

Lok Sabha Speaker refers 'cash-for-query' complaint against Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra to ethics panel

Decision comes in the wake of BJP MP Nishikant Dubey's complaint to Speaker Om Birla against Trinamool leader alleging that she had taken bribes from a businessman to ask questions in Parliament

October 17, 2023 10:39 pm | Updated 10:39 pm IST - NEW DELHI

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Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. File. | Photo Credit: PTI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has referred BJP MP Nishikant Dubey's "bribe-for-query" complaint against Trinamool Congress member Mahua Moitra to the Ethics Committee of the Lower House.



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Mr. Dubey has accused Moitra of taking "bribes" from a businessman to ask questions in Parliament and urged Mr. Birla to constitute an "inquiry committee" to look into the charges against her.

Ms. Moitra has hit back, saying she "welcomes any move against her after the Lok Sabha Speaker is finished dealing with pending charges against him (Dubey)".

The Ethics Committee of the Lok Sabha is chaired by BJP MP Vinod Kumar Sonkar.

On Sunday, Mr. Dubey wrote to the Speaker under the subject "Re-emergence of nasty 'Cash for Query' in Parliament, Direct involvement of Smt. Mahua Moitra, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) for serious 'Breach of Privilege', 'Contempt of the House' and a 'Criminal Offence' under Section 120-A of IPC".

Citing a letter he has received from an advocate, the BJP MP said the lawyer has shared "irrefutable" evidence of bribes exchanged between the Trinamool leader and a businessman.

In his letter to the Speaker, Mr. Dubey said 50 of 61 questions that she has asked in Lok Sabha till recently were focused on the Adani Group, the business conglomerate which the Trinamool MP has often accused of malpractices, more so after it was at the receiving end of a critical report of short-selling from Hindenburg Research.

Meanwhile, Ms. Moitra moved the Delhi High Court seeking to restrain Mr. Dubey, advocate Jai Anant Dehadrai and several social media platforms and media houses from posting, circulating or publishing any alleged fake and defamatory content against her. The High Court issued notices to the defendants in the case and posted Ms. Moitra's suit for further hearing on Friday.