

ROLE OF PARLIAMENT

Indian Parliament is constituted, as the supreme legislative body. It is a multifunctional institution performing a variety of roles. These roles are discussed below:

Legislative Role

The primary function of Parliament is law-making. It is the law making that makes the legislature a paramount body.

The lower house of the Parliament seems to enjoy a key role with regard to money bill. These bills can be introduced only in the Lok Sabha and not in Rajya Sabha. Once the bill is passed by the lower house, it goes to the Rajya Sabha for consideration. The Rajya Sabha is given fourteen days time to take action on the bill. The Rajya Sabha can either pass it or can amend or reject it. If the bill is passed by the Rajya Sabha, then it goes to the President for his assent. If it is

amended or rejected, then it goes back to the Lok Sabha for reconsideration and then voted by a simple majority and is sent to the President for assent.

In case of ordinary bills, both the houses have equal powers. These bills can be introduced either in the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha. The Rajya Sabha may amend or reject a bill that is passed by the Lok Sabha. If the Lok Sabha disagrees with the action of the Rajya Sabha or if it happens vice versa, when the Rajya Sabha disagrees to the amendments made to a bill by the Lok Sabha, then the matter is placed before a joint sitting of both the Houses and then it gets passed by a simple majority. A bill passed in a joint sitting is sent to the President for his assent. With regard to Constitutional amendment too, both the Houses have equal powers. The Constitution cannot be amended unless the Rajya Sabha also agrees to bring in such amendments.

Control over the Executive

Another important role of the parliament is the control of the executive. In the

Constitution, the Council of ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha⁵

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The lower house enjoys the right to call for information pertaining to policies

and programmes of the government and to see whether it has acted in conformity

with its obligation. The parliament's control over executive is meant to galvanize

and promote administrative pro-activeness in all matters of public interest. This

makes the executive to be always vigilant to work in public interest.

There are numerous procedures by which the lower house controls the executive.

Parliamentary questions to ministers, adjournment motions, and call attention

motions are the procedures, which enable members to draw attention to specific

grievances or issues and elicit government's responses on them. The lower house

has a right to pass a no-confidence or censure motion against the government

(this right does not exist with the Rajya Sabha). Besides, there are motions of

short duration discussions, private members' resolutions, motions for modification

of statutory instruments, and reporting by the departments and public undertakings

that keep a tab on the administrative lapses or shortcomings of the government