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**Apex court to examine
plea to debar defectors
from poll fray**

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Thursday decided to examine a plea for directions to debar legislators, who resigned to topple a government, from contesting polls and holding any public office for six years under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution.

A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian issued notice to the Election Commission and the Union government on a petition by Madhya Pradesh Congress leader Jaya Thakur.

The court sought responses from the poll panel and the Centre in four weeks in the matter.

The petition filed through advocate Varinder Kumar Sharma contended that a defector should be debarred from holding any remunerative post till the existing term of legislature, in order to discourage the corrupt practice of resignation to overthrow the incumbent government and joining a new dispensation.

"MLAs, MPs contest the election at the cost of huge public exchequer, but they are giving resignation on their own choice for personal benefits or with an ulterior motive. They are defeating the law laid down by Parliament in the Tenth Schedule (anti-defection law) upheld by the Supreme Court in the 'Kihori Hollohan' case 1992," her plea stated.

The petitioner cited instances of Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh where a group of MLAs resigned to topple the existing governments and joined the new ones as ministers after getting re-elected in the bypolls.