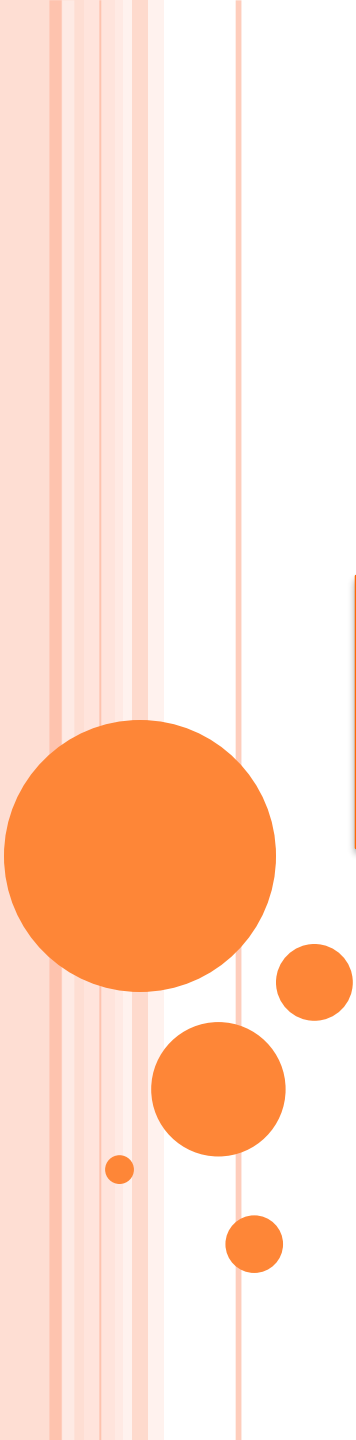




FUNCTIONS OF PARLIAMENT

PARLIAMENT – AN INTRODUCTION

- **Meaning of the word ‘Parliament’** -- is a word derived from the French expression *parlement* which means ‘speaking’, and Latin word ‘*parliamentum*’ which means ‘*talking*. It has come to mean ‘meeting for discussion’.
- **Different Names of Legislature:** In India Parliament is known as *Sansad*. Other nations have their own names viz. Diet in Japan, Congress in US, Knesset in Israel.



BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARLIAMENT

India has borrowed this nomenclature from England and has adopted what is called as 'Westminster model of parliamentary system' but Indian *Sansad* has its **unique set of characteristics** such as

1. Union Parliament is non-sovereign
2. Representation to both the Houses is given on the basis of population
3. Provision of joint sitting of both the Houses
4. Provision of nomination in both the Houses



COMPOSITION



Basic Principle of Composition:

Bicameralism means that Parliament/ Legislature shall have two houses, one representing people and other representing units of federation (states) to ensure the federal system of government.

Components:

- Lok Sabha (The House of People/ Lower House)
- Rajya Sabha (Council of States/ Upper House)
- President is an integral part of Parliament

LOK SABHA

- **Total members** – 545 (530 from different states + 13 from UTs + 2 Anglo-Indians)
- **Method of Election:** Directly by the people on the basis of universal adult franchise and territorial constituencies
- **Basic qualifications** of the members:
 1. Must be a citizen of India;
 2. Must be not less than 25 years of age;
 3. Should not hold any Office of Profit;
 4. Should neither be insane, nor bankrupt, and
 5. Should possess all those qualification prescribed by the Parliament from time to time.
- **Tenure:** 5 years
- **Number of Sessions:** Two Mandatory Sessions
- **Quorum:** 1/10th
- **Presiding Officer:** Speaker, elected by the members



RAJYA SABHA

- ❖ Total members – 250 (238 elected + 12 nominated by the President from amongst scientists, artists, scholars, social workers etc.)
- ❖ Method of Election: Members are elected by the members of State Legislative Assemblies through open ballot by single transferable vote of proportional representation system
- ❖ Tenure: Permanent House but members of Rajya Sabha have 6 years terms and 1/3rd of its member retire every second year
- ❖ Qualifications: Not less than 30 years of Age, other qualifications remain as those required for Lok Sabha.
- ❖ Presiding Officer: Vice President is ex-officio Chairman of Rajya Sabha
- ❖ Quorum: 1/10th



PARLIAMENT – MULTI-FUNCTIONAL INSTITUTION

➤ **Legislative**

Supreme law-making body – can make laws on any subject included in the Union List or Concurrent List, on residuary subjects. During the Proclamation of Emergency, can make laws on the subjects given in the State List

➤ **Executive**

Exercise control over the executive through different devices/mechanisms – by asking questions, and through motions such as adjournment, censure, call attention and no-confidence, cut-motion etc.

➤ **Financial**

Passes the Union Budget, and Vote on Account (if Budget is not passed in the beginning of new financial year)

➤ **Judicial**

Impeach President and Judges of Supreme Court and High Court, Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Chief Elections Commissioner

➤ **Constituent:** Can amend the constitution

➤ **Electoral:** Can elect President and Vice-President



PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

“COMMITTEE ARE EYES, EARS AND HANDS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND SOMETIMES THESE BECOME THE BRAIN OF THE HOUSE ALSO” – THOMAS REED

Basic Purpose of the Committees is to

1. Bring Efficiency
2. Save Time,
3. Expert Knowledge can be acquired
4. Members of Opposition also get chance to participate
5. Discussions above party-lines

Different Committees:

1. Adhoc Committees: Usually on topical issues.
2. Standing Committees: the Business Advisory Committee, the Committee on Petitions, the Committee of Privileges and the Rules Committee, Department Related Standing Committees such as Committee on Commerce, HRD, Home Affairs etc.
3. Other Committees: Committee on Estimates, Committee on Public Undertakings, Committee on Public Accounts, Business Advisory Committee, Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions, Committee of Privileges, Committee on Petitions, Committee on the Welfare of SCs and STs, Committee on Empowerment of Women etc.



ROLE OF PARLIAMENT – IN NUTSHELL

- To form or end the Government
- To represent the electorate
- To legislate
- To hold the Government accountable for its actions
- To monitor the expenditure of public funds
- To be a forum for debate
- To be a forum for the expression of grievances
- To call for Information

