

LSTV and RSTV merged into SANSAD TV

March 3, 2021

In news : Presiding officers of both Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha accepted for the merger of Lok Sabha Television (LSTV) and Rajya Sabha Television (RSTV) into a single 'Sansad TV'

Surya Prakash panel and its recommendations for the merger of RSTV & LSTV

- The recent merger of RSTV & LSTV was taken in line with the proposals given by a panel headed by former Prasar Bharati chairman A Surya Prakash
- This panel was appointed by Rajya Sabha chairman M Venkaiah Naidu in consultation with LS speaker Om Birla
- The panel had submitted its report in June last year.
- Note: The contents of the report, submitted to both Rajya Sabha chairman M Venkaiah Naidu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, are not yet public.

What did the panel say?

- The panel, which had consulted some members of Parliament also, had suggested that Parliament should have only one channel, which could be called Sansad TV
- It suggested that Sansad TV could have two platforms to telecast live the proceedings of Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha during Sessions, it had proposed that the same platforms Sansad 1 and Sansad 2 could broadcast the same programme, in Hindi and English respectively, during the inter-Session period.
- There is also a suggestion that only one platform can function in bilingual during the inter-Session period

Evolution of Live telecasting of the sessions by LSTV & RSTV

The period before LSTV & RSTV

- Before LSTV started functioning as a channel, select parliamentary proceedings had been televised since December 20, 1989 the Presidential Address to the joint session that takes place on the first day of the first session of the year would be telecast live, for example.
- On April 18, 1994, the entire proceedings of Lok Sabha started to be filmed.
- In August that year, a Low Power Transmitter (LPT) was set up and made operational in Parliament House to telecast the proceedings live.
- From December 1994, Question Hour in both Houses were telecast live on alternate weeks on Doordarshan.
- It was arranged in such a manner that during the telecast of the Question Hour of one House by Doordarshan, the Question Hour of the other House was broadcast by All India Radio
- When the DD News channel was launched, Question Hour in both Houses started getting telecast simultaneously on DD channels.
- But it was only after a decade, in December 2004, that a separate dedicated satellite channel was set up for the live telecast of the proceedings of both Houses.
- In 2006, LSTV started airing the proceedings of the Lower House live.

Emergence of LSTV

- Lok Sabha TV is the older of the two it started operating on July 24, 2006.
- The LS channel's vision, according to its website, is to reach the "live proceedings of the Parliament House...to every household".
- **LSTV was the brainchild of former Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee.**
 - People familiar with the circumstances in which

the channel was set up, said that then Rajya Sabha Chairman Bhairon Singh Shekhawat was not really convinced with Chatterjee's proposal.

- **It was during his time of Shekhawat's successor, Hamid Ansari, that the separate channel for the Upper House materialised.**
 - **It is owned and operated by Lok Sabha Secretariat,** LSTV has the mandate to telecast uninterrupted live proceedings of the Lok Sabha

Emergence of RSTV

- RSTV was launched in 2011.
- Apart from telecasting live the proceedings in Rajya Sabha, it also brings analyses of parliamentary affairs, and provides a platform for knowledge-based programmes.
- RSTV has a considerable number of followers, and is among the most watched channels in its category.
- With RSTV using better technology, its budget is bigger than that of LSTV.
- The Union Budget allocates funds for the running of channels.
- RSTV also employs more people than LSTV (around 250 compared to LSTV's 110).
- Rajya Sabha TV is owned and operated by the upper house of Indian Parliament