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Panel set up to review MPs' unruly acts

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The Lok Sabha continued to witness uproar on Friday, even as Speaker Om Birla set up a committee to look into the incidents that took place in the House between March 2 and 5.

As Birla, anguished over the stalemate in the Lok Sabha, continued to stay away from the House, the ruling BJP MP Kirit Premjibhai Solanki, who was chairing the proceedings, announced the decision to set up the panel.

The Speaker, himself, will lead the committee, which will have representatives of all political parties. Solanki announced the constitution of the committee, after the leaders of all the Opposition parties made brief statements in the House, demanding revocation of the suspension of the seven Congress MPs.

Seven Congress MPs—Gaurav Gogoi, TN Prathapan, Dean Kuriakose, Manicka Tagore, Rajmohan Unnithan, Benny Behanan and Gurjeet Singh Aujla—were on Thursday suspended from the Lok Sabha for the remainder of the Budget Session in view of their “gross misconduct”.

“You cannot send a pickpocket to gallops,” Adhir Chowdhury, leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha, said in the House on Friday.

The MPs were suspended for allegedly snatching papers from the table of the

Lok Sabha, tearing them and even tossing pieces of papers around the podium of the Speaker, while raising slogans from the well of the House on Thursday.

Sudip Bandyopadhyay of the Trinamool Congress, Dayanidhi Maran of the DMK and Supriya Sule of the NCP too said that the decision to suspend the seven members should be recalled as the “punishment” was “disproportionate”.

Prahlad Joshi, parliamentary affairs minister, justified the suspension of the Congress MPs for their “unruly behaviour” in the Lok Sabha, stating the tearing of papers from the desk of the Speaker had never happened in the past. He, however, added that the BJP-led government did not want any MP to remain outside the House and the Treasury Bench would accept whatever would be decided by the Speaker.

Even as the Opposition MPs continued to raise slogans from the well of the House and waved placards, demanding discussion on the violent clashes in northeast Delhi, the Government got two Bills—the Mineral Laws (Amendment) Bill and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill—passed by the Lok Sabha on Friday.

Earlier, the Congress MPs in both Houses led by Rahul Gandhi staged a protest near the statue of Mahatma Gandhi outside the Parliament Building—opposing the suspension of seven members of the party from the Lok Sabha on Thursday.