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State set for bypolls to 15 Assembly seats on Oct. 21

SC to hear rebel MLAs' pleas tomorrow

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With the Election Commission announcing bypolls to 15 Assembly constituencies in the State on October 21, all eyes are now on the Supreme Court that is expected to hear the petitions of 17 disqualified MLAs of the Congress and JD(S) on Monday.

It was the resignations of these MLAs that brought down the 14-month Congress-JD(S) government. They were disqualified in July, 2019, by the then Speaker K.R. Ramesh Kumar till the expiry of the Assembly term. The disqualified MLAs are not eligible to contest byelections, unless the Supreme Court strikes down the Speaker's ruling.

Elections to two of the 17 constituencies - Maski in Raichur district and R.R. Nagar in Bengaluru - have

been withheld as separate election cases related to them are pending in the Karnataka High Court. Results of the byelections will play a crucial role in stabilising or destabilising the BJP government. The BJP has to win in at least eight constituencies to reach the magic figure of 113 in 225-member Lower House to maintain stability of the government.

The counting of votes is scheduled for October 24. The Model Code of Conduct came into effect on Saturday in all districts where the bypolls have been announced. The EC announced byelections to 15 constituencies since the Supreme Court has so far not admitted petitions made by 17 disqualified legislators challenging the Speaker's ruling.

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