**News:** Lok Sabha Speaker informed the House that he had received the notice of privilege motion moved by the Congress against Social Justice Minister for his statement on the Supreme Court order on the issue of reservation in promotion for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBC).

**Why?**

- The Congress accused the minister of ‘misleading’ the House by stating that the case pertained to a decision of the Uttarakhand government in 2012 when the Congress was in power.

- The Minister had also informed that the Centre was not a party to the case and assured that ‘appropriate steps’ would be taken.

- Stating that it was a misleading argument, Congress MPs not only moved a privilege motion but also read out the names of advocates who represented the BJP government Uttarakhand in the Supreme Court. However, the Speaker cut him by short stating that the motion is under his consideration.

**About Privilege Motion**

Parliamentary privileges are certain rights and immunities enjoyed by members of Parliament, individually and collectively, so that they can “effectively discharge their functions”. When any of these rights and immunities are disregarded, the offence is called a **breach of privilege** and is **punishable under law of Parliament**.
Procedure

A notice is moved in the form of a motion by any member of either House against those being held guilty of breach of privilege. Each House also claims the right to punish as contempt actions which, while not breach of any specific privilege, are offences against its authority and dignity.

Rules governing the privilege motion

- Rule No 222 in Chapter 20 of the Lok Sabha Rule Book and correspondingly Rule 187 in Chapter 16 of the Rajya Sabha rulebook governs privilege.

- It says that a member may, with the consent of the Speaker or the Chairperson, raise a question involving a breach of privilege either of a member or of the House or of a committee thereof.

- The rules however mandate that any notice should be relating to an incident of recent occurrence and should need the intervention of the House. Notices have to be given before 10 am to the Speaker or the Chairperson.

Role of the Speaker/Chairman

- The Speaker/RS chairperson is the first level of scrutiny of a privilege motion.

- The Speaker/Chair can decide on the privilege motion himself or herself or refer it to the privileges committee of Parliament.

- If the Speaker/Chair gives consent under Rule 222, the member concerned is given an opportunity to make a short statement.

Privileges committees in the Parliament

- In the Lok Sabha, the Speaker nominates a committee of privileges
consisting of **15 members** as per respective party strengths. A report is then presented to the House for its consideration. The Speaker may permit a half-hour debate while considering the report. The Speaker may then pass final orders or direct that the report be tabled before the House.

- A resolution may then be moved relating to the breach of privilege that has to be unanimously passed.

- In the **Rajya Sabha**, the **deputy chairperson heads the committee of privileges**, that consists of **10 members**.