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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ: DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Parliament

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Times of india ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 27/07/2014

**Speaker to ask  
Azam Khan  
to apologise**

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan will be asked to tender an unconditional apology to BJP MP Rama Devi in Lok Sabha for his sexist remarks against her on Monday, failing which he will face disciplinary action.

Speaker Om Birla has decided to issue a notice to Khan after consulting floor leaders of all parties. Earlier, in LS, several women MPs spoke out against the controversial SP MP, who has so far refused to acknowledge that he might have acted improperly. Party leaders called for stringent action against Khan.

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**Speaker can take  
action against Azam**

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Khan had set off a furore in Lok Sabha on Thursday when he had responded to a request from Rama Devi — who was presiding over proceedings — to address the chair by making personalised and sexist comments about how he could not look anywhere else.

"If he (Azam Khan) does not apologise, the Speaker has been authorised to take action against him," parliamentary affairs minister Pralhad Joshi said after the Speaker's meeting which was called across party lines, condemned Khan's remarks and demanded exemplary action against him during zero hour.

With Khan seen as a serial offender — he had recently attacked former Bollywood star Jaya Prada in distasteful terms during the Lok Sabha campaign — MPs from BJP, Congress, Trinamool Congress, NCP, DMK

and BJD said the House should send a strong message that such conduct was unacceptable.

Women MPs like Mimi Chakraborty (TMC), Supriya Sule (NCP), Kanimozhi (DMK), Anupriya Patel (Apana Dal) and Meenakshi Lekhi and ministers Smriti Irani and Nirmala Sitharaman demanded exemplary action against Khan after BJP member Sanghmitra Maurya raised the issue.

Law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said either Khan should tender an apology or he should be suspended from the House. BJD member Bhartruhari Mahtab said Khan's remarks were "unpardonable" and deserved action. "It was one of the darkest days," he said.

"This is a blot on all legislators including men," Irani said and attacked SP leader Akhilesh Yadav for supporting Khan in the House on Thursday after the row erupted.