

Rajya Sabha

Coordinates: 28°37′0″N 77°12′30″E﻿ / ﻿28.61667°N 77.20833°E﻿ /

The **Rajya Sabha** (Hindi: राज्य सभा) or **Council of States** is the upper house of the Parliament of India. Membership is limited to 250 members, 12 of whom are nominated by the President of India for their contributions to art, literature, science, and social services. The remainder of the body is elected by the state and territorial legislatures. Members sit for six-year terms, with one third of the members retiring every two years.

The Rajya Sabha meets in continuous sessions, and unlike the Lok Sabha, the lower house of Parliament, is not subject to dissolution. The Rajya Sabha has equal footing in all areas of legislation with Lok Sabha, except in the area of supply, where the Lok Sabha has overriding powers. In the case of conflicting legislation, a joint sitting of the two houses is held. However, since the Lok Sabha has twice as many members as the Rajya Sabha, the former would normally hold the greater power. Only three such joint-sessions have been held; the latest one for the passage of the 2002 Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The Vice President of India (currently, Hamid Ansari) is the *ex-officio* Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, who presides over its sessions. The Deputy Chairman, who is elected from amongst the RS's members, takes care of the day-to-day matters of the house in the absence of the Chairman. The Rajya Sabha held its first sitting on 13 May 1952.^[5] The salary and other benefits for a member of Rajya Sabha are same as for a member of Lok Sabha.

1 Qualifications

Article 84 of the Constitution lays down the qualifications for membership of Parliament. Members of the Rajya Sabha must:

- Be citizens of India
- Make and subscribe before some person authorized in that behalf by the Election Commission an oath or affirmation according to the form set out for the purpose in the Third Schedule to the Constitution;
- Be at least 30 years old;
- Possess such other qualifications as may be prescribed in that behalf by or under any law made by Parliament.

- Be elected by the Legislative Assembly of States and Union territories by means of Single transferable vote through Proportional representation.

In addition, twelve members are nominated by the President of India having special knowledge in various areas like Arts, Science etc. However they are not entitled to vote in Presidential elections as per Article 55 of Indian Constitution.

2 Limitations

There are certain limitations, which makes Lok Sabha more powerful than Rajya Sabha.

2.1 Money Bills

In the case of Money bills, if the Rajya Sabha return the bill to Lok Sabha, opposing the bill, it is deemed to have passed. Though the Rajya Sabha can send recommendations to the Lok Sabha, it is not binding on the Lok Sabha to act on it. Also, the house cannot exercise Pocket Veto; if the house does not pass the bill within 14 days, it is again deemed to have been passed by the house.

2.1.1 No-Confidence Motion

Unlike Lok Sabha, it cannot pass motion of no confidence against the government.

2.2 Legislation

The number of members of Lok Sabha is 545, that is more than twice the members of Rajya Sabha. As a result, in case a non-financial bill is rejected by the Rajya Sabha, if passed by the Lok Sabha, then in the joint-session of the parliament, the bill is likely to be passed. So, in general, the Lok Sabha has more power than Rajya Sabha in matters of legislation as the government is accountable to Lok Sabha, and Money bills can be introduced only in Lok Sabha.

3 Membership and composition

Seats are allotted in proportion to the population of each state or **union territory**. An additional 12 members are nominated by the President.^[6]

See also List of members of the Rajya Sabha

3.1 Membership by party

Members by Party Source: Rajya Sabha Secretariat^[7] (as of 20 February 2015)

4 Officers

4.1 Leader of the House

Besides the Chairman (Vice-President of India) and the Deputy Chairman, there is also a function called *Leader of the House*. This is a cabinet minister - the prime minister if he is a member of the House, or another nominated minister. The Leader has a seat next to the Chairman, in the front row.

The following people have been the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha:

4.2 Leader of the Opposition (LOP)

Main article: [Leader of the Opposition \(India\)](#)

Besides the Leader of the House, who is leading the majority, there is also a Leader of the Opposition - leading the minority parties. The function was only recognized in the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of the Opposition in Parliament Act 1977. This is commonly the leader of the largest minority party, and is recognized as such by the Chairman.

The following people have been the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha:

4.3 Secretariat

The Secretariat of Rajya Sabha was set up pursuant to the provisions contained in Article 98 of the Constitution. The said Article, which provides for a separate secretarial staff for each House of Parliament, reads as follows:- 98. *Secretariat of Parliament -Each House of Parliament shall have a separate secretarial staff: Provided that nothing in this clause shall be construed as preventing the creation of posts common to both Houses of Parliament. (2) Parliament may by law regulate the recruitment and the conditions of service of persons appointed to the secretarial staff of either House of Parliament.*

The Rajya Sabha Secretariat functions under the overall guidance and control of the Chairman. The main activities of the Secretariat inter alia include the following :-

- (i) providing secretarial assistance and support to the effective functioning of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha)ssible to Members of Rajya Sabha;
- (iv) servicing the various Parliamentary Committees;
- (v) preparing research and reference material and bringing out various publications;
- (vi) recruitment of manpower in the Sabha Secretariat and attending to personnel matters; and
- (vii) preparing and publishing a record of the day-to-day proceedings of the Rajya Sabha and bringing out such other publications, as may be required concerning the functioning of the Rajya Sabha and its Committees.

In the discharge of his constitutional and statutory responsibilities, the Chairman, Rajya Sabha is assisted by the Secretary-General, who holds the rank equivalent^[8] to the Cabinet Secretary to the Government of India. The Secretary-General, in turn, is assisted by senior functionaries at the level of Secretary, Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary and other officers and staff of the Secretariat.

5 Media

Rajya Sabha Television (RSTV) is a 24*7 parliamentary TV channel fully owned and operated by the Rajya Sabha. The channel is aimed at providing in-depth coverage and analysis of parliamentary affairs especially the functioning of and developments related to Rajya Sabha. During sessions of Parliament, apart from telecasting live coverage of the proceedings of Rajya Sabha, RSTV presents incisive analysis of the proceedings of the House as well as other day-to-day parliamentary events and developments.^[9]

6 References

- [1] "Hon'ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Parliament of India". rajyasabha.nic.in. Retrieved 19 August 2011.
- [2] "Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Parliament of India". Retrieved 19 August 2011.
- [3] "RAJYA SABHA - AN INTRODUCTION". rajyasabha.nic.in.
- [4] "Council of States (Rajya Sabha) - rajyasabha.in".

- [5] “OUR PARLIAMENT”. Indian Parliament. Retrieved 11 May 2011.
- [6] “FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT RAJYA SABHA”. Indian Parliament. Retrieved 8 December 2012.
- [7] Rajya Sabha party strength
- [8] “Rajya Sabha Introduction”.
- [9] “About Rajya Sabha TV”. Rajya Sabha. Retrieved 19 May 2014.

7 Further reading

- The Nominated Members of India’s Council of States: A Study of Role-Definition J. H. Proctor, Legislative Studies Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 1, Feb 1985, pp. 53–70.
- Alistair, McMillan. “Constitution 91st Amendment Bill: A Constitutional Fraud?”. nuff.ox.ac.uk. Retrieved 19 May 2014.

8 External links

- Rajya Sabha homepage hosted by the Indian government
- Rajya Sabha FAQ page hosted by the Indian government
- 37 Rajya Sabha members have criminal background: Study - analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms and National Election Watch
- Nominated members list
- State wise list
- Rajya Sabha Television
- MEMBERS OF RAJYA SABHA (STATE WISE LIST) TN

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