Rajya Sabha passed 3,817 Bills in the last 67 years; Held 5,466 sittings since 1952

Syllabus subtopic: Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

News: The first ever effort by the Rajya Sabha secretariat to quantify and analyse the legislative work done by the Upper House since it came into being in 1952 has revealed that the House has passed 3,817 Bills till the end of the last and the 249th session.

Prelims and Mains Focus: about significance of RS vis-a-vis Lok Sabha

Unique events relating to Rajya Sabha:

Casting vote by the Chair: The first and the only time when a Presiding Officer of Rajya Sabha cast his vote was when the Panel Chairman M.A. Baby did so in 1991 when the voting was tied on the Statutory Resolution moved by the opposition seeking disapproval of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Ordinance resulting in the victory of the opposition in the House.

President Rule approved only by Rajya Sabha: It happened only twice in respect of extension of President Rule in Tamilnadu and Nagaland in 1977 and in case of Haryana in 1991 when Lok Sabha was dissolved.

Removal of a Judge: The only time Rajya Sabha adopted a motion for removal of a Judge was in respect of Justice Soumitra Sen of Calcutta High Court in 2011 but he resigned before the motion was taken up in Lok Sabha.

Reprimand: Former Member of Rajya Sabha K.K.Tiwari was summoned to the Bar of the House and was reprimanded in 1990 for a statement published in newspapers the same day that brought the office of Chairman and the House to indignity and contempt.

Bill passed by Rajya Sabha but negated by Lok Sabha:
The Constitution (Sixty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 1990 seeking to amend Article 356 relating to extension of President’s Rule in Punjab.

Bills passed by Lok Sabha but negatived by Rajya Sabha (5):
- The Constitution (24th Amendment) Bill, 1970 seeking to terminate privy purses and privileges of former Indian States,
- The Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill, 1977,
The Constitution (64th Amendment) Bill, 1989 seeking to insert a new Part IX in the constitution relating to Panchayats,

The Constitution (65th Amendment) Bill, 1989 relating to Nagar Panchayats and Municipalities


Bills passed at the joint sittings of both the Houses of Parliament (3):

- The Dowry Prohibition Bill, 1959
- The Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill, 1978
- The Prevention of Terrorism Bill, 2002

Women representation in RS

- The representation of women in Rajya Sabha increased from 15 (6.94%) in 1952 increased to 31 (12.76%) in 2014 and is now 26 (10.83%) in 2019.
A JOURNEY SINCE 1952

Total members so far 2,282 (including 208 women and 137 nominated members)

Longest-serving members:
- Mahendra Prasad, serving the 7th term, followed by
- Manmohan Singh serving 6th term

Representation of women in Rajya Sabha increased from 15 (6.94%) in 1952 to 31 (12.76%) in 2014. It is currently 26, or 10.83%, of the strength of the House.

120 Bills passed by Lok Sabha and amended by Rajya Sabha

Total sittings of the House till 249th session
- 5,466

Total number of bills introduced in Rajya Sabha
- 944

Number of bills withdrawn
- 104

Number of bills pending in Rajya Sabha
- 38

Total number of bills passed by Rajya Sabha
- 3,817

Number of bills passed by RS that lapsed due to dissolution of LS
- 60

RAJYA SABHA FIRSTS

First bill passed: The Indian Tariff (2nd Amendment) Bill, 1952

First constitution amendment bill: The Constitution (Second Amendment) Bill, 1953 for readjustment of representation in Lok Sabha by increasing the size of population per constituency

First bill on law and order: The Preventive Detention (Second Amendment) Bill, 1952

First security bill: The Armed Forces (Assam & Manipur) Spl Powers Bill, 1958

First bill on pollution: The Prevention of Water Pollution Bill, 1969

First money bill deemed to have been passed by Rajya Sabha: The Appropriation (Railways) No.4 Bill, 1978

First bill referring to terrorism: The Terrorist Affected Areas (Special Courts) Bill, 1984

LANDMARK EVENTS

1. Casting vote by the chair: The only time a presiding officer of RS cast his vote was on August 5, 1991 when voting was tied 39-39 on a statutory resolution moved by opposition seeking disapproval of the CrPC (amendment) ordinance, resulting in opposition victory

2. Prez rule nod just by RS: President Rule extended in Tamil Nadu and Nagaland in 1977, and for Haryana in 1991, only by RS when LS was dissolved

3. Removal of a judge: RS adopted a motion for removal of a judge in respect of Justice Soumitra Sen of Calcutta HC in 2011. He quit before the motion was taken up in LS

4. Expulsion of members: RS adopted a motion in 1975 to expel Subramanian Swamy after his activities were found to be derogatory to the dignity of the House. Chatrapal Singh was expelled in 2005 after the ethics panel found him guilty of accepting money for raising questions. Sakshi Maharaj was expelled in 2006 for irregularities in MPLAD projects