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ಶಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Election.

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Times of India ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE : 27/09/2019

# EC defers Karnataka bypolls till SC decides on rebel MLAs

Next Hearing In Disqualification Case On Oct 22

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru/New Delhi:** With just four days left for filing nominations, the Election Commission told the Supreme Court on Thursday it would defer bypolls to 15 assembly constituencies in Karnataka till the apex court decides on the disqualification of MLAs.

This brought a huge relief to the disqualified members and also the three main political parties which were gearing up for the October 21 bypolls. As per the schedule announced by EC, the last date for filing nominations is September 30. Polling was scheduled for October 21 along with assembly polls in Maharashtra and Haryana.

## WHAT THE VERDICT MEANS



**LONG RUN:** Rebel MLA Byrathi Basavaraj runs to submit his resignation to the speaker before Supreme Court's 6pm deadline on July 11

**FOR DISQUALIFIED MLAs:** While the rebel MLAs were jubilant at the bypolls being stayed, the uncertainty about their status continues. They cannot press for cabinet berths or take part in assembly sessions

**FOR YEDIYURAPPA GOVT:** CM Yediyurappa is likely to come under greater pressure as the rebel MLAs grow restive. Forced to keep aside ministerial berths for accommodating the MLAs, he will not have a full-fledged cabinet in near future

**FOR OPPOSITION:** The only happy quarter, perhaps, as neither Cong nor JD(S) was prepared for bypolls. Cong received a fresh setback with DKS' arrest while JD(S) is still recovering from the no-trust vote

After a bench of Justices NV Ramana, Sanjiv Khanna and Krishna Murari indicated it will not pass interim order on the plea of 17 disqualified MLAs and would pass the final order after hearing the matter, senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for EC, said he would then ask the poll panel to defer the election process.

The lawyers appearing for the disqualified MLAs, CLP leader Siddaramaiah and other respondents said they had no objection to the EC's proposal. In view of the EC's assurance, the court deferred the hearing to October 22.

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## Will study SC order and then take appropriate steps: ECI

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After studying the order of the Supreme Court and taking feedback from senior counsel, the ECI shall take immediate consequential steps in the matter concerning the scheduled bypoll," an EC statement said.

The disqualified MLAs had approached the SC seeking permission to contest elections and told the bench their disqualification by then Speaker KR Ramesh Kumar was illegal as they were not given sufficient time to respond to the notice and the order was

passed within three days while the rule gave one week's time.

Their plea was opposed by state chiefs of Congress and JD(S) which alleged that there was no illegality in the then Speaker's order. The disqualification of MLAs had eventually led to the fall of the Congress-JD(S) government.

Some of the MLAs had contended that Kumar's decision was an illegal, arbitrary and mala fide exercise of his powers under the 10th Schedule of the Constitution. They also questioned Kumar's decision to reject their resignations.