

The Union Parliament

1. A Federal Setup involves a dual government, i.e., the national government and the governments of the component states.
2. In countries like India where the people belong to different races or regions, with their own customs and languages, Federation seems to be the only plan to keep them united.
3. An important federal feature of the Indian Constitution is the dual government. In India there are two sets of authority:
 - a. The government of the whole country called the Union Government
 - b. Governments of the component units, called the State Governments
4. The three constituents of the Indian Parliament are-
 - a. Lok Sabha
 - b. Rajya Sabha
 - c. The President
5. The two houses of the Indian Parliament are :
 - a. The Lok Sabha,
 - b. The Rajya Sabha.
6. The maximum strength of the Lok Sabha provided by Article 81 of the Constitution is 550.
7. In addition to the elected 550 members, two members of the Anglo-Indian community may be nominated by the President to the Lok Sabha, in case he feels that this community is not adequately represented.
8. The Lok Sabha is constituted by direct election based on universal adult franchise. Thus every person who has attained the age of 18 is entitled to vote provided he is not otherwise disqualified.
9. Seats have been reserved in the Lok Sabha for
 - a. The Scheduled Castes
 - b. The Scheduled Tribes

In a reserved constituency persons belonging only to these Castes and Tribes can contest an election, but all electors are allowed to vote.
10. In order to be chosen a member of the Lok Sabha a person-
 - a. must be a Citizen of India.
 - b. must be not less than twenty-five years of age.
11. The normal duration (term) of the Lok Sabha is five years, if it is not dissolved earlier. When a Proclamation of Emergency is in operation, the life of the House may be extended by a law of Parliament. But this extension shall in no case be more than a year at a time.
12. The maximum gap allowed between two sessions of the Parliament is 6 months.
13. The term '**Session**' means a period during which the House meets to conduct its business.
14. A quorum is the minimum number of members required to be present before a meeting is allowed to begin. The quorum to constitute a meeting of the House is one-tenth of the total number of members. This includes the Speaker or the person who presides over the meeting. Thus at least 55 members should be present at the beginning of each day's sitting.
15. The Speaker is the Principal Presiding Officer of the Lok Sabha.
16. The Speaker is elected by the House from among its members by a simple majority of members present and voting.
17. The Speaker holds office until he ceases to be a member of the House or until he himself resigns his office. He can be removed from his office by a resolution passed by a majority of all the then Members of the House. The Speaker does not vacate his office on the dissolution of the House. He vacates it immediately before the first meeting of the newly constituted House.

The Union Parliament

18. The Deputy Speaker is elected by the House from among its members by a simple majority of members present and voting.
19. If any question arises whether a bill is a Money bill, or not, the decision of the Speaker thereon shall be final.
20. The Rajya Sabha consists of not more than 250 members.
21. The nominated members are 12 in number. They are nominated by the President from among persons having special knowledge or practical experience in matters such as literature, science, art and social service. The principle of nomination enabled distinguished persons to have a place in the Upper Chamber.
22. Representatives of States in the Rajya Sabha are elected by the elected Members of the Legislative Assembly of each State. This is done in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the Single Transferable Vote.
23. In order to be chosen a member of the Rajya Sabha, a person-
 - a. must be a Citizen of India.
 - b. must be not less than 30 years of age.
 - c. must possess such additional qualifications as may be prescribed by law from time to time
24. The Rajya Sabha cannot be dissolved by the President of India. It is a permanent body like the American senate. One-third of its members retire at the end of every second year.
25. The members of the Rajya Sabha have a six-year term.
26. The Vice-President of India is the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. The Deputy Chairman presides at the sittings of the House in the absence of the Chairman or during the period when the Vice-President is discharging the functions of the President.
27. The Money bill cannot be introduced in the Rajya Sabha.
28. **Making a Law on a Matter in the National Interest :** The Rajya Sabha has the power to declare that it would be in the national interest of the Parliament to enact a law on a matter in the State List. If Rajya Sabha passes such a Resolution by a two-thirds majority, the Parliament can make laws for the whole or any part of the country on any matter given in the State List.
29. A Money Bill can be introduced only in the Lok Sabha. Money Bill after it has been passed by the Lok Sabha is transmitted to the Rajya Sabha for its recommendations. The Rajya Sabha must return the Money Bill to Lok Sabha within a period of 14 days. If the Bill is not returned within 14 days of its receipt, it shall be deemed to have been passed by both Houses in the form in which it was passed by the Lok Sabha.
30. The three Lists which distribute the subjects of legislation between the Union and the States are-
 - a. Union List
 - b. State List
 - c. Concurrent List
31. The Parliament and the State Legislatures both have the right to make laws on subjects mentioned in the Concurrent List. In the case of conflict between a Central and State law, the law made by Parliament shall prevail.
32. Parliament possesses residuary powers. It means that it can make laws with respect to all those matters which are not mentioned in any of the three lists—the Union List, the State List and the Concurrent List.
33. The Union Parliament may make laws on subjects in the State List in the following cases:
 - a. During the Proclamation of an Emergency.
 - b. When the Rajya Sabha passes a resolution by a two-thirds majority that a subject in the State List has assumed national importance.
 - c. When two or more States desire that the Parliament should legislate on a subject given in the State List.
34. A **Money Bill** can only be introduced in the Lok Sabha. It is then transmitted to the Rajya Sabha for its recommendations. The Rajya Sabha must return the Bill to the Lok Sabha within a period of 14 days with its recommendations. The Lok Sabha is free to accept or reject the recommendations made by Rajya Sabha in money matters.
As regards financial powers of the Union Parliament, mention may be made of a few other provisions also.

The Union Parliament

35. The Consolidated Fund of India is the most important of all government accounts. It refers to the total of the Government of India's receipts from income tax, Customs, central excise, and other sources, as well as its outlays, minus unusual items. All revenues received by the government, all loans raised by the government, and all sums of money received in repayment of those loans, subject to certain taxes assigned to states, form one consolidated fund which is referred to as "the Consolidated Fund of India".
36. The expenditure charged on the Consolidated Fund of India includes the salaries and allowances of the President, the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts, etc. This expenditure does not require an annual Vote of Parliament.
37. The two ways in which the Lok Sabha exercises control over the Executive –
- The Question Hour:** The first hour of a sitting in both Houses is allotted for asking and answering of questions. **The purpose of the question hour is to obtain information on a matter of public importance or to discuss some grievance.** The Question Hour keeps the Ministers on their toes. It is a valuable protection against injustice and slackness on the part of the Government.
 - Censure Motion and the No-Confidence Motion:** A Censure Motion may be moved against a group of Ministers or an individual Minister, expressing a strong disapproval of their policy or some deed. Adoption of the Censure Motion would result in the resignation of the Government. But a Vote of Censure against a particular minister has no such effect.
- No-Confidence Motion is moved by a Member or the Leader of the Opposition. If The Motion is carried, the Government has to resign.
38. The Parliament performs certain electoral duties also, such as
- Elected members of both Houses of Parliament and members of Legislative Assemblies elect the President of India.
 - The Vice-President is elected by members of both Houses of Parliament.
39. Two Judicial functions of the Union Parliament are-
- The President can be removed from his office by Impeachment. A resolution accusing the President may be initiated in either House of Parliament.
 - The Parliament may punish a person for obstructing the work of Parliament or showing disrespect for the House.
40. The Constitution lays down that there shall be freedom of speech in Parliament. No member shall be liable to proceedings in any Court for anything said or any Vote given by him in Parliament.
41. Two important occasions when the President addresses a Joint Sitting of the two Houses of Parliament are-
- The President addresses the Joint Sitting of the two Houses at the commencement of the First Session after each General Election.
 - The President addresses both Houses of Parliament at the commencement of the first session of each year, i.e., the Budget Session.
42. **(a) Starred Questions** — Starred Questions are those to which a member wishes to have an oral answer on the floor of the House. Such questions are distinguished by an asterisk. Supplementary questions may be asked after replies to such questions given by the Ministers.
- (b) Unstarred Questions** — Unstarred Questions do not carry an asterisk mark. Answers to them are given in a written form. No supplementary questions can be asked thereon.
- (c) An Adjournment Motion** — An Adjournment Motion proposes that the House should lay aside all other business and take up the consideration of "a matter of urgent public importance." Such a Motion interrupts the normal business of the House. Therefore, the Speaker applies a rigorous test for the admissibility of Adjournment Motions.
- (d) Speaker's Casting vote** — The Speaker shall not vote in the first instance. When the votes for and against a proposal are equal, the Speaker gives a Casting Vote. This vote decides whether or not the proposal will be passed.
43. The Government has to resign when a No-Confidence Motion is passed.

The Union Parliament

44.

No-confidence Motion	Censure Motion
No-Confidence Motion is moved against the entire Council of Ministers.	Censure Motion can be moved against an individual Minister or a group of Ministers.
A Motion of No-Confidence need not record the grounds on which it is based.	The Member should state the reasons why he is moving the Censure Motion. In other words, Censure Motion should specify the policies or acts that are being censured.

45. Defection means "giving up the membership of that party to which a person belonged or on whose ticket he or she contested an election and joining another party or group." Voting in the House against directions of the party also amounts to Defection.
46. A Bill is the draft of a "legislative proposal", which, when passed by both Houses of Parliament and assented to by the President, becomes an Act.
47. 14 days.
48. 6 months.
49. The procedure of Joint Sitting of both the Houses of Parliament is laid down by the Constitution for resolving deadlocks between the two Houses of Parliament. The President summons both the Houses of Parliament and the Speaker of Lok Sabha presides over a Joint Sitting of both Houses of Parliament. All decisions are made by majority vote.
50. The Speaker of Lok Sabha presides over a Joint Sitting of both Houses of Parliament.
51. An important provision of the Constitution which clearly establishes the supremacy of Lok Sabha with regard to Money Bills is as follows-
- Money Bill can be introduced only in the Lok Sabha.
 - Money Bill after it has been passed by the Lok Sabha is transmitted to the Rajya Sabha for its recommendations. The Rajya Sabha must return the Money Bill to Lok Sabha within a period of 14 days. If the Bill is not returned within 14 days of its receipt, it shall be deemed to have been passed by both Houses in the form in which it was passed by the Lok Sabha.
 - The Lok Sabha may accept or reject all or any of the recommendations of the Rajya Sabha.