

Appointment of Victoria Gowri as Madras HC judge raised in Rajya Sabha, LoH Piyush Goyal says not right to cast aspersions

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Trinamool Congress MP Jawhar Sircar Thursday asked the government in the Rajya Sabha if the [recent appointment of Lekshmana Victoria Gowri](#), who has been accused of hate speech, as a judge of the Madras High Court was an “appropriate one”.

A section of lawyers in Tamil Nadu had lodged a protest after the Supreme Court Collegium recommended her appointment on January 17. These lawyers had pointed to her previous association with the BJP and alleged instances of hate speech by her.

Asking a supplementary question, Sircar cited Union Law Minister Kiren Rijju’s written reply that said the “appropriate” persons are appointed as judges. “Do you consider Victoria Gowri’s appointment really an appropriate person – one who has been accused in public of casteist remarks, of bias against minorities?” Sircar asked.

Before Rijju could reply, Leader of the House [Piyush Goyal](#) pushed back at the question. “I think we should have decorum. An honourable judge has been duly appointed through a process. I don’t think we as honourable members here should be casting aspersions of this nature,” Goyal said.

Sircar clarified that he had posed the question as the allegations were in the public domain. Some lawyers in Tamil Nadu had protested against Gowri’s appointment.

Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, too, asked Sircar to be “delicate” in his comments on the judiciary.

“The three wings of the state – legislature, executive and judiciary – they have to act in tandem and togetherness. We must have mutual respect for them. All three have to ultimately get together to fructify our goals. When it comes to the judiciary, with respect to which a judgment of the highest court has already come, I’m sure that issue should be kept away,” Dhankhar said.

For his part, Rijju cited Dhankhar’s remarks, adding: “There are certain sensitive matters which we have to bear in mind when we speak in this house.”

On Tuesday, the Supreme Court had junked the plea challenging the recommendation of its Collegium to elevate Victoria Gowri as a judge of the Madras High Court.

She took oath as additional judge of Madras High Court the same day even as lawyers, who are a part of the All India Lawyers Union, staged a protest outside the court against her appointment.