



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Suspension of Members of Parliament". This topic has relevance in the Polity and Governance section of the UPSC CSE exam.

GS 2: Polity and Governance

Why in the news?

In the current winter session of Parliament, both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha have recently suspended 141 Opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) for causing disruptions in the proceedings.

Background:

The recent suspension of Members of Parliament (MPs) stems from their involvement in disrupting parliamentary proceedings during protests related to a security breach in the Parliament.

- Opposition's demand for a statement from Home Minister Amit Shah.
- Waving placards and some MPs climbing onto the Speaker's podium.
- Opposition raising slogans on the security breach, leading to disruptions.

Causes of Disruptions:

Disruptions in Parliament can be attributed to various factors, including:

- Lack of time for addressing important matters.
- Perception of an unresponsive government.
- Deliberate disruptions for political or publicity gains.
- Absence of prompt action against disruptive behavior.

Rules Governing Suspension of MPs in Lok Sabha

In Lok Sabha, the authority to maintain order and discipline lies with the Speaker. The Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, specifically Rule Numbers 373 and 374, delineate the process for the suspension of Members of Parliament (MPs).

1. **Rule Number 373: Immediate Withdrawal**
 - The Speaker, if deeming a Member's conduct as grossly disorderly, can direct the Member to withdraw immediately from the House.
 - The withdrawn Member is required to remain absent for the remainder of the day's sitting.

2. **Rule Number 374: Naming and Suspension Motion**

- If a Member persistently and wilfully obstructs the business of the House, the Speaker may name the Member.
- A motion is then initiated to suspend the named Member for a period not exceeding the remainder of the session.
- The suspended Member must withdraw from the precincts of the House.

Rules Governing Suspension of MPs in Rajya Sabha

Distinction from Lok Sabha:

In the Rajya Sabha, the Chairperson does not possess the authority to unilaterally suspend a member. The process is governed by Rule 256.

1. **Rule 256: Suspension Motion in Rajya Sabha**

- The Chairperson, after naming a member for disorderly conduct, initiates a motion for suspension.
- The suspension period is not more than the remaining duration of the session, as per Rule 256(2).
- The Chair can, however, instruct a member to leave the House even though they cannot suspend a member independently.

2. **Rule 255: Immediate Withdrawal**

- The Chairman has the authority to direct any member with grossly disorderly conduct to withdraw immediately from the Rajya Sabha.
- The withdrawn member must absent themselves for the remainder of the day's meeting.

Duration of Suspensions

MPs can be suspended for the remainder of the session, with a maximum period of five days in the Lok Sabha. The House can reinstate a suspended member at any point by passing a motion.

Commonality of MP Suspensions

While not uncommon, the number of suspensions has increased in recent years:

- Since 2019: At least 149 suspensions.
- 2014-19: 81 suspensions.
- 2009-14: 36 suspensions.

Challenges in Maintaining Order

Balancing order enforcement and respecting democratic values is a challenge for Presiding Officers. Differentiating between disruptions arising from frustration and planned parliamentary offenses requires nuanced approaches. Addressing root causes is crucial for the smooth functioning of Parliament.

Way Forward:

Parliamentary disruptions and the subsequent suspension of Members of Parliament (MPs) underscore the need for systemic improvements.

- **Dialogue and Debate:**
 - Encourage constructive dialogue and debate to address concerns.
 - Foster an environment that allows MPs to express opinions without resorting to disruptions.
- **Engagement Platforms:**
 - Establish dedicated forums for MPs to discuss grievances and concerns.
 - Utilize parliamentary committees for in-depth discussions on critical issues.
- **Time Management:**
 - Implement efficient time management strategies to ensure adequate discussion on important matters.
 - Prioritize agenda items to optimize the use of parliamentary sessions.
- **Responsiveness:**
 - Strengthen mechanisms for the government's timely response to queries and concerns raised by MPs.
 - Facilitate open communication channels between the government and the opposition.
- **Ethical Standards:**
 - Promote and uphold ethical standards among MPs, emphasizing their responsibility to the electorate.
 - Establish a code of conduct to guide MPs in their parliamentary conduct.

Q.1 Consider the following statements regarding Suspension of Members of the Parliament (MP):

1. Procedure of Suspension of MPs is given in Representation of Peoples Act 1951.
2. MPs of both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha can be Suspended only by the President.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: D

Q.2 Analyze the implications of the suspension of Members of Parliament (MPs) on the functioning of a democratic system. Examine the balance between maintaining order and upholding democratic values

Rishabh