

Chapter 6

The Parliamentary System: Legislature and Executive

Chapter Notes:

Introduction

- India became independent in 1947; citizens gained the right to govern themselves.
- The **Constitution of India** (1950) laid the foundation of governance.
- **Universal Adult Franchise**: Every adult citizen has the right to vote, irrespective of caste, gender, class, or religion.
- Parliament represents the people and makes laws with their consent.
- First Lok Sabha: 1952; Current (18th) Lok Sabha: 2024.

Composition of the Indian Parliament of India

- **Bicameral Legislature**: Two houses + President.
 - **Lok Sabha** (House of the People / Lower House) – directly elected.
 - **Rajya Sabha** (Council of States / Upper House) – indirectly elected by state legislatures.
 - **President** – part of the Parliament.
- Representation based on **population of states**.
- **Speaker** presides over Lok Sabha; **Vice President** is Chairperson of Rajya Sabha.

Union Executive

- **Composed of**:
 - **President** – Head of State (nominal executive).
 - **Vice President** – also Chairperson of Rajya Sabha.
 - **Council of Ministers** headed by the **Prime Minister** – real executive authority.
- **Council of Ministers**:
 - Chosen from MPs (both houses).
 - Collectively responsible to Lok Sabha.
 - Assisted by **civil servants** (bureaucrats).

Legislative Functions of Parliament

(a) Constitutional Functions

- Elects the **President and Vice President**.
- Amends the Constitution.
- Ensures **federalism, separation of powers, and protection of Fundamental Rights**.

(b) Lawmaking

- Main function: Passing laws.
- **Bill → Act → Law** (steps: introduction, reading, committee stage, voting, President's assent).
- Example: **Right to Education Act (2009)**.
- **Money Bills** can only be introduced in Lok Sabha.

(c) Executive Accountability

- Government is answerable to Parliament.
- **Question Hour:** MPs question ministers.
- Parliamentary Committees review ministries' work.

(d) Financial Accountability

- Parliament approves the **annual budget**.
- Ensures government spends **public money** responsibly.

Executive Functions of Parliament**(a) President**

- Head of State; performs constitutional duties.
- Gives assent to bills, summons Parliament, appoints PM and ministers.
- Uses discretionary powers during crises (e.g., hung Parliament).

(b) Prime Minister and Council of Ministers

- **Real executive authority.**
- Key functions:
 - Lead Council of Ministers.
 - Advise the President.
 - Formulate policies and run ministries.
 - Collectively responsible to Lok Sabha.

Differences: Legislature vs Executive

- **Legislature**
 - **Composition** :- President, Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha
 - **Role** :- Makes laws, supervises Executive
 - **Bills** :- Can introduce some bills
 - **Accountability** :- Questions Executive
 - **Finance** :- Sanctions expenditure
- **Executive**
 - **Composition** :- President, Vice President, PM & Council of Ministers
 - **Role** :- Implements laws, runs government
 - **Bills** :- Introduces most bills
 - **Accountability** :- Answers to Legislature
 - **Finance** :- Prepares budget

Judiciary – Role of Checks and Balances

- Independent organ of government.
- Interprets laws, safeguards Constitution, protects Fundamental Rights.
- Ensures laws and executive actions do not violate the Constitution.
- Maintains **checks and balances** between Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary.

State Legislature & Executive

- Each state has a **Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha)**; some have **Legislative Council (Vidhan Parishad)**.
- Head of State: **Governor** (appointed by President).
- Real executive: **Chief Minister and Council of Ministers**.
- States legislate on **State List**; both Centre & States on **Concurrent List**.

Challenges to Legislatures

- Absenteeism of members.
- Disruptions & reduced debate quality.
- Low productivity of sessions.
- Presence of MPs with criminal cases.

Importance of Parliament

- Represents people's voice.
- Protects democratic values.
- Ensures accountability of government.
- Strengthens unity through federalism.
- Former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee: "Governments will come and go, but democracy must endure."

The Big Questions (Page 139)

Q1. What is India's parliamentary system, and how is it structured?

Answer: India follows a **Parliamentary system of government** inspired by the British model.

The Parliament consists of:

- **President**
- **Lok Sabha** (House of the People) – Lower House, directly elected by citizens.
- **Rajya Sabha** (Council of States) – Upper House, indirectly elected by State Legislatures.

It is a **bicameral legislature** where laws are made, debated, and passed.

Q2. What are the key functions of the Parliament?

Answer: The main functions of the Parliament are:

- **Constitutional Functions** – e.g., election of President & Vice President, amendments.
- **Lawmaking** – framing new laws and modifying old ones.
- **Executive Accountability** – keeping a check on government through Question Hour, debates, committees.
- **Financial Functions** – approving the annual budget and controlling government expenditure.

Q3. What are the roles of the legislature and the executive in India's Parliamentary democracy?

Answer:

- **Legislature (Parliament):** Makes laws, debates policies, approves budget, and supervises the Executive.
- **Executive (President, Vice President, Prime Minister & Council of Ministers):** Implements and enforces laws, runs the government, formulates policies, and remains answerable to the Legislature.

👉 Legislature = law-making, Executive = law-implementing.

Q4. How are the legislature and the executive organised at the union and state levels?**Answer:****Union Level:**

- **Legislature** → Parliament (Lok Sabha + Rajya Sabha + President).
- **Executive** → President (nominal head), Prime Minister & Council of Ministers (real executive).

State Level:

- **Legislature** → Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly). Some states also have Vidhan Parishad (Legislative Council).
- **Executive** → Governor (nominal head), Chief Minister & Council of Ministers (real executive).

LET'S REMEMBER (Page 145)

Q. From your previous lessons on the theme of Democracy and Governance, name a few Constitutional functions of the Parliament. Did you list the election of President and Vice President? What about amendments to the Constitution? Indeed, these are vital constitutional functions of the Parliament. There are other important functions that we will explore in higher grades.

Answer: The important constitutional functions of the Parliament include:

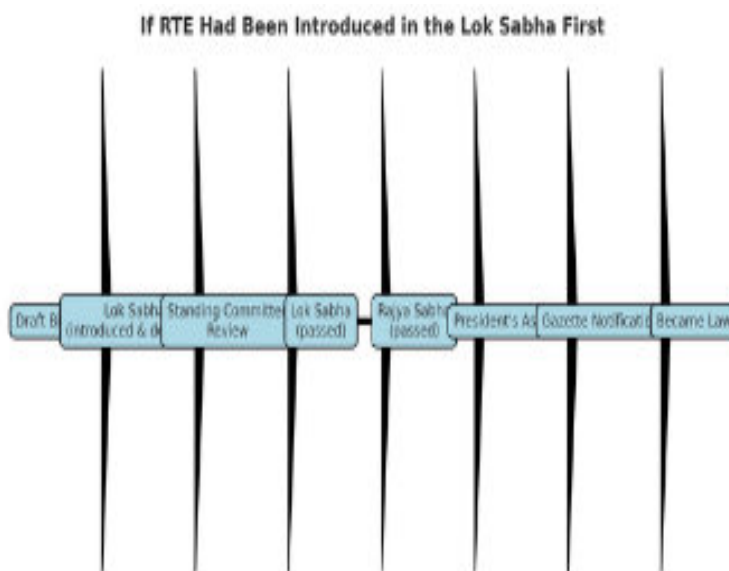
- **Election of the President and Vice President.**
- **Amendments to the Constitution.**
- Upholding **parliamentary democracy** through universal adult suffrage.
- Ensuring **separation of powers** between legislature, executive, and judiciary.
- Protecting **fundamental rights** and implementing **Directive Principles of State Policy**.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page 148)

Q. Draw a small chart to show the process of how RTE became an act. What do you think the process would be if RTE had been tabled in the Lok Sabha?

Answer: Process of how RTE (Right to Education Act, 2009) became a law:

- **Idea & Constitutional Basis** → Education added as a Fundamental Right (Article 21A) by 86th Amendment, 2002.
- **Bill introduced** → in Rajya Sabha (2008).
- **Committee stage** → Standing Committee studied the Bill, suggested changes.
- **Debates & Voting** → passed in Rajya Sabha first.
- **Sent to Lok Sabha** → discussed, passed in 2009.
- **President's Assent** → August 2009.
- **Gazette Notification** → Came into effect as a law.



LET'S EXPLORE (Page 150)

Given here is an extract from the report of meetings between the Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare and the officers from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Observe the screenshots above and discuss the following in small groups —

Q. 1. Who is reporting to whom?

Answer: The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare officers are reporting to the Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare (a Parliamentary Committee).

Q. 2. What is the subject that has been reviewed?

Answer: The subject reviewed is the co-location of Ayush facilities (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy) at Primary Health Centres (PHCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs), and District Hospitals (DHs).

Q. 3. Identify the Committee's recommendation.

Answer: The Committee recommended that states and union territories (UTs) that do not have a separate Department of Ayush should establish one. This would ensure better coordination and promote the speedy development and implementation of Ayush healthcare and schemes.

Q. 4. What is the government's reply?

Answer: The Government replied that public health is a state subject, so creating a Department of Ayush is under the responsibility of state/UT governments. However, the Ministry of Ayush has requested states/UTs to set up such directorates and deploy manpower. So far, 24 States/UTs have created a separate Ayush Directorate.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page 151)

Q. Why do you think that Parliament keeps an eye on government expenditure? (Hint: Whose money does the government spend?)

Answer: Parliament keeps an eye on government expenditure because the government spends **public money collected through taxes and revenues**.

Since this money belongs to the **citizens of India**, Parliament ensures it is used **wisely, honestly, and for the welfare of the people**.

This system of **financial accountability** prevents misuse or wastage of national resources.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page 152)

Q. If the Executive is part of the Legislature, how do we say that there is separation of power? (Hint: revisit the section on legislature above)

Answer: In India's parliamentary system, the **Executive (Prime Minister and Council of Ministers)** is chosen from the **Legislature (Parliament)**.

However, **separation of powers** does not mean complete separation, but rather a **division of functions**:

1. **Legislature** → makes laws and supervises the Executive.
2. **Executive** → implements and enforces those laws.
3. **Judiciary** → ensures laws and actions follow the Constitution.

This system, along with **checks and balances**, prevents misuse of power and maintains democracy.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page 154)

Q 1. What might happen if one of the organs — Legislature, Executive, Judiciary — had all the power? How could it affect the rights of people? Discuss with your classmates how each organ checks the others. For example, how does the Legislature question the actions of the Executive? How does the Judiciary make sure that laws and government actions respect the Constitution? Do you think there might be ways in which the actions of the Judiciary itself are reviewed?

Answer: If one organ had **all the power**, it could lead to **dictatorship**, misuse of authority, and **denial of people's rights**.

To prevent this, the Constitution provides **separation of powers** and **checks and balances**:

- **Legislature → Executive:** Questions the Executive through Question Hour, debates, committees, and approval of budgets.
- **Executive → Legislature:** Introduces most bills, ensures implementation of laws passed by Parliament.
- **Judiciary → Legislature & Executive:** Reviews laws and government actions to ensure they follow the Constitution.

Even the **Judiciary's decisions** can be reviewed through **appeals in higher courts** or **Constitutional amendments** by Parliament.

Q 2. Can you find examples where the Judiciary has asked lawmakers to review a law? Can you find any instances when the implementation of a law has been questioned by the Judiciary?

Answer: Yes, there are many examples:

- **NJAC Act (2014):** The Supreme Court struck down the **National Judicial Appointments Commission Act**, saying it violated the independence of the judiciary. It asked lawmakers to review the law.
- **Right to Privacy (2017):** The Supreme Court ruled privacy as a **Fundamental Right** and directed the government to frame stronger data protection laws.
- **Implementation Example:** In several cases (like pollution control or protection of forests), the Judiciary has asked the Executive to properly **implement environmental laws**.

These examples show how the Judiciary acts as the **guardian of the Constitution**.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page 157)

Q. What type of legislature does your state have?

Answer: States in India can have **two types of legislatures**:

1. **Unicameral** – only **Vidhan Sabha** (Legislative Assembly).
 2. **Bicameral** – **Vidhan Sabha + Vidhan Parishad** (Legislative Council).
- Examples of **bicameral states**: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh.
 - All other states have a **unicameral legislature**.

👉 The answer will depend on the student's state. For example:

- If the student is in **Maharashtra** → "My state has a **bicameral legislature** (Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parishad)."
- If in **Gujarat** → "My state has a **unicameral legislature** (only Vidhan Sabha)."

LET'S EXPLORE (Page 158)

Period of Lok Sabha	Number of sessions	Number of sittings
1 st Lok Sabha (1952-1957)	14	677
2 nd Lok Sabha (1957-1962)	16	567
10 th Lok Sabha (1991-1996)	16	423
13 th Lok Sabha (1999-2004)	14	356

Q1. What conclusions can you draw about the functioning of Parliament over time from the data in the table?

Answer: In the **early years (1st Lok Sabha)**, the number of sittings was very **high (677 sittings)**, showing active debates and discussions.

Over time, the **number of sittings has reduced**:

- 2nd Lok Sabha: 567 sittings
- 10th Lok Sabha: 423 sittings
- 13th Lok Sabha: only 356 sittings

This shows that the **functioning and productivity of Parliament have declined** with fewer working days.

Q2. What conclusions can you draw from M. Venkaiah Naidu's statement about Rajya Sabha productivity?

Answer:

- Productivity of the Rajya Sabha has **declined from 78% (2004–14) to about 65% (after 2014)**.
- In some sessions, productivity was extremely low (as low as **6.80%**).
- In **2018**, it recorded its lowest ever productivity of **35.75%**, mainly due to disruptions.

Q3. What implications does this decline in productivity have for the role of Rajya Sabha?

Answer:

- Low productivity means **less time for debates and discussions** on important bills and policies.
- It weakens the Rajya Sabha's role of **reviewing laws and holding the government accountable**.
- Disruptions reduce the **quality of democratic functioning** and delay important decisions.
- If not addressed, it may **weaken public trust** in Parliament's ability to represent the people.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page 159)

Q 1. Take up a small group project. Compile data regarding the functioning of the legislature in your state or union territory.

Answer: Students can collect information such as:

- **Number of sessions** held in a year.
- **Average number of sittings** of the State Assembly.
- Examples of **important bills/laws** passed recently.
- Instances of **disruptions** or low productivity.

Example (if state = Gujarat): "In Gujarat, the Vidhan Sabha met for 3 sessions in 2023. Around 30 sittings were held in the year. Major discussions included water management, education reforms, and budget approval."

Q 2. Seek an appointment with an MLA and gather information about challenges with respect to the state legislature.

Answer: Challenges highlighted by MLAs often include:

- **Frequent disruptions** and walkouts reducing effective debate time.
- **Short duration of sessions**, leaving less time to discuss bills.
- **Absenteeism of members**, lowering the quality of discussions.
- **Limited resources/research support** available to MLAs.
- **Pressure of political rivalries**, which sometimes affects constructive debate.

Example: “Our MLA mentioned that a major challenge is the short duration of Assembly sessions, which restricts detailed debate on policies.”

These are **model answers** since actual details will vary by state.

Questions and activities (Page 161-162)

1. Find out how many representatives from your state are in each House of the Parliament.

Answer: The number of representatives depends on the population of the state.

Example: Uttar Pradesh → 80 Lok Sabha MPs, 31 Rajya Sabha MPs.

2. What makes the Indian Parliament the “voice of the people”? How does it ensure that different opinions are heard?

Answer: The Indian Parliament is called the “voice of the people” because it represents India’s diverse population through elected representatives.

- **Universal Adult Franchise:** Every citizen 18+ can vote, making Parliament the direct expression of people’s will.
- **Bicameral Structure:** Lok Sabha represents the people, Rajya Sabha represents the states.
- **Diverse Representation:** Reserved seats for SCs, STs, and inclusion of many parties and regions.

How different opinions are heard:

- **Debates & Question Hour** let MPs raise issues.
- **Translation in 18 languages** ensures inclusivity.
- **Committees** review bills with cross-party input.
- **Media & public engagement** keep Parliament open to citizens.

Thus, Parliament ensures that **all voices—regional, social, and political—are heard in democracy.**

3. Why do you think the Constitution made the Executive responsible to the Legislature?

Answer: The Indian Constitution makes the Executive responsible to the Legislature to ensure that the government is accountable to the elected representatives of the people and to prevent the abuse of power. This system, known as parliamentary democracy, means the Executive (the Council of Ministers) is drawn from the Legislature (Parliament) and must maintain its confidence.

Here's why this is important:

- Accountability:** The Executive is accountable to the Legislature, meaning they have to answer for their actions and policies. This is achieved through mechanisms like questions in Parliament, debates, and votes of no confidence.
- Democratic Control:** By being responsible to the Legislature, the Executive is ultimately responsible to the people who elected the members of the Legislature. This ensures that the government is responsive to

the needs and expectations of the citizens.

- iii. **Checks and Balances:** This system creates a system of checks and balances where the Legislature can scrutinize and oversee the Executive's work. This prevents the Executive from becoming too powerful and potentially authoritarian.
- iv. **Policy Alignment:** The Executive's dependence on the Legislature for support ensures that policies are aligned with the needs and priorities of the people as reflected by their elected representatives.
- v. **Preventing Abuse of Power:** If the Executive loses the confidence of the Legislature, it can be removed from power. This is a crucial safeguard against the abuse of power and ensures that the government remains accountable to the people.

4. Why do you think we have chosen the system of bicameral legislature at the Union level?

Answer:

- India is a large and diverse country with many states and regions.
- A bicameral legislature (Lok Sabha + Rajya Sabha) ensures better representation:
 - **Lok Sabha** → represents the people directly (population-based).
 - **Rajya Sabha** → represents the states and protects their interests.
- It allows wider debate and prevents hasty passing of laws.
- Strengthens federalism and creates a system of checks and balances in lawmaking.

5. Try to track the journey of a recent bill passed by the Parliament. Identify in which House it was introduced. Were there any major debates or disagreements? How long did it take for the bill to become a law? Use newspaper archives, government websites, and Lok Sabha debates, or ask your teacher for help.

Answer: Here's a well-organized answer tracing the journey of a recent bill passed by Parliament, suitable for Class 8 learning:

Example: The Women's Reservation Bill (Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023)

a. Where was the Bill introduced?

→ Introduced in the Lok Sabha on 19 September 2023, during the special session of Parliament.

b. What happened next?

→ Lok Sabha passed it on 20 September 2023 with overwhelming support—454 votes in favor, only 2 against. It was then sent to the Rajya Sabha, which passed it the very next day (21 September 2023), unanimously—214 votes in favor, none against.

c. President's assent & notification

→ The President of India, Droupadi Murmu, gave assent on 28 September 2023, and it was gazette-notified the same day, thus becoming a formal Act.

d. Duration of the entire process

→ From introduction to President's assent, the process took just 9 days—remarkably fast for a constitutional amendment.

e. Why was it able to pass so quickly?

→ The bill enjoyed wide political consensus and was supported across party lines.

It addressed a longstanding demand for women's representation, making it both timely and widely accepted. The discussions occurred during a focused special session, allowing faster passage.

Summary Table

Stage	House/Office	Date	Outcome
i. Introduction	Lok Sabha	19 Sept 2023	Bill introduced
ii. Lok Sabha passage	Lok Sabha	20 Sept 2023	Passed by large majority
iii. Rajya Sabha passage	Rajya Sabha	21 Sept 2023	Passed unanimously
iv. Presidential assent	President	28 Sept 2023	Became law upon assent and gazette

f. Want to explore more?

→ Similar tracking can be done for other recent Acts like:

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (new criminal code)

Post Office Act, 2023 (modernizing postal laws)

6. Choose a recent law passed by the Parliament. Divide into teams to role-play different parts of the process — MPs debating in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, ministers answering questions, and the President giving assent. Present a short skit showing how a bill becomes a law; enact a ‘model Parliament’.

Answer: Skit: Model Parliament – Passage of the Women’s Reservation Bill, 2023

Setting: New Parliament Building, September 2023. Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha chambers, with MPs, ministers, and the President’s office. Teams include Lok Sabha MPs, Rajya Sabha MPs, the Law Minister, Speaker, Vice President (as Rajya Sabha Chairperson), and President.

Characters:

- Speaker (Lok Sabha)
- Law Minister (introduces bill)
- Lok Sabha MPs (Pro-Government, Opposition, Independent)
- Vice President (Rajya Sabha Chairperson)
- Rajya Sabha MPs (State Representatives)
- President (for assent)

Scene 1: Lok Sabha – Bill Introduction (September 19, 2023)

- **Speaker:** Order, order! The House will now consider the Constitution (One Hundred Twenty-Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2023, for women’s reservation. The Law Minister may introduce the bill.
- **Law Minister:** Hon’ble Speaker, this bill reserves one-third of seats in Lok Sabha and state assemblies for women, fulfilling our constitutional commitment to equality, as seen in the Right to Education Act, 2009.
- **Pro-Government MP:** This bill empowers women, building on India’s universal franchise legacy. It will strengthen democracy!
- **Opposition MP:** We support it but demand sub-quotas for OBC and SC/ST women. Why delay implementation until delimitation?
- **Independent MP:** Funding and timelines need clarity. A committee must review this, like the RTE process.
- **Speaker:** The bill is open for debate. A committee will examine concerns. Vote tomorrow.

Scene 2: Lok Sabha – Passage (September 20, 2023)

- **Speaker:** After committee review, the bill is put to a vote. All in favour?
- **MPs (Majority):** Aye!
- **Speaker:** With 454 votes in favour, the bill passes. Forwarded to Rajya Sabha.

Scene 3: Rajya Sabha – Debate and Passage (September 21, 2023)

- **Vice President (Chairperson):** The Women's Reservation Bill is now before the Rajya Sabha. State representatives, your views?
- **State MP 1 (Large State):** This ensures gender equality but needs clear implementation timelines.
- **State MP 2 (Small State):** Smaller states support it, but funding for electoral changes must be equitable.
- **Vice President:** After debate, the vote. All in favour?
- **MPs:** Aye! (214 votes in favour)
- **Vice President:** The bill passes. Sent to the President.

Scene 4: President's Office – Assent (September 28, 2023)

- **President:** After review, I assent to the Constitution (One Hundred Twenty-Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2023, making it law. This upholds our Constitution's spirit, like the Sengol symbolising righteous governance.
- **Aide:** The act will transform India's democracy, ensuring women's voices are heard.

Narrator: The bill, born from public demand, navigated debates, committees, and votes in both houses, becoming law in 10 days, showcasing India's parliamentary democracy.

Performance Notes: Assign teams to roles (5–6 students per team). Use props like a gavel for the Speaker, a mock bill document, and a gold-plated Sengol replica. Encourage MPs to use poetic quotes (e.g., Tirukkural, as in the 2025 budget) for authenticity. Perform in 10–15 minutes, emphasising debate, voting, and assent stages.

7. The Women's Reservation Bill, 2023, was passed with wide support. Why might it have taken over 25 years for this bill to be passed, despite being discussed for so long?

Answer: The Women's Reservation Bill, 2023 took more than 25 years to pass because of several challenges, even though it had wide support:

a. Political Disagreements:

- First introduced in 1996, parties could not agree on issues like sub-quotas for OBC and SC/ST women.
- Some feared losing male-dominated seats, so consensus was delayed.

b. Legislative Hurdles:

- The Bill needed approval in both Houses of Parliament.
- Earlier attempts (1996, 2008) failed due to stalled debates or Lok Sabha dissolutions, so it had to be reintroduced.

c. Social Resistance:

- Some leaders opposed it due to patriarchal attitudes, fearing it would disturb traditional power structures, despite India granting women voting rights early on.

d. Logistical Issues:

- Linked with delimitation and census exercises, raising doubts about electoral boundaries and implementation.

e. Lack of Political Will:

- For years, governments focused on other priorities.
- Finally, in 2023, during a special session, political unity and public pressure helped the Bill pass.

The Bill's passage after decades shows that while lawmaking can be slow due to debates, disagreements, and delays, persistent demand and consensus can bring historic change for inclusive democracy.

8. Sometimes the Parliament is disrupted and does not function for the number of days it is supposed to. What impact do you think this has on the quality of laws and the trust people place in their representatives?

Answer: Parliamentary disruptions — such as protests, walkouts, and unruly behaviour — harm both the quality of laws and public trust in representatives.

Impact on Quality of Laws

i. Delayed Legislation:

- Disruptions reduce working hours in Budget, Monsoon, and Winter sessions.
- Important bills get delayed or rushed, leading to weak and incomplete laws (e.g., Women's Reservation Bill took decades).

ii. Limited Scrutiny:

- Less time for debates, Question Hour, and committee reviews.
- Risk of passing laws that ignore public needs (e.g., RTE Act needed long review before passing).

iii. Poor Debates:

- Heated or biased arguments shift focus from policy-making to political point-scoring, lowering the quality of decisions.

Impact on Public Trust

i. Loss of Confidence:

- Citizens see MPs wasting time, behaving unprofessionally, or facing criminal charges, which weakens trust in Parliament.

ii. Perceived Inefficiency:

- When sessions are cut short, people doubt Parliament's ability to govern effectively.
- As Atal Bihari Vajpayee said, democracy must endure beyond party politics.

iii. Voter Disengagement:

- Young voters may lose interest, thinking leaders focus more on politics than governance, lowering participation.

iv. Solutions

- Encourage constructive debates and enforce stricter rules for attendance and discipline.
- Media and citizen scrutiny can hold MPs accountable.
- Youth participation and informed citizens can help ensure productive sessions.

Disruptions weaken Parliament's role as the "voice of the people," but active citizen engagement and responsible leadership can restore trust and strengthen democracy.

9. Can you create 'interest' groups among students and list questions related to any policy that you may want to ask your MP and / or your MLA? How would these questions be different if it is to the MP instead of the MLA, and vice versa?

Answer: Hypothetical student interest groups can focus on the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 and prepare questions for MPs and MLAs. The questions differ according to their roles at the Union and State levels.

Student Interest Groups

- **Education Access Group** – Ensuring every child, especially in rural or marginalised areas, gets free education.
- **School Infrastructure Group** – Demanding better classrooms, libraries, and digital tools.

- **Teacher Training Group** – Improving teacher quality and training for better learning outcomes.

Questions for MPs (Lok Sabha / Rajya Sabha) – Union Level

- **Education Access Group:** How is the central government ensuring free education (6–14 years) in remote areas, as per Article 21A?
- **School Infrastructure Group:** What steps are being taken to increase central funding for school buildings, books, and facilities?
- **Teacher Training Group:** How will the Ministry of Education standardise teacher training across India to meet RTE goals?
- **General:** Are there plans to extend RTE to cover secondary education?

Questions for MLAs (Vidhan Sabha) – State Level

- **Education Access Group:** What steps is our state taking to ensure no child is denied RTE benefits due to local issues?
- **School Infrastructure Group:** How are schools in our constituency being upgraded to meet RTE standards (books, uniforms, facilities)?
- **Teacher Training Group:** What state-specific programs are available to train teachers in our constituency?
- **General:** How is the state addressing dropout rates, especially among SC/ST students?

Differences in Questions

- **MPs (Union level):** Focus on national policies, funding, and law-making (Union & Concurrent List).
- **MLAs (State level):** Focus on local implementation, infrastructure, and teacher recruitment (State List).
- **Overlap:** Since education is on the Concurrent List, both MPs and MLAs share responsibility — MPs make policy and allocate funds, MLAs ensure execution at the ground level.

Implementation Idea (Classroom Activity):– Form groups of 4–5 students per interest area. Use class discussions to refine questions, then submit them via letters or digital platforms (e.g., mygov.in) to MPs/MLAs. Encourage emphasis on public participation to engage with representatives effectively.

10. What is the role that the Judiciary plays in Indian democracy? What could happen if we didn't have an independent judiciary?

Answer:

- The Judiciary is the guardian of the Constitution and ensures that laws and government actions are fair and just.
- It protects Fundamental Rights of citizens.
- It checks the powers of the Legislature and the Executive through judicial review.
- It settles disputes between citizens, states, and the Union.
- By being independent, it remains free from political pressure and ensures justice for all.

If there were no independent judiciary:

- The government could misuse power without any check.
- Citizens' rights could be violated with no protection.
- Unfair laws could not be challenged.
- Democracy could weaken, and there would be a danger of dictatorship.