided over by Chief Justice



Speaker K R Ramesh Kumar enters Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Thursday. DH PHOTO

Ranjan Gogoi rejected the plea. The court orally observed it has already passed the order in the morning and it was for the Speaker to decide what his course of action should be.

The bench, by then, has ordered that the decision of the Speaker as may be taken in

terms of its order be laid before the court on Friday.

Hearing a writ petition filed by MLA Pratap Gouda Patil and others, the bench, also comprising Justices Deepak Gupta and Aniruddha Bose, earlier in the day, allowed their plea as senior advocate Mukul

Rohatgi, appearing for them, submitted that they would appear before the Speaker, who should be asked to take a decision on their resignations.

The counsel said the first resignation was made on July 1, but the Speaker deliberately delayed his decision. One MLA, who went to meet the Speaker, was manhandled on Wednesday, Rohatgi said.

"Now, the disqualification petition has been moved against us. The Assembly session is to start from July 12. The idea is to issue a whip, if it is violated, issue notice and take action under the Tenth Schedule (anti-defection law)," he said.

Rohatgi sought a direction to grant protection to the MLAs, when they come back to Bengaluru from a hotel in Mumbai.

Agreeing to the plea, the court said, "Such a request be

made to the Director General of Police well in time to enable him to arrange for such security as the circumstances of the case would require."

Subsequently at 2 pm, senior advocates A M Singhvi and Devadatt Kamat made an abortive bid on behalf of the Speaker to convince the court to recall the order. The court, however, said the matter would now be taken up on Friday only.

The plea filed by the Speaker also stated, "With the greatest of respect to this court that under the framework of our Constitution, no direction is contemplated against the Speaker inter-alia to take a decision under Article 190 in a particular manner. The order sought to be vacated would also impede the duties of the Speaker under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution."

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