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Opposition denied chance for discussion: Congress

Party says many laws passed will be legally challenged

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
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The Narendra Modi government pushed through Bills to end the second part of the Budget session two weeks before schedule but the Opposition was denied an opportunity to have short-duration discussions or calling attention motions, the Congress alleged on Thursday.

The party said many of the laws passed in the second part of the Budget session will be legally challenged in the Supreme Court, and cited the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) law defining the Lieutenant-Governor as the "government" in Delhi and the Mines and Mineral (Regulation and Development) Act as examples.

Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge; Chief Whip in the Rajya Sabha Jairam Ramesh; and the party's stand-in leader in the Lok Sabha, Ravneet Bittu, at a joint press conference, said the



Mallikarjun Kharge

principle of "government must have its way while the Opposition must have its say" was not followed.

"Every Bill that was passed in the Parliament session will be challenged in the Supreme Court. There is no doubt about it," Mr. Ramesh said.

"This is the first time the Opposition's legitimate demand for calling attention [motion], short duration [discussion] has not been agreed to. If it has not been agreed to, it means the government is not keen or prepared to discuss."

Questioning the provi-

sions of the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development Bill, passed by the Rajya Sabha on Thursday, Congress leaders asked how an institution, set up by an Act of the Parliament, could be outside the purview of Central Bureau of Investigation, the Central Vigilance Commission, and the Comptroller and Auditor-General.

Party leaders said that though the Opposition had played a constructive role in getting Bills passed, the government did not agree to any discussion on crucial issues such as disinvestment, inflation and price rise, newly framed rules for digital media, and the farm laws.

"I personally gave notice on two issues: on digital media being curtailed and the panic privatisation of Railways, insurance, airports, steel plants, oil refineries and petrochemical plants. Neither of those two notices were agreed to," Mr. Ramesh said.