

## SC collegium stands firm on Justice Joseph

The appointment of Justice Joseph, who had quashed the imposition of President's rule in Uttarakhand to reinstate the Congress government in 2016, has been stalled since January this year.

The collegium had first recommended Justice Joseph for the Supreme Court on January 10 when Justice Jasti Chelameswar was a part of it.

After months of silence, matters turned from bad to worse when the government chose to unilaterally "bifurcate" Justice Indu Malhotra's file and appoint her as apex court judge while Justice Joseph's name was returned to the collegium. Justice Malhotra became the first woman lawyer to directly become a Supreme Court judge.

This reiteration of the collegium follows several meetings held through the month of May. On May 11, the collegium, then consisting of Justice Chelameswar, had resolved "in principle" to reiterate Justice Joseph's name. But it was unable to get it done for paucity of time before the court closed for summer vacation.

Justice Joseph's case is one of the first decisions taken by the collegium after Justice Sikri became a member with Justice Chelameswar's retirement on June 22.

Now, the government is bound by the collegium decision and has to appoint Justice Joseph to the apex court.

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