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Om Birla turns down 'no Well' suggestion for new Parl building

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NEW DELHI DHNS

As India builds a new Parliament, a suggestion was made to do away with the 'Well' - witness to many Opposition protests - in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

However, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla shot down the suggestion, made by an official, during internal discussions on the layout of Chambers of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha in the new Parliament building.

Referring to incidents of Opposition members charging towards the presiding officers during the passage of the three farm laws in the Rajya Sabha in September last year, suggestions were also made to fortify the Chair to deny easy access to unruly members.

Parliament sources said Birla rejected the suggestions outright and made it clear that Opposition is an integral part of democracy and no attempts should be made to deny them the right to protest.

The Lok Sabha Speaker has been chairing meetings of officials of the Secretariat on the internal layout of the chambers of both the Houses to ensure that adequate seating arrangements are made for visitors to Parliament, besides the members.

The Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha have separate galleries for visitors, including of-



Om Birla.

ficers who assist ministers while the House is in session, the 'Speaker's Box' where foreign delegations are seated to witness the proceedings.

Both the Houses also have separate viewing galleries for members of the general public, foreign envoys, legislators

from state Assemblies, Speaker's guests and the media to witness the House proceedings.

The Opposition utilises various modes such as walkout, sloganeering, boycott of proceedings besides the usual fiery speeches to make a point in the House.

However, if the disruptions threaten to derail the functioning of the House, the presiding officers have to resort to suspending the unruly members through rules of procedure.

The Parliament has witnessed vociferous protests and unruly scenes during the UPA regime over the carving out of separate Telangana state in 2013, washout of the Winter Session in 2010 over the 2G spectrum allocation issue and in 2018 over the Rafale deal.

The foundation stone for the new Parliament building was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 10, 2020.

The new Parliament, being built at a cost of Rs 971 crore, is expected to be ready by October 2022.