

Aspersions Should Not Be Cast On Appointment Of Victoria Gowri As HC Judge: Law Min Kiren Rijiju

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Differences of opinion are a part of democracy and there are ways to find solutions to that, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Thursday in Rajya Sabha on whether there exist differences between the judiciary and the executive on the issue of appointment of judges.

The government also said aspersions should not be cast on the appointment of Victoria Gowri as a judge of the high court, asserting that she has been appointed through a process.

Asked by TMC member Jawhar Sircar whether the appointment of Gowri was right even when she has been accused in public of making casteist remarks, of remarks against minorities, Leader of the House Piyush Goyal sought the indulgence of the chair.

“I think there should be some 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. I seek your indulgence,” Goyal said.

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said the three wings of the state have to act in tandem and “we must have mutual respect for them”.

“All three ultimately have to get together to fructify our goals. When it comes to judiciary, with respect to which a judgement of the highest court has already come.

I am sure that issue should be kept away.

“I would urge the honourable member to ask his supplementary in a pointed manner keeping in mind the provisions that judicial situations have to be addressed in a delicate manner,” he said.

The Chairman also told the TMC member that he was making reference to an individual who is not a member of the House.

“You are making reference on which the honourable President has issued a warrant of appointment and the Supreme Court has already taken a view on that,” Dhankhar said. Law minister Rijiju agreed with the Chair, saying, “You have very rightly made the observation that there are certain sensitive matters which you have to bear in mind when we speak in this august House.” To a question by Sircar on any differences between the judiciary and the executive on the appointment of judges, Rijiju said the former senior bureaucrat is not expected to be told about the rules, regulations and decorum.

“In a way, if there are differences in opinion, that is very much a part of democracy. Within a family, within political parties, there are differences of opinion. When there are differences of opinion, there are ways to find solutions to that also. His question was not anything which he wanted to know from the government in terms of any figures or facts,” he said.

When Sircar said the minister has not answered his pointed question on the differences, Rijju said there are 210 vacancies in various high courts.

“Once the names are recommended by the three-member Collegium in the high court, then it proceeds as per laid down procedure in the memorandum of procedure. We have not received the proposal on these 210 vacancies, so there is no question of any sharp differences,” the law minister said.