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## After sparks fly, LS passes NIA amendment bill

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

16/07  
AFTER intense debate, the Lok Sabha on Monday passed the NIA (Amendment) Bill, giving sweeping powers to the agency to probe terrorist acts against Indians and Indian interests abroad, cyber crimes, and cases of human trafficking.

The debate saw the opposition raising concerns that the NIA law

might be misused to target a particular community but the government trashed the allegation saying its goal is to finish off terrorism.

While sparks flew during the debate, the bill sailed through in the LS after Home Minister Amit Shah asserted that let there be division of votes as demanded by AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi, to know who is against terrorism and who is not. Division of votes

saw members who were opposed to the legislation eventually supporting it. The bill was passed with 278 members supporting and just six opposing it.

The legislation seeks to broaden the NIA mandate to probe and prosecute scheduled offences, and also to create special courts.

Notably, NIA officers will be able to investigate scheduled offences committed outside India. P11