



PARLIAMENT OF INDIA



Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu
Chairman, Rajya Sabha

Rajya Sabha : 2017-2022

An Overview



RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI



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PREFACE

Like never before, the functioning of the Rajya Sabha during 2017-2022 has been viewed, assessed and presented in the public domain from time to time in a wholesome perspective, throwing light on the trend analysis and functional context, enhancing the public understanding of the working of this organ of the apex legislature of the country.

Every aspect of the functioning of the House including the dynamics of its composition, the productivity, attendance and participation of Members in the proceedings of the House, the extent of disruptions, time spent on different items of Business revealing that the House has come to be more deliberative, the impact of shifting of Question Hour to 12.00 Noon in 2014 and its utilisation etc. have been quantified for presenting an evidence based case for improving the functioning of the Council of States.

All this has been possible with the Hon'ble Chairman, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu firmly believing that for anything to be changed, it needs to be first quantified. Based on the numbers, Hon'ble Chairman has steadfastly sought to bridge the gap between the potential and the reality. Consequently, he has been able to steady the ship with the House clocking increased productivity of 82.34% for the last eight Sessions (249th to 256th) as against 42.77% for the first five Sessions (244th to 248th) that he presided till April, 2022.

The Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs) have been close to the heart of the Hon'ble Chairman given their importance for the 24x7 functioning of Parliament. He has spent considerable time and energy in regularly reviewing their functioning and as a result, these Committees have touched new benchmarks in their performance.

Hon'ble Chairman has been particular about harnessing technology for more effective functioning of the Members and the Secretariat and this has paid rich dividends.

A great admirer of Indian languages, the efforts of Hon'ble Chairman have resulted in manifold increase in the use of Indian languages in the proceedings of Rajya Sabha and that of Hindi in the Secretariat.

This is for the first time that a comprehensive account of the functioning of the Rajya Sabha during the five year tenure of its Chairman is being made available in public domain for ready reference and future guidance. This gives an overview of the outreach of Hon'ble Chairman and the outcomes. Before doing so, in another first, Hon'ble Chairman has presented a 'Report to the people' in the House on February 13, 2019 on the working of the Rajya Sabha during 2014-19 coinciding with the tenure of the 16th Lok Sabha. The Chairman did so as he is of the view that the Rajya Sabha, as a legislature is also accountable to the people.

The Hon'ble Chairman has succeeded in taking the institution of Rajya Sabha much closer to the people through extensive outreach efforts by ensuring transparent presentation of its working in a break from the past.

I am confident that this publication would prove to be immensely helpful to all the stakeholders in appreciating the working of the Rajya Sabha during 2017-2022 and the lessons it holds for the times to come.

29 July, 2022

P.C. Mody
Secretary-General

CHAIRMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

- Backed by 26 years of legislative experience including 7 years in the united Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly and 19 years in the Rajya Sabha, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu assumed the Office of the Chairman of Rajya Sabha on August 11, 2017.
- His awareness of the mind and methods of legislators and the strategies and limitations of various sections of the legislatures, deep understanding of the operational political context and its evolution from time to time guided his endeavours as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.
- Being conscious of the unique role and importance of the Rajya Sabha in the federal democratic polity, Shri Venkaiah Naidu has steadfastly strived to enhance the functioning and effectiveness of the House.
- The Chairman is of the opinion that to bring about any change, it is necessary to measure and quantify various aspects of the functioning of the House for presenting an evidence based case for such a change.
- Accordingly, the Chairman has for the first time ushered in putting numbers on every aspect of the functioning of the Rajya Sabha, its Committees and the Secretariat.
- This evidence based endeavour extended to the productivity of the House over the years and for each session during his tenure, attendance of Members in the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha and all of its Committees, opportunities availed by various parties and their members in the proceedings of the House and its Committees, time taken on various items of Business, use of Indian languages etc.

- At every opportunity, the Chairman has sought to raise the bar to improve the overall functioning of the House.
- Special emphasis has been laid on improving the functioning of the Eight Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees of Rajya Sabha and about a dozen of the Standing Committees of the House, given their importance for the 24x7 functioning of the Parliament.
- For the first time since 1993 when Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs) were introduced, Chairman Shri Venkaiah Naidu ushered in evaluation and regular monitoring of their functioning.
- Chairman's opening and valedictory remarks at the start and conclusion of each Session of the House, the regular formal and informal meetings with the leaders of various parties and Members and other appropriate public forums were availed to convey his concerns and the need and the potential for improvement.
- The Chairman has sought to present the functioning of Rajya Sabha in the context of that of parliamentary democracy in the country since independence bringing out the linkages and strongly advocating the need to improve the quality of democratic polity so as to fulfil the vaulting aspirations of the people in the best democratic manner.
- Improving and steadying the productivity of Rajya Sabha, improved functioning of the Committees of Rajya Sabha, hassle free conduct of the sessions of the House since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, increased adoption of technology in aid of the functioning of Members and the Secretariat, bringing to an end the colonial practices, increased use of scheduled Indian languages, reform initiatives in respect of the functioning of the House and administrative mechanisms of the Secretariat, regular monitoring of the working of Rajya Sabha, its Committees and the Secretariat, manifold increase in public outreach on the functioning of the House and several initiatives of first of it's kind marked the five years

of Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu's tenure as the Chairman of Rajya Sabha.

- Amidst the declining productivity that marked the functioning of Rajya Sabha over the last 25 years, 5 of the 13 full sessions presided over by Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu (till April, 2022) have reported productivity of close to or above 100%, even as the Chairman would have liked it to be better.
- The overall productivity of the 13 full sessions of Rajya Sabha (244th to 256th) presided over by the Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has been 68.35%.
- Against the productivity of 42.77% for the first five Sessions, it has increased to 82.34% for the next eight Sessions is an indication of the 'ship being steadied' as once observed by the Chairman. This also marked a reversal in the declining productivity of the House.
- Chairman has made persistent efforts to enable increased participation of Members in the proceedings of the House like the Question Hour, Zero Hour, Special Mentions and the Debates by streamlining the norms for the same.
- All through his tenure as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has urged the Members to be guided by the twin principles of "Let the Government propose; Let the Opposition oppose and Let the House dispose" and "Debate, Discuss and Decide; Don't disturb".

THE CONTEXT AND THE CONSEQUENCES

- The functioning of any institution depends on the operational context, its evolution and internal dynamics.
- The effectiveness of a legislature hinges on its composition, the agendas and priorities of the constituent units and the broad political ecosystem that forms its operational base.
- Indian polity has undergone a major change since the onset of coalition politics in late 80s of the last century. No political party could obtain majority in the Lok Sabha for 30 years after 1984.
- During the 70 years since Rajya Sabha came into being in 1952, the Governments of the day did not have majority in the House for about 40 years including the last 32 years in a row.
- Since 1978 for which data regarding various aspects of functioning of the Rajya Sabha is maintained, the House has availed 100% or more of scheduled sitting time for 16 of the 17 years till 1994.
- In the next 27 years till 2021, the annual productivity of the House has been 100% only twice in 1998 and 2009.
- During 1991-94, though the Government of the day did not have majority in the Rajya Sabha, the annual productivity of the House has been over 100%. It has started declining in 1995.
- During 1995-1997, the productivity was 95%.
- During 1998-2003, Rajya Sabha has availed 90% of the originally scheduled sitting time.

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- For the next 10 year period during 2004-2013, Rajya Sabha has availed about 80% of the scheduled sitting time and the trend continued till 2017.
 - These statistics bring out the context in which Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has assumed the Chairmanship of the Rajya Sabha in August, 2017.
 - For the period 2014-2021, the productivity of the House has been 74%.
 - The Rajya Sabha has recorded the lowest ever annual productivity of 40% in 2018.
 - Of the 13 Sessions presided over by the Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, the productivity of the first five Sessions has been 42.77% and it has improved to a high of 82.34% for the next eight Sessions.
 - The productivity of the last 8 Sessions (249th to 256th) has been substantially higher than the average of 74% for the 8 year period of 2014-2021.

OUTREACH

- In the context of the declining productivity of the Rajya Sabha over the last 25 years, Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has made sustained efforts to improve the same through his tenure by extensive outreach to the leaders and Members of the House, both within and outside the Chambers of the House.
- Shri Venkaiah Naidu made it a point to chronicle the functioning of the House over times, both in his opening and valedictory remarks for each session of the House, exhorting Members to make productive use of the available time of the House by highlighting the gaps between the possible and present performances. He complimented the Members whenever the going was good and did not hide his distress whenever the productivity of the House hit a low. It was a sustained endeavour.
- His exhortations are illustrated below:

"Our democratic polity allows flourishing of different ideas and thoughts on a range of socio-economic issues. But, adversarial politics should not be allowed to have adverse impact on the functioning of the Parliament which, in turn, impacts the progress of our nation. We must act together; we must come together; we must discuss, debate and deliver together."

**-Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu in Rajya Sabha on
August 11, 2017 on the assumption of Office**

Chairman Shri Venkaiah Naidu steadfastly urged the members to make a difference to the functioning of the Rajya Sabha in each of the 13 full Sessions that he presided over.

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
244	<p>The Government shall endeavour to accommodate the opposition's point of view and Opposition at the same time shall enable effective functioning of the House for transaction of legislative business and taking up other issues.</p> <p>-On December 15, 2017</p>	<p>As Chairman, this has been the first full Session for me. It could have been better than what it transpired to be. All of you would agree with me that though the Parliament is a political institution, it cannot be an extension of politics and marked by deep divisions and acrimony. It is a matter of deep discomfort that the House has lost about 34 hours of valuable working time as against the period of 41 hours of business transacted. We were all, however, delighted over the positive media reports on the House creating a record of taking up all the Starred Questions on January 2, 2018 after 15 long years.</p> <p>-On January 5, 2018</p>
245		<p>This Session turned out to be an eminently forgettable one on account of utter disregard of the mandate of this</p>

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
246	Some of you would have noticed editorials in some leading news dailies expressing concern over the state of affairs in the	<p>important parliamentary institution and its responsibilities and missed opportunities. The important General Budget could not be discussed. No legislative work was transacted except passing of the Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill, 2018 and that too without any discussion. Over 124 hours of precious time of this House has been lost due to disruptions as against only 45 hours of functioning. I am disturbed to note a total breakdown in communication among various sections of the House which was at the root of the prolonged stalemate that ruined this important session. Hope is what sustained all of us and let's hope for the better when we all meet next time.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-On April 6, 2018</p>
		This Monsoon Session of Parliament has brought new tidings marking a break from the last two Sessions with productivity of more than

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
247	<p>Parliament and urging all concerned to make amends by ensuring a productive Session this time around. As per a survey conducted (by Azim Premji University and Centre for the Study of Developing Societies) in 8 States only 1.75% of the people expressed confidence in political parties and only 36.60% have faith in the Parliament. If people do not have faith and confidence in the Parliament and political parties, we need to take serious note of it and ponder if we can make amends so as to restore the confidence of the people. I sincerely appeal to all sections of the House to 'strategise' for enabling informed debates rather than 'scheming' for disruptions.</p> <p>-At the all party leaders meet on July 17, 2018</p>	<p>74% which is three times more than that of the last Budget Session and credit goes to all of you. The legislative performance during this Session has been 140% of the previous two Sessions combined. During my daily meetings with the leaders of different parties, some leaders said more than once that I get very emotional and sentimental about whatever is happening or not happening in the House and should not be so. But my problem is that I cannot take whatever happens inside the House as a matter of <i>déjà vu</i>. The pattern of disruptions is a matter of serious concern and I am glad there has been a perceptible change this time around. I do hope that it further improves and stays like that.</p> <p>-On August 10, 2018</p> <p>During this Session, the House could function for only 27 hours while more than 78 hours were lost due</p>

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
248	<p>The Budget Session beginning today is the first in the 71st year of our Republic. Success of any democracy guided by the lofty principles of Republic depends on the efficacy of functioning of various institutions that form the pillars of the Republic. I appeal to all sections of the House to be guided by the spirit of the occasion and send out a right message by enabling proper functioning of the House. As the nation is headed for General Elections, we need to guard against competitive politics adversely affecting the functioning of the House. On the contrary, all sections</p>	<p>to disruptions. The Session was characterised by regular and continuous disruptions which deprived Members of the opportunity to discuss matters of urgent public importance and seek the accountability of the executive through questions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-On January 9, 2019</p> <p>With a heavy heart, I have to say that this short but important Budget Session turned out to be another wasted opportunity. 44 hours of the available 48 hours have been lost due to disruptions. This only reinforces the 'dysfunctional pattern' that has been evident over the last five years. It is time for all sections of the House to evolve a 'collective conscience' to enable effective functioning. Rajya Sabha as the Second Chamber of the apex legislature, too is accountable to the people. This Session being the last one before the General Elections fast approaching, we need to</p>

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
	<p>of the House need to seize this opportunity to put across their point of view on the floor of the House in a dignified manner.</p> <p>-At the all party leaders meet on January 31, 2019</p>	<p>know as to what extent this august House lived up to its role and expectations of the people. I would like to report to the people what all we have been able to do (In the last five years). Evidence suggests that we did not rise to the expectations of people. Since June 2014 Rajya Sabha held 18 Sessions and 329 Sittings till today and passed only 149 Bills which is 39 Bills lesser than the 188 Bills passed during 2009-2014. This Session and the last one have witnessed heightened efforts by some sections of the House to force this august House into a kind of 'suspended animation'. I have made my best possible efforts to enable normal functioning of the House. I have been regularly talking to the leaders of various parties but my anguish seems to have had no impact. Of the total 18 Sessions over the last five years, the average productivity has been about 60%.</p> <p>-On February 13, 2019</p>

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
249	<p>I have been expressing time and again, my concern about disruption of proceedings of the House and the negative public perception arising out of this dysfunction state of affairs. Every Question Hour lost means a loss of opportunity of seeking answers from the Government on about 8 issues of policy, implementation and governance by 40 Members. Every Zero Hour lost means depriving 15 Members from raising issues of immediate public importance. Our nation has just entered the 71st Year of Republic. As the House of Elders, we need to lead by example. The House should seek the 'meeting ground' rather than the 'zone of divergence'.</p>	<p>I am glad that my optimism has come true during this Session. With great pleasure, I have a turnaround story to report to all of you and the people of the country. This Session presented a 'new normal' with high productivity of 104.92%, the best in the last five years since 2014 and coming after 17 Sessions. With 35 Sittings, this Session is the longest in the last 14 years. With 151 Starred Questions taken up for oral answers, this Session is the best in the last 14 years coming after 45 Sessions. With 326 Zero Hour Submissions, this is the best in the last 21 years spanning 63 Sessions since the 186th Session in 1999. Passing of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, widely known as the 'Triple Talaq Bill' is the most far reaching social reform legislation in the last over 60 years since the passage of the Hindu</p>

-On June 21, 2019

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
250	<p>The momentous occasion of the 250th Session of the House is an opportune time for collective reflection on the journey so far and sincere introspection over the missed opportunities. This is warranted so that we don't repeat the mistakes, if any, of the past. We need to learn from the experience of the last 67 years (since first sitting of the House) and if we don't, there is an inherent risk of making ourselves irrelevant. It will be desirable on the part of the Members of the Rajya Sabha to maintain a fine balance between becoming obstructionist or redundant, as observed by President Shri Pranab Mukherjee.</p>	<p>Code Bills. The Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Bill is another historic legislation</p> <p>-On August 7, 2019</p> <p>I am particularly delighted over this landmark 250th Session ending on a happy note marked by 'seriousness and gravity'. I am particularly happy over all of you collectively demonstrating that parliamentary democracy is more about contestation of ideas and ideologies than confrontation which carries a tinge of conflict in its womb. With productivity of over 100% during the last Session and about 100% this Session, I tend to strongly believe that this new norm will stay.</p> <p>-On December 13, 2019</p>
251	<p>-On November 18, 2019</p> <p>As a Republic, we have completed 70 year long journey only the last week.</p>	<p>The productivity of the House including both the parts of this Session has</p>

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
	<p>As the Presiding Officer, it shall be my endeavour to ensure that all sections of the House get their due space in a structured manner during this Session. The last two sessions viz., the 249th and 250th, have after a long period of stormy proceedings reported 100% productivity. I appeal to all of you to keep up this positive momentum.</p> <p>-At the all party leaders meet on January 31, 2020</p>	<p>been 76.13%. Full and proper exercise of the right to discuss and debate would have resulted in 100% productivity. I hope that we move forward in the right direction hereafter.</p> <p>-On March 23, 2020</p>
252	<p>We are meeting after a gap of 175 days since we met last (the Budget Session of 2020 was adjourned <i>sine die</i> on March 23rd, 2020, ahead of the schedule due to outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic). I sincerely urge all of you to sustain and try to enhance the high productivity recorded by this august House during the last three Sessions.</p> <p>-On September 14, 2020</p>	<p>We have to conclude this Session 8 sittings ahead of the scheduled 18 as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to challenge the humankind across the globe even after 9 months of its outbreak. This august House had to function from 6 different locations including the Chambers of both the Houses of Parliament and four Galleries of this House, a first of its kind in the history of Rajya Sabha. In another first, we have functioned on</p>

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
253	On the landmark occasion of 100 years of Representative Democracy in our country (the first direct election to the imperial and provincial legislative councils were held during the winter of	<p>Saturday and Sunday of the last week without taking the usual break. The productivity of the House has been 100.47% continuing the high productivity witnessed during the last three Sessions. For the first time, in the history of this august House a Notice of Motion for removal of the Hon'ble Deputy Chairman has been given and it had to be rejected for the stated reasons. On behalf of all of you and on my own, I once again place on record our deep and sincere appreciation for all the frontline workers, doctors, nurses, paramedical staff, sanitation workers and scientists and all others for ensuring our wellbeing .</p> <p>-On September 23, 2020</p> <p>This Budget Session of Parliament is being adjourned <i>sine die</i>, 10 Sittings ahead of its schedule. The productivity of the House has been about 90%. I am happy to inform you that the high productivity</p>

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
	<p>1920), I suggest to this august House to resolve to enhance dignity of the House through disruption free proceedings.</p>	<p>witnessed since the 249th Session has continued this time as well. As we are entering the 75th year of independence, we should be guided by the mantra of 'debate, discuss and decide' and not 'disrupt'. This is the only way forward in these challenging times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which we have been able to contain with coordinated efforts of all concerned.</p>
	<p>-On February 2, 2021</p>	<p>-On March 25, 2021</p>
254	<p>People look up to Parliament in their quest for meeting the aspirations and alleviating their sufferings. They are living under the COVID pandemic induced stress since last year. This Monsoon Session, which we hope to be a fuller one, assumes enhanced significance in the context of prevailing situation of the country and the suffering of the people further compounded by the possible third wave. Amidst this uncertainty, Parliament</p>	<p>(No valedictory remarks were made by the Chairman)</p> <p>The productivity of the House during Monsoon Session has been a low of 26% marking a departure from the high productivity of the previous five Sessions.</p> <p>-On August 11, 2021</p>

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
	<p>needs to assure the people of the required support of all kind with necessary interventions. Hence, I appeal to all sections to ensure a meaningful Monsoon Session that got underway today.</p> <p>-On July 19, 2021</p>	
255	<p>The 72nd Constitution Day was commemorated on November 26, 2021. The people of India who gave us this Constitution chose democracy as an instrument for socio-political and economic transformation of our country in a peaceful manner. Accordingly, the Constitution prescribed 'dialogue and debate' in the legislature for negotiated path ways for development based on the 'will of the people' conveyed in succeeding elections to the Parliament and State Legislatures. I urge all of you to make the best of this Session.</p> <p>-On November 29, 2021</p>	<p>I am not happy to share with you all that the House functioned much below its potential. I urge all of you to reflect and introspect, collectively and individually, if this Session could have been different and better. I don't want to speak elaborately on the course of this Session, as that would lead me to make a very critical view.</p> <p>(The House clocked productivity of only 47.80% during this Session. Question Hour was the worst affected with 60.60% of the total Question Hour time having been forfeited on account of disruptions.)</p> <p>-On December 22, 2021</p>

Session No.	Opening Remarks	Valedictory Remarks
256	<p>This Session is being held at the confluence of the 75th year of our independence and 70 years of elections since then. In this historic year the need of the hour is for the 5,000 MPs, MLAs and MLCs to resolve to return to the people the favour they have been relentlessly doing by nurturing our democracy. The only way of doing so is to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the trust the citizens still have in our parliamentary democracy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-On February 2, 2022</p>	<p>The productivity of the House during the 256th Session has been 99.80% which could have been 100% if only the House could have availed 10 more minutes of scheduled functional time. Discussion on Working of four Ministries has been the best in the last 12 years.</p> <p>(Information released by the Secretariat on April 7, 2022 on the concluding day of the Budget Session.)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-On April 7, 2022</p>

WORK AT A GLANCE

Since the assumption of Office by Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu as Chairman of Rajya Sabha, 13 full Sessions *i.e.* 244th to 256th were held till the Budget Session of 2022 that concluded on April 7, 2022. The Winter Session of 2020 was not held.

Total sittings scheduled : 289

Actual sittings held : 261

Total duration of actual functioning of the House : 913 hours
11 minutes

Productivity of the House for this period : 68.35%

Bills introduced : 35

Bills passed/returned : 177

Number of Private Members' Bills introduced : 194

Total Private Members' Resolutions discussed : 9

Total Starred Questions orally answered in the House : 936 out of
3525

Total Zero Hour Submissions made on issues of public importance :
1526

Total Special Mentions made : 953

The Eight (8) Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees of Rajya Sabha have held a total of 558 meetings (till June, 2022) and submitted 369 reports.

**Details of the 13 Sessions presided over by the Chairman
Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu**

S. No.	Session number with dates	No. of Sittings held	Produ-ctivity (%)	Bills passed/ returned	Bills Intro-duced	Private Members' Bills intro-duced
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	244 (15.12.2017 to 05.01.2018)	13	58.80	9	0	19
2.	245 29.01.2018 to 09.02.2018 (Part I) & 05.03.2018 to 06.04.2018 (Part II)	30	28.90	1	0	5
3.	246 (18.07.2018 to 10.08.2018)	17	73	14	1	16
4.	247 (11.12.2018 to 09.01.2019)	18	27.30	4	5	0
5.	248 (31.01.2019 to 13.02.2019)	10	6.80	5	6	0
6.	249 (20.06.2019 to 07.08.2019)	35	104.90	32	7	44

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	250 (18.11.2019 to 13.12.2019)	20	99	15	0	40
8.	251 (31.01.2020 to 11.02.2020 & 02.03.2020 to 23.03.2020)	23	76.10	13	1	17
9.	252 (14.09.2020 to 23.09.2020)	10	102.50	25	6	0
10.	253 (29.01.2021 to 12.02.2021 & 08.03.2021 to 25.03.2021)	23	93.50	19	3	0
11.	254 (19.07.2021 to 11.08.2021)	17	29.60	19	4	0
12.	255 (29.11.2021 to 22.12.2021)	18	47.90	10	1	22
13.	256 (31.01.2022 to 11.02.2022 & 14.03.2022 to 07.04.2022)	27	99.80	11	1	31

ISSUES THAT DISRUPTED

- During the 13 Sessions of Rajya Sabha from the 244th to the 256th, fifty eight issues have broadly led to disruption of the proceedings of the House leading to forced adjournment of the House once or more during the day or for the full day.
- It so happened during 141(57%) of the 248 scheduled full day Sittings. 107 (43%) Sittings were free of such disruptions.
- Of these 58 issues that impacted the functioning of the House, about 20 issues disrupted the House for more than two sittings. These were :

Special category status for Andhra Pradesh (raised in 36 sittings); Passing of farm laws and farmers' protests (19); Pegasus Spyware issue(17); Demand for constitution of Cauvery Waters Management Board (17); Demand for termination of suspension of 12 Members from the House (12); Frauds in Public Sector Banks especially in Punjab National Bank (9); Hike in fuel prices (8); Misuse of CBI (7); Supreme Court Order banning immediate arrest under Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities Act) (6); The issue of meeting between former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and some Pakistani Officials in Delhi (6); Citizenship Amendment and National Register of Citizens (6); Procurement of Rafale Aircraft (5); Poaching of Congress MLAs in Karnataka (5); Alleged communal violence in North-East Delhi (5); Union Minister Anantkumar Hegde seeking removal of the word 'Secularism' from the Constitution (4); Lakhimpur Kheri incident of killing of farmers and demand for resignation of Minister of State (Home Affairs) (3); Sealing of commercial establishments in Delhi (3); Misuse of Office

of the Governor (3); Giving more powers to LG of Delhi at the cost of Delhi Government (2); Demand to refer Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill to Select Committee of Rajya Sabha (2).

**Issues that disrupted the proceedings of the House
(Session-wise) :**

Session No.	Total Sittings*	No. of disrupted Sittings	Issues
1	2	3	4
244 (Winter Session of 2017)	13	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The issue of alleged meeting between former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and some Pakistani officials in Delhi (raised for 6 days) - Minister Shri Anantkumar Hegde seeking removal of the word 'Secularism' from the Constitution (4) - Demand to refer Muslim women (Protection of Rights on Marriage Bill, 2017) to Select Committee of Rajya Sabha (2) - Law and order in Maharashtra in the wake of Bhima Koregaon caste violence in Pune (1) - Disqualification of Shri Sharad Yadav from Rajya Sabha (1)
245 (Budget Session of 2018)	28	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special category status to Andhra Pradesh (24) - Constitution of Cauvery Waters Management Board (17) - Frauds in Public Sector Banks (10) - Supreme Court Order banning immediate arrest under SC/STs (Prevention of Atrocities Act) (6) - Sealing of commercial establishments in Delhi (3)

1	2	3	4
246	16	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interference of West Bengal Governor in the administration of the State (2) - Deteriorating law and order situation in Kasganj, Uttar Pradesh (1) - Publication of final draft of NRC in Assam (3) - Special category status to Andhra Pradesh (2) - Harassment of girls at a shelter House in Deoria, Uttar Pradesh (2) - A BJP Member's comments on a TMC Member during discussion on SCs and STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Bill, 2018 (1) - Demand for JPC probe in to procurement of Rafale Aircraft (1)
247	17	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seeking ban on construction of Mokedatu balancing reservoir project in Karnataka (11) - Special category status to Andhra Pradesh (6) - Misuse of CBI (2) - Rafale Aircraft (2) - Sealing of commercial establishments in Delhi (1) - Violence in Bulandshahr District of Uttar Pradesh (1) - Violence in Kerala over ban on entry of women into Sabrimala Temple (1) - Law and order situation in Assam and Northeast due to concern over the passing of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019(1) - Firing on civilians in Jammu and Kashmir (1)

1	2	3	4
248 (Budget Session of 2019)	8	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alleged misuse of CBI in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh (5) - Special category status for the State of Andhra Pradesh (3) - JPC into Rafale (2) - Issue of NRC in Assam and other NE States (2) - Alleged poaching of Congress MLAs in Karnataka (1) - Deaths due to consumption of illicit liquor in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand (1) - Denial of entry into Lucknow Airport for President of Samajwadi Party (1)
249 (Monsoon Session of 2019)	34	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political situation in Karnataka and poaching of MLAs (4) - Disinvestment of PSUs (1) - Demanding postal examinations in all languages (1) - Killings in Sonbhadra District of Uttar Pradesh over a land dispute (1) - Media reports on US President saying that India sought mediation on Kashmir issue (1) - Mob lynching in Bihar and other parts of the country (1) - Demand for referring Right to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2019 to Select Committee of Rajya Sabha (1) - Accident of concerned Unnao rape survivor and family (1) - Absence of Concerned Minister during debate on National Medical Commission Bill, 2019 (1)

1	2	3	4
250 (Winter Session of 2019)	20	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alleged police action on protesting JNU students (1) - Issue of Electoral Bonds (1) - Privatization of PSUs (1) - Government formation in Maharashtra and role of Governor (1) - Burning of Unnao rape victim (1) - Demand to take up Calling Attention Notice and Short Duration Discussion every week (1) - Non-availability of any Cabinet Minister in the House (1) - Delay in release of GST dues to the States (1) - Unrest in Assam and North East over Citizenship (Amendment) Bill (1)
251 (Budget Session of 2020)	21	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alleged communal violence in Northeast Delhi (5) - Detention of Shri Digvijay Singh by police in Bengaluru (1) - A BJP Member's comment during a discussion on Private Member's Bill by Shri Binoy Biswam (1) - Nationwide protest on Citizenship (Amendment) Bill and National People's Register (1)
252 (Monsoon Session of 2020)	10	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protests against passing of farm laws (2)
253 (Budget Session of 2021)	21	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farmers agitation against farm laws (3) - Hike in fuel prices (3) - Giving more powers to LG of Delhi through Government of NCT of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021 (2)

1	2	3	4
			- Demand for referring Insurance Bill to Select Committee of Rajya Sabha (1) - Treasury Benches raising Maharashtra DGPs letter alleging State Home Minister running extortion racket (1)
254 (Monsoon Session of 2021)	17	17	- Misuse of Pegasus Spyware (17) - Ongoing farmers' protest (13) - Handling of COVID-19 Pandemic (1) - Hike in fuel prices (1) - Special category status to Andhra Pradesh (1)
255 (Winter Session of 2021)	18	13	- Demand for termination of 12 suspended Members (12) - Killing of civilians in firing in Mon District of Nagaland (2) - Demand for resignation of MoS (Home) further to SIT report on killing of farmers at Lakhimpur Kheri (3) - Ongoing farmers' agitation (1)
256 (Budget Session of 2022)	25	6	- Hike in Fuel prices (4) - Nation wide strike by Trade Unions(1) - Burning of children and women in West Bengal (1)
Total	248	141	

*13 sittings of the total 261 were excluded for this purpose since during those sittings the Business of the House was to lay on the Table of the House the copies of the annual Joint Address of the President, Union Budget and only paying Obituaries.

OUTCOMES

Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has stressed on the need to quantify every aspect of the functioning of the House and the Secretariat so as to track their course of journey. This enabled regular review and monitoring for tracking the change. And the change did come about. Some illustrations of such quantification and numbers speaking for change are listed below:

Functioning of the House

1. The overall productivity of the Rajya Sabha during the 13 sessions presided over by Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has been 68.35%. The productivity has increased from 42.77% for the first five Sessions to 82.34% for the next eight Sessions. The productivity of Rajya Sabha during 2014-2022 (till April) has been 74%.

- Review on June 8, 2022

2. On an average, 78% of the Members of the Rajya Sabha attend the proceedings of the House everyday and 2.56% never attend the proceedings. Analysis of attendance of Members from 248th to 254th Sessions held from 2019 till September, 2021 showed the highest daily attendance of 82.57% was reported during 254th Session while a low of 72.88% was recorded during the 253rd Session. For these 7 Sessions lasting 138 Sittings, 29.14% reported full attendance.

- Review on October 10, 2021

3. Shifting of the Question Hour from 11.00 am to 12.00 noon in November, 2014 has led to about 9% increase in its utilization over the next five years though the House is yet to fully achieve the intended objective. 32.60% of the total time available for

Question Hour was availed during the 5 year period of 2010 to 2014 with 67.40% of the precious time lost due to disruptions and forced adjournments. Utilization of Question Hour time has improved to 41.39% during 2015 to 2019. Utilization of Question Hour was 60.40% during 2004-2009.

-November 13, 2020

4. For the 16 year period between 2004 and 2019, utilization of Question Hour has been 45.37%. The highest utilization of 73.36% was in 2017 followed by 68.45% in 2005. The lowest utilization of 21.66% was in 2013 followed by 24.13% in 2018. For 10 years during this period, Question time was made use of for less than half of the available time including the period 2015-2019. Utilization of Question Hour has shown a declining trend during the election year 2019 and the year prior to it. During 2013 and 2014, the utilization was only 24.19% as against the average of 37.29% for 2010-2012. Similarly, Question Hour was availed for only 33.94% during 2018-19 as against the average of 46.63% for the previous three years.

-A review on November 13, 2020

5. Winter Session of Rajya Sabha ended in the year 2019 on a high note making a break from the disruptive preceding years by passing 52 Bills during the 65 sittings, the best in the last 36 years. In 1984, the House passed 67 Bills in 63 Sittings. During the last 67 years, since the inception of Rajya Sabha in 1952, the legislative productivity has been little over one Bill per day in only 6 years *viz.*, 1976, 1984, 1985, 1993, 2002 and 2003.

-December 31, 2019

6. In the first of its kind analysis undertaken by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat at the behest of the Chairman, it was revealed that different parties got their due share of opportunities of participation under various windows during the first part of the Budget Session that concluded on 11th February, 2020. The Opposition got slightly more opportunities in the total of 1460

interventions. BJP's 82 Members accounting for 34% of the total strength of 239 of the House got 480 opportunities amounting to 33% of the total. Congress with 46 Members constituting 19% of the strength got 345 opportunities which comes to 24% of the total. The 10 recognised parties in the House with 5 Members and above each with a total of 190 Members accounting for 80% of the total strength got about 81% of the total opportunities. Others including regional parties and independents amounting to 20% of the membership of the House got 19% of the total opportunities.

- A review of participation of Members on February 23, 2020

7. A first of its kind analysis of utilisation of time during the Sessions by Rajya Sabha revealed that the House spends 40.20% of its functional time on deliberating various issues of public importance followed by 32.22% on ensuring accountability of the executive and 27.57% on making laws. This analysis is based on the information for the 41 year period since 1978 for which required data is available. Time share of other items of business is; General Discussion on Budget (7.08%); Motion of Thanks (4.36%); Discussion on functioning of various Ministries (3.93%); Question Hour (14.19%); Calling Attention Notices (7.1%); Statement of Ministers on various issues (6.33%); Private Members' Resolution (3.16%); Half an Hour Discussions (1.25%). All instances of the House working for above 500 hours per year were during 1978-1988. Since 1995, there were only 6 instances of the House functioning for more than 300 hours per year during the 23 years. Since 2010, it has been below 300 hours per year.

- Review results of April 25, 2020

8. During 2015-2019, only 40% of the total available Question Hour time was availed resulting in wastage of 60% of the valuable Question Hour time on account of disruptions etc. During 2015-2019, Rajya Sabha held a total of 332 Sittings

against which only 133 hours and 17 minutes was availed. The time spent on Question Hour crossed 50% of the available time only once in 2017. Utilisation was 26.25% in 2015; 48.33% during 2016; 57.73% in 2017; the lowest of 22.28% in 2018 and 47.17% in 2019.

- September 3, 2020

9. Since the assumption of Office by Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha on August 11, 2017, the House has shown certain winds of change recently breaking from the past. The productivity of the House was 104% during the 249th Session, 99% during the historic 250th Session and 76% during the 251st Session resulting in average productivity of 78.42% during 2019, the highest since 2010. This turn around came in the backdrop of the productivity of 28.90% during the 246th Session, 27.30% during the 247th and a low of 6.80% during the 248th Session with annual productivity of 35.75% during 2018, the lowest ever.

-On the occasion of completion of three years in Office
on August 11, 2020

10. Since the first sitting of Rajya Sabha on May 13, 1952, the composition of the House has undergone substantial change over time with Opposition having an upper hand in the House in terms of numbers for 39 of the first 68 years beginning (and continuing so since then). The Upper House has passed several major Bills related to GST, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), Triple Talaq, Re-organisation of J & K, Citizenship Amendment etc, though the present Government does not have the numbers. The Upper House is turning out to be more and more a deliberative body having spent 33.40% of the time of the House on discussing issues of public importance during 1978-2014; 41.42% during 2005-2014 and 46.59% during 2015-2019. However, as against 39.50% of the time of the

House spent on accountability of the executive during 1978-2004, it declined to 21.99% during 2005-2014 and further to 12.34% during 2015-2019.

-Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu in a Facebook post on May 13, 2020 on the Occasion of 68th Anniversary of Rajya Sabha

11. An analysis of the participation of Rajya Sabha Members in the Question Hour revealed that a large number of Members get opportunities to raise Starred Questions. An analysis of 660 Starred Questions including 375 listed during the 249th Session and 285 listed during the 250th Session revealed that 75% and 65% of the Members got such opportunities during the last two Sessions respectively. Lead questioners during these two Sessions combined include; Shri A. Vijay Kumar of AIADMK (13) questions, Shri Harnath Singh Yadav of BJP (11), Dr. Santanu Sen of TMC (10), Dr. Banda Prakash of TRS (9), Shri Ram Nath Thakur of JD(U) (9), Shri Amar Shankar Sable of BJP (9), Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabudde of BJP (9), Dr. L. Hanumanthaiah of Congress (8), Shri Kanakamedala Ravindra Kumar of TDP (8), Shri V. Prabhakar Reddy of YSRCP (8), and Smt. Sasikala Pushpa Ramaswamy of AIADMK with 7 Questions was in the lead among the 25 women Members of Rajya Sabha.

-On January 12, 2020

12. During this Winter Session of 2019, 39% of the total functional time of the House has been spent on legislative business, 25.40% on raising Matters of Urgent Public Importance, 13% on Question Hour and 5% on Private Member's Bills. This Session has proved to be the best in the last 49 years for which data is available with 9.5 questions orally replied per day as against general trend of four to five. 117 of the Starred Questions, accounting for 67% of the total 255 questions scheduled have been orally answered.

-Chairman in the House on December 13, 2019

13. 249th Session of the Rajya Sabha, the best in many respects

The 249th Session of Rajya Sabha, the Budget Session of 2019, proved to be the most productive in the last 20 years in various aspects of the functioning of the House.

- i. With 32 Bills passed, this was best of the 52 Sessions of the last 17 years and the fifth best in the last 41 years.
- ii. With a total duration of 195 hours of transacting various items of Business during the 35 sittings, this Session was the best of 36 Sessions during the last 11 years.
- iii. With 35 Sittings, this Session was the longest in the last 14 years.
- iv. With 155 Starred Questions orally answered, this was the best in the last 14 years and after 45 Sessions.
- v. With 40.27% of Starred Questions orally answered, this was the best in the last 16 years and 51 Sessions.
- vi. With 195 Special Mentions, this was the best of the 12 Sessions in the last 4 years.
- vii. With 326 Zero Hour Submissions, this Session turned out to be the best in the last 20 years spanning 63 Sessions for which such data is maintained.
- viii. With a productivity of 104.92%, this Session was the best of the last 17 Sessions.

-Chairman in the House on August 7, 2019

14. In a first of its kind, Rajya Sabha Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu presented a 'Report to the People' on the performance of the Upper House during the last five years *i.e.* 2014-2019, during the Budget Session, the last before the General Elections in 2019. Since 2014, the House held 18 Sessions and 329 Sittings and passed 154 Bills. With this, legislative output is

34 Bills lesser than the 188 Bills passed during 2009-2014. Since 2014, the House could make use of only about 60% of the time available.

-Chairman presented the 'Report to the People'
in the House on February 13, 2019

15. Rajya Sabha took up all the 15 listed Starred Questions for the day after 15 years. It so happened last time during the 197th Session of the House in 2002.

-On January 2, 2018

16. Rajya Sabha Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu expressed concern over the dysfunctional legislatures on account of persistent disruptions. The Chairman noted that the productivity of the Rajya Sabha has hit the lowest ever of 40.08% during 2018, the year before the General Elections in 2019 and further slipped to 29.60% during the 254th Session. The annual productivity of Rajya Sabha has been over 100% for 16 years from 1979 to 1994 while it has been so only twice in 1998 and 2009 during the next 26 years.

-Chairman's observation on the occasion of 'Constitution Day'
on November 26, 2021

17. Suspensions (of Members from the House for disrupting the proceedings) either in the past or now, are only expression of disapproval of the acts of misconduct of such Members by the House. Disapproval of such undemocratic conduct in the House can't be decried as undemocratic, for sure. The latest suspension (of 13 members during the Winter Session of 2021) is not the first time to have happened. Since 1962, it happened on 11 occasions till 2010, further to a Motion moved by the Governments of the day.....Unfortunately, a message is sought to be sent out that 'sacrilege' of the House is democratic but

action against such sacrilege is undemocratic. I am sure people of the country would not buy this new norm of democracy.

-Chairman in the House on December 2, 2021

18. Rajya Sabha has taken up the Private Members' Business for the full scheduled time of two and a half hours (on Friday, the 3rd December, 2021), doing so after 1 year 9 months and 24 days and after 66 sittings. The last time it so happened was on February 7, 2020 during the 251st session (the Budget Session) of the House. On December 3, 2021, 22 Private Members' Bills were introduced in Rajya Sabha and one was discussed.

-Chairman in the House on December 6, 2021

19. The last five Sessions of the Rajya Sabha including the Winter Session of 2021 were adjourned *sine die* ahead of the schedule losing a total of 29 Sittings in the process. Three of them were cut short due to COVID-19 pandemic. A review in this regard desired by the Chairman revealed that 51% of the 63 Sessions over the last 20 years were concluded ahead of the schedule for various reasons. In the process, a total of 108 Sittings, accounting for 7.42% of the total scheduled sittings lost over these 20 years.

-On December 6, 2021

20. The annual productivity of the Rajya Sabha at 58.80% during 2021 has been the second lowest ever after that of about 40.08% during 2018. In contrast, the 8 DRSCs of Rajya Sabha have done well during September, 2020 to September, 2021. The latest review of the performance of these 8 Committees have revealed an increase of 20% in the duration of meetings and 6% rise in attendance, despite the pandemic. This has been the best performance of these Committees during the last four years. While only two Committees reported average duration of over two hours per meeting in 2017-18, six Committees have done so during 2020-2021. While no Committee has reported

attendance of 50% in 2017-2018, three Committees have done so during 2021 and the other six Committees improved average attendance during this period. The average duration of each meeting has increased from 1 hour 48 minutes during 2016-2017 to 2 hours 11 minutes over the last five years. The average attendance increased from 44.87% to about 46% during this period.

-On January 1, 2022

21. Rajya Sabha witnessed disruption free proceedings on February 2, 2022 during the debate on Motion of Thanks to the President's Address after 41 Sittings spread across four Sessions and after about a year. Sharing this with members, Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu said in the House: "Debates yesterday were marked by an effective assertion of achievements by the ruling party Members on one hand and contestation by the Opposition Members on the other. This is the advantage of smooth functioning of the House. I hope, this spirit will continue to prevail for the remaining part of the Session and for future as well."

-On February 3, 2022

FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMITTEES

1. The eight Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs) of Rajya Sabha have held 549 Meetings during September 2017 - May 2022. The overall average duration of these meetings for this period has improved to 2 hours 11 minutes from one hour 48 minutes in 2016-2017. Despite COVID-19 pandemic, the average attendance has been about 46%.

-Review on June 7, 2022

2. Withdrawal of the special allowance to the Members of Parliament *w.e.f.* April 1, 2018, for attending the meetings of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs) as well as of the House has had no effect subsequently on the attendance in the meetings of these Committees. While the average attendance was 47.64% during 2016-2017, when such allowance was available for full year, it has increased to 48.79% during 2019-2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the attendance fell in 2020-2021 marginally due to the severe second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, the average attendance for the two year period of 2019-2021 has been 46.75%. An analysis in this regard undertaken at the behest of the Chairman revealed that the average duration of meetings of 8 DRSCs of the Rajya Sabha has increased from 1 hour 48 minutes during 2016-2017 to 2 hours 11 minutes.

-On January 18, 2022

3. The 8 DRSCs of Rajya Sabha have done well during September 2020 to September 2021 reporting an increase of over 20% in the duration of meetings and 6% rise in attendance, despite the pandemic. This has been the best performance of these Committees during the last four years. While only two Committees reported average duration of over two hours per

meeting in 2017-2018, six Committees have done so during 2020-2021. While no Committee has reported attendance of 50% in 2017-2018, three Committees have done so during 2021 and the other six Committees also improved average attendance during this period. The average duration of each meeting has increased from 1 hour 51 minutes during 2017-2018 to 2 hours 14 minutes.

-On January 1, 2022

4. The Chairman informed the House that 7 of the 8 Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs) of Rajya Sabha held a total of 20 Meetings during the inter-session period (before Monsoon Session of 2021) for a total duration of 50 hours 38 minutes. The average meeting duration of 2 hours 32 minutes has been the best so far. He referred to an earlier letter to the Chairmen of all the eight (8) Committees urging them to ensure an average duration of 2 hours 30 minutes and attendance of 50% per meeting. The average attendance in the meetings during the inter-session period has been about 49%.

- On July 19, 2021

5. The eight Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs) of the Rajya Sabha held 41 Meetings since their reconstitution in September 2019. Eighty Members of Rajya Sabha are on these Committees and 18 of them have attended all the meetings of respective Committees. 18 of 168 Lok Sabha Members also had full attendance. Average attendance in these 41 meetings was 48.54% with the attendance ranging from a low of 5 in case of one meeting of the Committee on Home Affairs to 25 in one meeting of the Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports (EWCY&S). The Average attendance in each of these Meetings ranged from 39% in case of the Committee on Home Affairs to 65% in case of EWCY&S. Attendance has been below 50% in case of 23 Meetings. 28 Members accounting for 11% of the total 248 Members did not attend any meeting of DRSCs so

far and 100 Members accounting for 40% of the total skipped two or more successive meetings of the respective committees.

-Chairman in the House on December 5, 2019

6. Shri Naidu informed the House that a total of 95 Members accounting for 39% of the total 243 from both the Houses on the 8 Departmental Committees of the Rajya Sabha had zero attendance in the meetings on scrutiny of Demands for Grants for 2021-2022. 57% of 14 TMC Members, 36% of 109 BJP Members, 15% of 33 Congress Members and 50% of 80 from other parties did not attend even a single meeting of the respective Committees during consideration of Demands for Grants of 20 Ministries during the recess. 23 Members of the Rajya Sabha accounting for 30% of the total 77 and 72 of the Lok Sabha accounting for 43% of the total 166 had zero attendance.

- On March 7, 2020

7. Attendance in DRSCs Meetings held so far improved significantly during 2019-2020 crossing 50% mark for the first time during the last three years. In this year, a total of 98 meetings were held so far with overall attendance of 50.73%. The number of meetings held without quorum fell to 10% during 2019-2020 as against 38% and 11% in the previous two years.

-Review by Chairman on May 22, 2020

8. The Chairman informed the House that the 8 Committees of the Rajya Sabha has spent 12% more time in 2021 on examination of Demands for Grants of 18 Ministries over that of the last year. These Committees held 21 Meetings for a total duration of 70 hours 27 minutes as against 20 Meetings for a duration of 63 hours last year. The attendance of the Rajya Sabha Members increased to 58.24% from 52.57% last year. Also, 50% of Members of the Rajya Sabha attended all the meetings as against 36% last year. The average duration of

these meetings was 2 hours 36 minutes. All the meetings had quorum, while 3 of the 20 meetings last year had no quorum.

- On March 8, 2021

9. The 8 DRSCs of Rajya Sabha held 55 meetings (during the inter-session period before Budget Session of 2021) for a total of 110 hours and 4 minutes with an average duration of 2 hours 7 minutes as against the earlier average of 1 hour 54 minutes per meeting.

-Chairman in the House on February 2, 2021

10. Withdrawal of the special allowance to the Members *w.e.f.* April 1, 2018, for attending the meetings of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees has had no effect subsequently on the attendance in the meetings of these Committees. While the average attendance was 47.64% during 2016-2017, when such allowance was available for full year, it has increased to 48.79% during 2019-2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the attendance fell in 2020-2021 due to the severe second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, the average attendance for the two year period of 2019-2021 has been 46.75%. An analysis in this regard undertaken at the behest of the Chairman revealed that the average duration of Meetings of 8 DRSCs of the Rajya Sabha has increased from 1 hour 48 minutes during 2016-2017 to 2 hours 6 minutes for 2019-2021.

-On January 18, 2022

USE OF INDIAN LANGUAGES IN THE HOUSE

1. The use of Indian languages in the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha has increased manifold during the 3 year period of 2018-2020 with Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu regularly urging the Members of the House to do so. Four languages namely Dogri, Kashmiri, Konkani and Santhali have been used for the first time since the Rajya Sabha came into being in 1952 and another six languages namely Assamese, Bodo, Gujarati, Maithili, Manipuri and Nepali have been used after a long gap. While Hindi and English are the widely used languages, the use of 21 other Scheduled Indian Languages (other than Hindi) has increased to over five times (512%) per sitting in 2020 over that of the 14 year period between 2004-2017.
2. With 12 interventions in Sanskrit, all during 2019-2020 it has emerged as the fifth widely used language in the Rajya Sabha among the 22 Scheduled Languages coming after Hindi, Telugu, Urdu and Tamil.

-Press Note on November 16, 2021

3. Mrs. Sarojini Hembram has become the first Member in 67 years since the inception of the Rajya Sabha to speak in Santhali during the Zero Hour.

-On December 6, 2019

4. During the Zero Hour, a BJP Member from Madhya Pradesh Shri Ajay Pratap Singh spoke in Bagheli language seeking inclusion of this language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution listing such Scheduled Languages.

-On July 8, 2018

5. Rajya Sabha Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, an ardent supporter of use of Indian Languages in the proceedings of the House spoke, though briefly, in 10 languages. He spoke in

Bangla, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu to inform the Members that Simultaneous Interpretation Service has now been made available for the Members to speak in any of the 22 languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

-On July 18, 2018

Others

1. Use of Hindi in the Rajya Sabha Secretariat has increased manifold in 2020 over that of 2019. Replies in Hindi to applications/representations by the Secretariat has increased three times while issue of tender notices in Hindi improved by 36%.

-As per a review on October 22, 2021

2. Dr. Parasaram Pattabhi Kesava Ramacharyulu was appointed as the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha, the first among those directly recruited from the Secretariat in 70 years.

-On August 31, 2021

3. In a first of its kind, the first time Member of Rajya Sabha Shrimati Kahkashan Parween presided over the Question Hour of the House. She was the only woman Member of the Panel of Vice-Chairpersons of the Rajya Sabha at that time.

-On July 20, 2018

4. Public outreach through media about the functioning of Rajya Sabha has increased by over 400% since Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu assumed Office as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. A large number of them were based on extensive research undertaken in respect of functioning of the House, changing composition of the House, functioning the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees, participation of Members in the proceedings of the House, productivity of the House, utilisation of Question Hour, observations and exhortations of the Chairman for improving the functioning of the House, etc.

-Based on a review on October 27, 2021

5. Rajya Sabha Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has commissioned a study for improvement of systems in the Secretariat seeking an imaginative approach that enables evidence based interpretation of the functioning of the House in the evolving situations and efficient delivery of services. It seeks integration of various initiatives taken during the last four years for better monitoring of the output and service delivery further to detailed examination of efficiency of processes in the functioning of the Secretariat. The scope of the study includes; Process re-engineering, Quantification of output/services to be delivered by each of the 12 divisions and actual delivery, Measures to improve functioning of the Committees of the Rajya Sabha, Leadership promotion by equipping Secretariat officials for higher positions through a holistic understanding of various aspects and nuances of the functioning of the House and the Secretariat, promotion of team spirit and a sense of involvement, Coordinated efforts for better communication outreach through media on various aspects of the functioning of the House. This study is being conducted by Dr. P.P.K. Ramacharyulu, Advisor.

-On December 30, 2021

GALVANIZING THE COMMITTEES

- Introduction of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSCs) in 1993 was a major initiative to enhance the effectiveness of parliamentary scrutiny of the legislative proposals, policies and programmes of the Government besides enabling the functioning of the Parliament 24x7.
- 8 of the 24 DRSCs are with the Rajya Sabha and the rest with the Lok Sabha.
- Having chaired the Committee on Home Affairs and being aware of the limitations and the potential of these Committees, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has since assumption of Office in August, 2017 focussed on improving the functioning of DRSCs.
- For the first time since their inception in 1993, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has begun taking stock of the functioning of these Committees and has been conveying his concerns and the need to ensure a turnaround in their functioning from time to time besides setting new benchmarks to be achieved.
- In the first phase, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has urged the Chairmen and Members of these Committees to ensure a certain improvement by improving the attendance of Members and average duration of the meetings of these Committees.
- Noticing the desired improvement, the Chairman has subsequently urged the Chairmen of DRSCs in writing to ensure an average duration of 2 hours 30 minutes and attendance of 50% of Members for each meeting of these Committees, thereby setting new benchmarks.
- Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has regularly reviewed the functioning of DRSCs and shared the findings for the benefit of all in the opening and closing remarks for each Session with the objective

of patting the good performers and motivating others to do the needful.

- The DRSCs are constituted in September every year for a tenure of one year. Each Committee consists of 31 Members with 10 from the Rajya Sabha and 21 from the Lok Sabha.
- The 8 DRSCs of Rajya Sabha have held a total of 558 meetings till June 30, 2022 with an average duration of over 2 hours over the 5 year period and average attendance of over 45% for each of these meetings. 369 Reports were submitted.
- These Committees have reported an improvement of over 20% during 2019-2020 in the average duration of each meeting over that of 2016-2017.
- The average attendance was 49% during 2019-2020 as against about 47% during 2016-2017. But for the election year of 2018-19 and COVID-19 pandemic since March, 2020, the attendance could have been much better.
- Till 2016-2017, the Members of Parliament were entitled to a special travel allowance for attending the meetings of the DRSCs which was withdrawn from April 1, 2018. It was presumed that the withdrawal of this allowance would have adversely impacted the attendance of Members in the Committee meetings.
- However, a study undertaken at the behest of the Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu revealed that the withdrawal of allowance did not impact the attendance as assumed. The 8 Committees reported an average attendance of 49% during 2019-2020 as against about 47% during 2016-2017.
- These 8 Committees have submitted a total of 369 Reports to the Parliament on a wide range of issues including the Bills referred to them, Demands for Grants of various ministries and other selected issues.
- The much desired focus on improving the functioning of DRSCs and the improvement reported has been among the main features of the tenure of Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

RISING TO THE PANDEMIC CHALLENGE

- The tracing of novel Corona Virus in India in January 2020, its rapid transmission and the subsequent pandemic posed a serious threat to the safe and smooth conduct of the Sessions of the Parliament.
- The Budget Session of Parliament (251st Session of Rajya Sabha) which was in progress had to be curtailed by eight Sittings in March, 2020.
- Given the concern about the safety of the Members of Parliament and the large number of employees during the Sessions, Chairman of the Rajya Sabha Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu and Speaker of the Lok Sabha Shri Om Birla held several rounds of discussions with all the concerned including the officials of the Ministries of Home, Health and Family Welfare and Parliamentary Affairs besides Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) etc.
- Elaborate arrangements were made for corona testing of the Members of Parliament and all officials and employees of both the Secretariats and media persons before the commencement of Sessions.
- A detailed protocol was formulated to contain the transmission of the virus and was implemented since the 252nd Session of Rajya Sabha (Monsoon Session of Parliament of 2020).
- Elaborate arrangements were made for live telecast of proceedings of the Rajya Sabha through enhanced deployment of the cameras of RSTV and LSTV besides large TV screens in the Rajya Sabha Chamber for the benefit of both the Members and live telecast for the public.

- Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu held mock Sessions to ensure that all the arrangements were full proof.
- For the first time the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha held their Sittings in shifts with reduced functional time during the Monsoon Session of 2020 and also for the first part of the Budget Session of 2021. The same was followed for the Winter Session during 2021 and first part of the Budget Session of 2022. For the remaining Sessions, Chambers and Galleries of the Rajya Sabha were used for seating the Members. The Winter Session of Parliament was not held in 2020.
- While the seating arrangement complied with the social distancing norm, Members were allowed to speak while sitting given the situation.
- Arrangements were also made to disinfect and deactivate the Corona Virus in the chambers of Rajya Sabha using ultraviolet radiation.
- Entry of media persons into the Press Gallery of Rajya Sabha was also scaled down to comply with the social distancing norms.
- The Covid protocol was applied for five Sessions from 252nd to 256th Session of the Rajya Sabha.
- Due to the pandemic, Rajya Sabha lost 26 Sittings starting with the 251st Session, the Budget Session of 2020.

PLAYING OUT THE ROLE

Except in case of the Money Bills, the Rajya Sabha is at par with the Lok Sabha in all matters of legislation. It can either amend or reject the Bills passed by the Lok Sabha. In case of differences in the passing of Bills between the two Houses, a Joint Sitting of both the Houses is convened to resolve the stalemate. Since September 2017 Rajya Sabha has made amendments to 14 Bills passed by the Lok Sabha and were accepted by the other House. Most of these amended Bills accommodated the concerns of the States on respective subjects.

2. Bills amended by the Rajya Sabha and accepted by the Lok Sabha include:

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2018, The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Amendment) Bill, 2018, The Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property (Amendment) Bill, 2018, The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2019, The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019, The National Medical Commission Bill, 2019, The Major Port Authorities Bill, 2021, The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2021, The Dam Safety Bill, 2021, The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2021.

RULINGS OF THE CHAIRMAN

- The Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) sets the framework for the functioning of Rajya Sabha in an orderly manner. These Rules are evolved and modified with the passage of time based on the experience and the felt need to enable the smooth functioning of the House.
- Besides these Rules, the Presiding Officers give Rulings and make Observations from time to time based on the situations encountered and issues raised during the proceedings of the House. Such Rulings and Observations have the power of precedent and convention for adherence by the Members for orderly conduct of proceedings.
- Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has given/made 65 such Rulings and Observations till the end of the 256th Session of Rajya Sabha. These *inter alia* include:
 1. Disapproval of undemocratic conduct in the House through suspension of concerned Members cannot be decried as undemocratic.
 2. If a Member disobeys the Chair, the entire issue raised by the Member will not be a part of the proceedings.
 3. Statement of Objects and Reasons do not form part of the Bill.
 4. The Government can only recommend adjournment *sine die* of the House while the Chair will take the final decision on doing so.
 5. Members should not avoid appearing before any investigating agency by citing the reason of House duty.

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6. Parties should ensure that their Members are present when important Bills are taken up for discussion in the House.
 7. Ground for Leave of Absence of the Members from the sittings of the House has to valid.
 8. Members should avoid wearing party symbols in the House.
 9. Prior permission of the Chair is mandatory for a Minister to make a statement on behalf of another Minister.
 10. Members who have given notices and remained absent are not to be given such opportunity for another week.
 11. Media should focus on the discussion and debate in the House rather than making headlines of other things.

CHAIRMAN'S CHARTER

Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has suggested a 10 point Charter for consideration for better functioning of the Rajya Sabha as below:

1. Adequacy of the number of the sittings in the context of the House meeting for about 60-70 days in a year now;
2. Adequacy of the present Rules of Business of the House and changes required, if any;
3. Adequacy and effectiveness of various instruments presently available for the Members to present their views on legislative proposals and raising issues of public concern;
4. Effectiveness of the procedures currently being followed in the House;
5. Norms to be followed for enabling equitable and wider participation of Members in the debates;
6. Ensuring that Members with right background and abilities to enrich debates are sent to the House;
7. Ensuring self-discipline on the part of the Members to ensure compliance with the Rules of the Business for orderly functioning of the House;
8. Requirement of infrastructure support to the Members to enable informed contribution to the Debates in the House ;
9. Ensuring adequate presence of Members in the House all through the proceedings and in the meetings of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees and other Committees of the House; and
10. Technology adoption for improving the functioning of the Members and for more lively conduct of the proceedings of the House.

- November 26, 2020

AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

- Given the special majority required to amend the Constitution and the implications of such amendments, the Constitution Amendment Bills are of significant importance.
- The Rajya Sabha has passed four such Constitution Amendment Bills which subsequently became the Acts of Parliament till the 256th Session presided over by Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, as given below :
 1. **The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty Third Amendment) Bill, 2018** granting constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes under the Constitution (One Hundred and Second Amendment) Act, 2018.
 2. **The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty Fourth Amendment) Bill, 2019** to provide for maximum of 10% reservation for economically weaker sections of citizens of classes other than socially and educationally backward classes or the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, under the Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Act, 2019.
 3. **The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty Sixth Amendment) Bill, 2019** to extend reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People and Legislative Assemblies of the States for another 10 years up to 25th January, 2030, under the Constitution (One Hundred and Fourth Amendment) Act, 2019.
 4. **The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty Seventh Amendment) Bill, 2021** enabling the State Governments and Union Territories to prepare and maintain their own

lists of socially and economically backward classes in view of the Supreme Court Judgement of May 5, 2021 under the Constitution (One Hundred and Fifth Amendment) Act, 2021.

**MAJOR BILLS PASSED BY THE RAJYA SABHA
(2017-2022)**

S. No.	Title of the Bill	Sessions in which passed
1	2	3
1.	The Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018	246 th
2.	The National Sports University Bill, 2018	246 th
3.	The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill, 2019	249 th
4.	The Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2019	249 th
5.	The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2019	249 th
6.	The National Medical Commission Bill, 2019	249 th
7.	The Code on Wages, 2019	249 th
8.	The Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, 2019	249 th
9.	The Consumer Protection Bill, 2019	249 th
10.	The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019	250 th
11.	The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019	250 th
12.	The International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019	250 th
13.	The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Bill, 2019	251 st
14.	The Direct Tax Vivad se Vishwas Bill, 2020	251 st
15.	The National Forensic Sciences University Bill, 2020	252 nd
16.	The Rashtriya Raksha University Bill, 2020	252 nd

1	2	3
17.	The Code On Social Security, 2020	252 nd
18.	The Major Port Authorities Bill, 2021	253 rd
19.	The National Institutes of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2021	253 rd
20.	The National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2021	253 rd
21.	The National Bank For Financing Infrastructure and Development Bill, 2021	253 rd
22.	The Essential Defence Services Bill, 2021	254 th
23.	The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021	255 th
24.	The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2021	255 th
25.	The Dam Safety Bill, 2021	255 th

REFORMS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

System Improvement

1. Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu instituted the first ever comprehensive review of the functioning of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat for 'System Improvement' in January 2022 to enable quick decision making and delivery of services in a transparent, monitorable and accountable manner. Dr. P.P.K. Ramacharyulu, Advisor and Former Secretary-General who was assigned the study, submitted the Report to the Chairman on July 5, 2022. This Report contains several far reaching recommendations for well defined delegation of administrative and financial powers, quantification of various aspects of the functioning of Rajya Sabha and the Secretariat to enable monitorable outcomes, specific additional mandate for various services and Sections, reorganisation of the 64 Sections of the Secretariat into 14 divisions to promote coherency in working and avoiding duplication of efforts, preparing officials for higher positions through time-bound transfers and capacity building, enabling positive work environment and a spirit of camaraderie etc.

Reforming the Rules

2. A two member Rules Review Committee (RRC) constituted by the Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu to recommend amendments to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) submitted its final report and it has been referred to the General Purposes Committee (GPC) for further consideration.

Technology Adoption

3. High speed broadband 'Fibre To The Home (FTTH)' with WiFi facility from MTNL was provided to the Members *w.e.f.* January 1, 2019 at their residences.

4. Online submission of Notices of Questions by Members through 'e-Notices' Portal was introduced during the Monsoon Session of 2019 and 85% of such Notices are now being received online doing away with printing of question forms.
5. To avoid physical maintenance of files that results in voluminous documentation in paper form, e-Office Suite has been introduced which also enables easy search and referencing. VPN Access has enabled seamless performance of work during lockdown and other pandemic induced disruptions.
6. Rajya Sabha reporters have started using voice recorders for recording of House Proceedings instead of recording tapes on cassette deck as a backup.
7. Electronic transmission of parliamentary papers to the Members' Portal has been introduced dispensing with the physical circulation of such papers from the 252nd Session and summons from the 253rd Session.
8. From the second part of the 256th Session, the Chairman has allowed laying of papers on the Table of the Rajya Sabha in electronic form.

COVID - 19 Support

9. A COVID-19 support group was formed which assisted and facilitated the corona affected officials and their family members round the clock during the COVID-19 pandemic. The affected people were helped with delivery of medicines, thermometers, oximeters, gloves, masks, PPE Kits, oxygen cylinders, online consultation with doctors and any other required assistance. Administration of free of cost COVID-19 vaccination for all the employees of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat was undertaken.

Members' Issues

10. To streamline booking of railway tickets by sitting and former Members of the Rajya Sabha and to avoid booking of multiple

rail tickets, they have been advised in 2019 to cancel all such bookings which are not likely to be utilized well in advance. In case of non-cancellation of such bookings, Members are required to reimburse the fare of such bookings.

11. On the passing away of a former Member pensioner, the spouse/dependent is now required to furnish an indemnity bond duly verified by a second class Magistrate instead of the earlier requirement of authentication by a first class Magistrate to avoid difficulties.
12. Sitting Members of the Rajya Sabha and their spouses are now being issued smart security feature enabled identity cards in line with that of the Lok Sabha.

Administrative Matters

13. Aadhar Enabled Biometric Attendance System (AeBAS) was introduced in the Secretariat *w.e.f.* August 17, 2018 to promote work time discipline.
14. Consolidated Recruitment and Conditions of Service Order *i.e.* The Rajya Sabha Secretariat (Methods of Recruitment and Qualifications for Appointments) Order, 2020 was issued on August 14, 2020 for implementing the recommendations of the Review and Anomaly Committee. All time based promotions/financial upgradation scheme was replaced with Career Progression Scheme on 01.01.2020.
15. Store Inventory Management Systems (SIMS) has been introduced to streamline the process of request for stationery/sanitary and other related items from different offices and sections bringing greater transparency and predictability in procurement of stationery and other related items.

Ending Colonial Practices

16. Chairman Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has urged the Members on 15.12.2017 not to use the word 'beg' while laying papers on the Table of the House.

17. Chairman has on 06.02.2018 suggested that the Members or general public need not use the phrase 'Your Excellency' while writing to the Vice President/Chairman and instead use 'Hon'ble Vice President/Chairman' only. On the same day he has announced that instead of using 'Yours Faithfully', Members may write 'Yours Sincerely'.

Addressing Social Media Concerns

18. Chairman, Rajya Sabha has announced the constitution of an *ad hoc* Committee on December 5, 2019 to study the alarming issue of pornography on social media and its effect on children and society as a whole. The 14 Member Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Jairam Ramesh presented its Report to the House on February 3, 2020.

Green Transport

19. To reduce vehicular emissions and promote cleaner and greener equipment, two Tata Tigor electric cars were deployed for transporting the Members.

Simultaneous Interpretation

20. Simultaneous Interpretation Service has been introduced to enable the Members of Rajya Sabha to speak in all the 22 Scheduled Indian Languages in the House.

