

Unparliamentary expressions in Indian Parliament

July 15, 2022

In news– A list of words that will be viewed as unparliamentary in both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha has been made public by the Lok Sabha secretariat ahead of the monsoon session which starts on July 18.

What are unparliamentary words?

- There are phrases and words, literally in thousands, both in English and in Indian languages, that are considered “unparliamentary”.
- **The Presiding Officers Speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairperson of Rajya Sabha have the job of keeping such words out of Parliament’s records.**
- For their reference, the **Lok Sabha Secretariat has brought out a bulky tome titled ‘Unparliamentary Expressions’.**The last such book was published in 2009.
- The book has several **words and expressions that would probably be considered rude or offensive in most cultures.** However, it also has stuff that is likely to be thought of as being fairly harmless or innocuous.
- **The state legislatures too are guided mainly by the same book, first compiled in 1999.**

New list of words-

- The new **list has words and phrases disallowed not only in the Indian Parliament, but also in various state assemblies,** as well as some parliaments of other countries.
- **It includes words that have been expunged from the records** in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha over the last few years.

- According to the latest list, words like 'jumlajeevi', 'baal buddhi', 'Covid spreader', 'abused', 'ashamed', 'betrayal', 'chamchagiri', 'cheated', 'Snoopgate', 'anarchist', 'Shakuni' among others would be expunged if used during debates or otherwise in both the Houses.
- **Other words include 'dodgy', 'drama', 'false', 'eyewash', 'fabrication', 'fraud', 'racist' etc.**

How the list is prepared-

- If a member uses a word that could be unparliamentary or indecent and hurts the decorum or dignity of the House, the head of the reporting section sends it to the Speaker or the presiding officer citing relevant rules and precedence with a recommendation to expunge them.
- **The Speaker has the discretion under Rule 380 to expunge the word or usage.**
- **Once the Speaker expunges the word or usage, it comes back to the reporting section which removes the word from the records and mentions in the proceedings as expunged as ordered by the chair.**
- At the end of the session, a compilation of words removed from the records, along with reasons, is sent to the Speaker's office, Sansad TV and the editorial service for information.
- This **editorial service section later prepares a list of all these expressions made in Indian Parliament**, the state legislatures and other parliaments to release as the new addition to the existing list.

Rules related to unparliamentary words-

- **Article 105(2) of the Constitution** lays down that **no Member of Parliament shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in Parliament or any committee thereof, MPs do not enjoy the freedom to say whatever they want inside the House.**

- **Whatever an MP says is subject to the discipline of the Rules of Parliament,** the “good sense” of Members, and the control of proceedings by the Speaker. These checks ensure that MPs cannot use “defamatory or indecent or undignified or unparliamentary words” inside the House.
- **Rule 380 (“Expunction”) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha says:** “If the Speaker is of opinion that words have been used in debate which are defamatory or indecent or unparliamentary or undignified, **the Speaker may, while exercising discretion order that such words be expunged from the proceedings of the House.**”
- **Rule 381 says:** “The portion of the proceedings of the House so expunged shall be marked by asterisks and an explanatory footnote shall be inserted in the proceedings as follows: ‘Expunged as ordered by the Chair’.”