



## 250th Session of Rajya Sabha

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### Why in News

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The **Rajya Sabha secretariat** has released the **first-ever analysis** of its legislative work, **“Rajya Sabha: The Journey since 1952”** on the occasion of the **250<sup>th</sup> session of Rajya Sabha**.

### Key Points

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- The Rajya Sabha has **passed 3,817 Bills** till the end of its 249th session (Monsoon Session, 2019).
- The recent monsoon session of Rajya Sabha(2019) has been reported as **the most productive session (103%)**.  
Productivity signifies the number of hours the House actually functioned compared to the number of hours officially earmarked for it to work.
- The **representation of women in Rajya Sabha increased** from 15 (6.94%) in 1952 to 31 (12.76%) in 2014 but decreased to 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Number of bills withdrawn  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 1976 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

## Some Unique Events Related to Rajya Sabha

- **Casting vote by Chairman:** The **first and the only time** when a Presiding Officer of Rajya Sabha cast his vote was for the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Ordinance, 1991.

The Chairman **cannot vote in the first instance**; he can only exercise a casting vote in the case of a tie.

- **President Rule approved only by Rajya Sabha:** It has happened only twice for extension of President Rule in Tamil Nadu (1977) and in Haryana (1991) when Lok Sabha was dissolved.

- **Bills passed at the joint sittings of both the Houses of Parliament:**
  - **The joint sitting has passed only three bills, namely**
    - The Dowry Prohibition Bill, 1959 passed at a joint sitting in 1961.
    - The Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill, 1978 passed at a joint sitting in 2018.
    - The Prevention of Terrorism Bill, 2002 passed at a joint sitting in 2002.
  - Joint sitting is **extraordinary machinery** provided by the Constitution to **resolve a deadlock** between the two Houses over the passage of a bill.

## **Rajya Sabha**

- The **maximum strength** of the Rajya Sabha is **fixed at 250**, out of which, 238 are to be the representatives of the states and union territories (elected indirectly) and **12 are nominated by the president**.
  - The representatives of states are **elected by the elected members of state legislative assemblies**.
  - The **representatives of each union territory** are indirectly elected by members of an electoral college specially constituted for the purpose
  - The seats are allotted to the states in the Rajya Sabha on the **basis of the population**.
- The Rajya Sabha (**first constituted in 1952**) is a **permanent body** and not **subject to dissolution**.
  - However, **one-third of its members retire every second year**.
  - The retiring members are eligible for re-election and renomination any number of times.
- The Constitution has **not fixed the term of office** of members of the Rajya Sabha and left it to the Parliament.

Accordingly, the **Parliament** in the **Representation of the People Act (1951)** provided that the term of office of a member of the Rajya Sabha shall be **six years**.
- **Special Powers** of Rajya Sabha include:
  - It can authorize the Parliament to make a **law on a subject enumerated in the State List (Article 249)**.
  - It can authorize the Parliament to **create new All-India Services** common to both the Centre and states (**Article 312**).

Source: PIB