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SC notice to Raj Speaker on plea against BSP MLAs joining Cong

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The Supreme Court on Thursday sought a response from the Rajasthan Assembly Speaker CP Joshi on a plea by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) against the merger of six of its MLAs into the ruling Congress party, giving strength to the Ashok Gehlot government.

A bench of Justices S Abdul Nazeer and KM Joseph issued notice also to the Assembly secretary, and

six MLAs on the petition challenging validity of the Rajasthan HC order of August 24, 2020.

Senior advocate Satish Chandra Mishra, appearing for the petitioner, submitted that the speaker could not have passed an order approving the merger. The HC had then held that the order by the speaker passed on September 18, 2019 was an 'administrative one' and not an order adjudicating the claim of the merger.

The BSP questioned the speak-

er's order whereby the benefit of the Tenth Schedule provisions, related to the merger of two-third members of the party, was granted to the party MLAs without deciding upon disqualification petitions against them. It also sought interim stay on the HC's order as well as that of the speaker.

It claimed the HC did not consider the fact that the speaker passed the order in violation of principle of natural justice without issuing notice to the party.