

Amid ruckus, RS clears insurance Bill

Even as the speeches were going on, MPs had an intense tussle with the marshals

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The contentious General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021 was passed amidst shocking scenes in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday despite the Opposition's demand to send the legislation to a select committee.

The Rajya Sabha passed the Bill that would allow the government to cut its share in public sector insurance companies, paving the way for more private sector participation, amid protests by the Opposition. The Bill had been passed by the Lok Sabha on August 2.

The entire Opposition was united in their call to send the Bill to a select committee. YSR Congress Party MP Vijaysai Reddy said it must go to a select committee to understand the greater rami-



Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge

fications of this law. Congress MP Syed Naseer Hussain and TDP MP K. Ravindra Kumar also urged the government to send the Bill to a select committee. RJD MP Manoj K. Jha said the entire nation was watching the murder of democracy here. "I ask the Chair too how can you sit and let this happen," Mr. Jha said.

When the government forced through a discussion amid the din, CPI MP Binoy Viswam tried to climb on to the reporter's table. BJD MP Sasmit Patra, who was in the

Chair, immediately adjourned the House. Within minutes, more than 10 women marshals and nearly 50 men formed a human chain around the reporter's table. They also blocked the way for the Opposition members to get into the well.

Noisy protest

When the House reconvened, Ripun Bora and Syed Naseer Hussain (Congress), Mr. Viswam and Elamaram Kareem (CPI-M) had a tussle with the marshals as they tried to push their way to the reporter's table.

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut, who was in the second row, clambered on to the seats and leapt at the marshals.

Even as the speeches were going on, the MPs had an intense tussle with the marshals. Mr. Bora at one point stood up on a platform where the TV screen is kept.

Trinamool MP Mausum Noor stood with a noose around her neck.

The Congress MPs walked out in protest against what Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge called an "insult to democracy". "We are all peace-loving people. So many male and female marshals created a shield... Lady members are insulted here. Marshals are pushing. We are not safe and our lady members are not safe," said Trinamool MP Sukhendu Sekhar Ray.

Inside the House, the government introduced the National Commission for Homoeopathy (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (Amendment) Bill, 2021. Both Bills were passed after brief discussions, before the Rajya Sabha was adjourned sine die.