

JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT NOW REACHING J&K: SITHARAMAN

Relevant for: Indian Polity | Topic: State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these

Intense debate: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman speaking in the Rajya Sabha on WednesdayPTI

Parliament on Wednesday approved a Rs. 1.42-lakh-crore Budget for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for 2022-23, with the Rajya Sabha returning the relevant Bills to the Lok Sabha amidst a war of words between the Treasury benches and the Opposition on “internationalisation of the Kashmir problem”.

The Lok Sabha passed the Bills on March 14. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, replying to the debate, said, “In the December of 1947, on the advice of the British government, our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru took the matter to UN. He internationalised the issue, which even years later, our neighbours have been misusing it. It’s an issue which should not have gone to a global forum. This was essentially an Indian issue which we could have handled and we are doing it. We have shown the difference now.”

Interjecting, Deputy Leader of the Congress in the Rajya Sabha Anand Sharma said the position even pre-2014 was that J&K was an integral part of India.

“It was Maharaja Hari Singh who then approached the government at the time of the Kabali invasion, when the Pakistani forces, under the garb of Kabalis, came close to the Srinagar airport, that is when the condition was made by the first Prime Minister and the first Home Minister that India will send its Army only if J&K signs the instrument of accession to become an integral part of India.” Addressing Ms. Sitharaman’s allegation of “internationalisation” he said that only the issue of cessation of the military conflict was kept before the UN Security Council. “India never accepted plebiscite.”

Ms. Sitharaman, in her speech, asserted that after the dilution of Article 370, the people of J&K have been benefited by implementation of 890 Central laws. “You see justice reaching, democracy reaching, economic development reaching” the residents of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.”

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