Powers of the Speaker

What is the issue?

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- Recently several Lok Sabha members produced written notices to the Speaker for a no-confidence motion.
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- Despite the Speaker's defined powers in this regard, she has failed to act upon this.
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What is a no confidence motion?

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- A no-confidence motion is a tool of opposition party to prove no majority or no confidence in the PM and Council of Ministers.
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- No-Confidence motion is not mentioned in the Constitution of India.
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- If the motion is passed, the ruling government ceases to enjoy the trust and confidence of the house and is subsequently removed.
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- A No confidence motion needs to be necessarily brought only in Lok Sabha.
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- Rajya Sabha cannot take up a No confidence motion or Adjournment motion.
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What is the purpose?

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- The Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers can hold office only as long as they have the confidence of the Lok Sabha.
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- The parliamentary system is thus primarily based on the idea of accountability.
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- It is achieved through processes such as questions, adjournment motions, etc.
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- The no-confidence motion is a final measure in this context.
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What is the Speaker's role in this?

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- **Motion** - The no-confidence motion needs to be given priority over all other businesses of the Parliament.
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- This is because other businesses cannot be undertaken when the very legitimacy of the government is being questioned.
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- If there are notices for no-confidence motion, the Speaker has to verify whether there are at least 50 MPs who support its introduction.
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- She should then fix a time for discussing it.
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- **Order** - The Speaker has the prime responsibility of ensuring that the House functions in order.
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- In case of disruptive behaviour by some MPs, the Speaker has the powers and the responsibility to bring order to the House.
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- MPs failing to comply with the Speaker's order can be asked to withdraw from the House, or can even be forcibly removed.
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- Necessary steps including suspension of members can be taken to ensure order in the House.
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What is the present concern?

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- The Parliament is witnessing disrupt for quite some time due to various concerns of different States.
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- In this backdrop, the Speaker has expressed her inability to ensure the required number of members supporting the no-confidence motion.
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- The inability of Parliament to function and to test the support for the government undermines the very basis of democratic structure.
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Source: The Hindu

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