

Notice issued to 3 MPs under anti-defection law

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The Lok Sabha Secretariat has issued notices to MPs Sisir Adhikari, Sunil Kumar Mondal and K. Raghu Rama Krishna Raju under the anti-defection law.

Mr. Adhikari and Mr. Mondal had switched over to the BJP from the Trinamool Congress, while YSR Congress Party's Mr. Raju has been speaking against the party's supremo. The Trinamool Congress and the YSRCP had approached Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, seeking their disqualification. The three leaders have been asked to respond within 15 days of the receipt of letters, a source told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

The timing of the notices are significant as it not only comes just days before the Parliament session but also

ahead of a proposed visit by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to Delhi later this month. The ruling YSR Congress Party in Andhra Pradesh had questioned the delay as well as the neutrality of the Speaker.

In an interview with *The Hindu*, Mr. Birla had explained the procedure.

“They [TMC] have written to me with their complaints. I have said that the complaint be taken on board as per form required, I shall ask the two named for their version and later refer it to the Privileges Committee which will then hear the matter,” Mr. Birla had said.

“Well, the anti-defection law doesn't specify a timeline in dealing with such complaints. All I can say is that the process will be carried out in the most transparent way,” he added.