



Whip in Parliament

For Prelims: Whip in Parliament, Supreme Court, One-line whip, Two-line whip,

For Mains: Whip in Parliament

Why in News?

In a recent Constitution Bench judgment, the [Supreme Court](#) held that a **country with a multi-party system cannot afford to crack the whip** every time a Minister makes an offensive or disparaging statement.

What is Whip?

▪ About:

- A whip is an **official of a political party who acts as the party's 'enforcer'** inside the legislative assembly or house of parliament.
- In India, **every major political party appoints a whip who is responsible for the party's discipline** and behaviour on the floor of the House.
- A whip is an **important office-bearer of the party in the Parliament.**
- Parties appoint a senior member from among their House contingents to issue whips — this member is called a Chief Whip, and he/she is assisted by additional Whips.
- India inherited the concept of the whip from the British parliamentary system.

▪ Violation of Whip:

- A legislator may face **disqualification proceedings if she/he disobeys the whip of the party** unless the number of lawmakers defying the whip is 2/3rds of the party's strength in the house.
 - Disqualification is **decided by the Speaker of the house.**

▪ Limitations of Whip:

- There are some cases such as Presidential elections where whips cannot direct a Member of Parliament (MP) or Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) to vote in a particular fashion.

▪ Types of Whips:

- The **One-line whip to inform the members about a vote.** It allows a member to abstain in case they decide not to follow the party line.
- The **Two-line whip is issued to direct the members to be present in the House at the time of voting.** No special instructions are given on the pattern of voting.
- The **Three-line whip is issued to members directing them to vote as per the party line.** It is the strictest of all the whip.

What are the Functions of Whip?

- The whip **plays a crucial role in ensuring the smooth and efficient conduct of business on the floor of the House.**
- He is **charged with the responsibility of ensuring the attendance** of his party members in large numbers and securing their support in favour of or against a particular issue.

- He ensures **discipline among party members in the House.**
- He identifies the signs of discontent among MPs and informs the respective leaders of their party.
- He or she acts as a binding force in the party and responsible for maintaining the internal party organisation in the Parliament.
- Under the **Tenth Schedule (anti-defection law)** a political party has a constitutional right to issue a whip to its legislators.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. The role of individual MPs (Members of Parliament) has diminished over the years and as a result healthy constructive debates on policy issues are not usually witnessed. How far can this be attributed to the antidefection law which was legislated but with a different intention? **(2013)**

Source: PIB

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