

Monsoon session of Parliament

July 21, 2021

In news

The Monsoon session of Parliament started on July 19.

What is the session of Parliament?

The period during which the House meets to conduct its business is called a session.

Who summons the session?

- The Indian Constitution (**article 85**) empowers the President to summon each House at such intervals that there should not be more than a six-month gap between the two sessions.
- Hence the Parliament must meet at least twice a year.
- The decision is taken by the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs, which currently comprises nine ministers, including those for Defence, Home, Finance, and Law.
- **The decision of the Committee is formalised by the President**, in whose name MPs are summoned to meet for a session.
- The President exercises the power to summon the Houses on the recommendation of the Prime Minister or the Cabinet.
- Like many other articles, it is based on a provision of The Government of India Act, 1935.
- Besides, articles 352(4 & 8), article 356(3) and article 360(2)(c) lay down certain time limits for summoning the Houses of Parliament

Article 85 also empowers the President to—

- Prorogue the Houses or either House.
- Dissolve the House of the People.

Prorogation of the house

Under Article 85(2) of the Constitution, the President may from time to time prorogue Houses or either House of Parliament. Termination of a session of the House by an Order by the President under the above constitutional provision is called 'prorogation'. Prorogation normally follows the adjournment of the sitting of the House sine die.

Dissolution(in case of Lok Sabha)

- In terms of Article 83(2) of the Constitution, the House of the People, unless sooner dissolved, shall continue for five years from the date appointed for its first meeting and no longer and the expiration of the said period of five years shall operate as a dissolution of the House.
- As per the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961, the function regarding dissolution of the House of the People has been allocated to the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

Three sessions of Parliament

India does not have a fixed parliamentary calendar. By convention, Parliament meets for three sessions in a year:

1. **Budget session:** January/February to May-It is the longest session. The session has a recess so that Parliamentary Committees can discuss the budgetary proposals.
2. **Monsoon session:** July to August/September.
3. **Winter session:** November to December.

Joint session of the Parliament

The joint sitting of the Parliament is called by the President of India (Article 108) and is presided over by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha or, in their absence, by the Deputy Speaker of

the Lok Sabha, or in their absence, the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

Conditions for summoning a joint session:

As per Article 108 of Constitution, a Joint session of Parliament can be summoned in the following situations. If after a Bill has been passed by one House and submitted to the other House—

- **The Bill is rejected** by the other House; or
- **The Houses have finally disagreed** as to the amendments to be made in the Bill; or
- **More than six months elapsed from the date of the reception of the Bill** by the other House without the Bill being passed by it.
- The President may, unless the Bill has elapsed by reason of a dissolution of the House of the People, notify to the Houses by message if they are sitting or by public notification if they are not sitting, their intention to summon them to meet in a joint sitting for the purpose of deliberating and voting on the Bill.

Exceptions to joint sittings

Following two bills cannot be referred to a joint sitting:

- Money Bill.
- Constitutional Amendment Bill.