

## RAJYA SABHA

### **STATISTICAL INFORMATION PERTAINING TO THE 218<sup>TH</sup> SESSION [19-11-2009 TO 22-12-2009 ]**

1. The 218<sup>th</sup> Session commenced on Thursday, the 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2009. The Session, which was scheduled to be adjourned *sine-die* on the 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2009, comes to an end today, the 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2009.
2. The Session had 23 sittings in all and the House sat for more than 100 hours. During the Session, more than 13 hours were lost on the issues like (a) sugarcane pricing; (b) leakage of Reports of the Liberhan Ayodhya Commission of Inquiry & National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities headed by Justice Ranganath Mishra; (c) massive fraud and scam in the State of Jharkhand; (d) visit of Central team to West Bengal, and (e) price rise. On five days, *i.e.* 20<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2009 and 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2009, the Question Hour could not take place. The House, however, made up this loss by skipping lunch recess and sitting late for more than 14 Hours to complete legislative and other important business.
3. Three new Members, one (Shri P. Kannan) elected in the Biennial election to the Rajya Sabha from the Union Territory of Puducherry and two nominated Members, *namely* Shri H. K. Dua and Dr. Ashok S. Ganguly, joined the House during the Session.
4. The House was informed by the Chair about the vacancies caused due to the resignations of Dr. C. Rangarajan, a nominated Member and Shri Ajay Singh Chautala and Shri Su. Thirunavukkarasar, Members representing the States of Haryana and Madhya Pradesh respectively.
5. During the Session, the House condoled the death of Dr. Y.S. Rajasekara Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Pyarelal Khandelwal, Shri Mahendra Sahni and Shri Suryakantbhai Acharya, sitting Members and one former Member of the Rajya Sabha, *namely*, Shri Parvathaneni Upendra.
6. References to (a) the First Anniversary of the Terrorist Attack in Mumbai on the 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2008; (b) the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Bhopal Gas tragedy; and (c) the 8<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the terrorist attack on the Parliament building were made by the Chair.
7. There were 10 *suo motu* Statements by Ministers which were either made or laid. These Statements related to (a) Issue of leakage of the Liberhan Commission Report in the Media and Press; (b) Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission - Solar India; (c) Incident of fire at POL Depot of the Indian Oil Corporation Limited at Sanganer, Jaipur; (d) Bomb blasts, which took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2009, in Nalbari District of Assam; (e) Issue of radioactive contamination of drinking water at Kaiga Atomic Power Station; (f) Visit of the Prime Minister to the United States of America; (g) Recent developments in Northern Sri Lanka; (h) Successful decoding of the human genome by Indian Scientists; (i) Prime Ministers' recent visit to Russia; and (j)

- Deliberation and results of COP-15 UNFCCC held at Copenhagen on December 18, 2009. These statements provided opportunities to Members to seek further clarifications. 9 Statements were also laid in pursuance of the Direction of the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, dated the 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2004 on the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the Reports of various Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees.
8. The following five matters of Urgent Public Importance were discussed in the form of a Calling Attention during the Session:-
    - (i) Government's changing position on Climate Change;
    - (ii) Preparations for Commonwealth Games 2010;
    - (iii) Disinvestment of profit making Central Public Sector Enterprises;
    - (iv) Present status of the WTO negotiations; and
    - (v) Progress of relief to the victims of 1984 riots and the measures being taken to punish the guilty.
  9. The following issues were discussed at length for more than 20 hours in the form of Short Duration Discussions:-
    - (i) Situation arising out of threat to the internal security of the country;
    - (ii) Achievements and problems of Women Self-help Groups in the country comprising mainly poor rural women;
    - (iii) Situation arising out of continued rise in prices of essential commodities in the country; and
    - (iv) Liberhan Commission Report and trial of Babri Masjid case.
  10. There were 129 Special Mentions on Matters of Public Importance.
  11. One Government Bill was introduced and 3 Government Bills were listed for withdrawal, out of which one Bill, *namely* the Lotteries (Prohibition) Bill, 1999, was opposed and, therefore, deferred. 17 Government Bills were passed/returned during the Session. (a) The Representation of the People (Second Amendment) Bill; (b) The Legal Metrology Bill; (c) The Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Bill; (d) The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill; (e) The Appropriation Bills relating to Supplementary Demands for Grants (General and Railways) & for the State of Jharkhand; (f) The Essential Commodities (Amendment and Validation) Bill; (g) The Competition (Amendment) Bill; (h) The National Rural Employment Guarantee (Amendment) Bill; (i) The NCT Of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second Amendment Bill; (j) The Rubber (Amendment) Bill; (k) The Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill; (l) The Civil Defence (Amendment) Bill, 2009; and (m) The Salaries and Allowances of Ministers (Amendment) Bill, 2009 were the notable legislation which the House passed/returned during the Session.
  12. A Motion for reference of the Commercial Division of High Courts Bill, 2009 to the Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha was adopted.
  13. A Resolution regarding the constitution of the Railway Convention Committee was also adopted.

14. During the Session, 24 Private Members' Bills were introduced. The issues regarding need to (a) amend articles 85 and 174 of the Constitution and (b) amend the Constitution (Schedule Caste) Order were discussed at length through Private Member' Bills.
15. The following issues were also discussed through Private Members' Resolutions:-
  - (a) the relationship of the Legislature, Judiciary and Executive;
  - (b) need to prepare an action plan for an all round development of the State of Sikkim; and
  - (c) need to enhance the role of Parliamentary Sovereignty in the sphere of international treaties, entered into by the Government of India.
16. During the Session, 107 Reports/Statements of various Parliamentary Committees, including those of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees, were presented or laid on the Table of the House.
17. The House agreed with the recommendations dealing with the Questions of absent Members and Listing of Starred Questions in the name of balloted MP only, contained in the 12<sup>th</sup> Report of the Committee on Rules, presented to Rajya Sabha on the 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2009.
18. 66 important matters, with the permission of Hon'ble Chairman, were raised by Members during the Session.
19. Out of 459 Starred Questions, 85 Questions were orally answered and answers to remaining Starred Questions were laid on the Table along with the answers of 3536 Unstarred Questions.
20. Report of the Liberhan Ayodhya Commission of Inquiry, Report of the National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities and White Paper and Vision 2020 on Indian Railways were some of the important documents which were laid on the Table during the Session.
21. The first Phase of the Project on Digitization of Verbatim Debates of Rajya Sabha was launched by the Hon'ble Chairman on the 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2009.

**Highlights of work transacted during the 218<sup>th</sup> Session – At a glance**

<b>Sittings</b>	
Date of issue of Summons	30-10-2009
Duration of the Session	19-11-2009 to 22-12-2009
Number of actual days of sitting	23
Actual Hours of sittings ( <i>excluding recess intervals</i> )	100 + Hrs.
Time lost due to interruptions/adjournments	13 + Hrs.
Time made up by late sittings/skipping lunch recess	14 + Hrs.
Date of prorogation of Session	27-12-2009
<b>Questions</b>	
No. of Starred Questions listed	459
No. of Starred Questions answered orally	85
No. of Unstarred Questions answered	3536
<b>Government Bills</b>	
No. of Bills introduced	1
No. of Bills withdrawn	2
No. of Bills passed/returned	17
No. of Bills referred to Select Committee	1
<b>Private Members' Business</b>	
No. of Bills introduced	24
No. of Bills part discussed (Under consideration)	1
No. of Bills withdrawn/negated	1
No. of Resolution part discussed	1
No. of Resolution withdrawn/negated	2
<b>Oath/Affirmation</b>	
No. of Members made and subscribed oath/affirmation	3
<b>Statements by Ministers</b>	
No. of <i>suo motu</i> Statements made/laid by Ministers	10
<b>Matters of public importance raised</b>	
No. of Calling Attentions	5
No. of Short Duration Discussions	4
No. of Special Mentions	129
No. of Matters raised with permission	66
<b>Papers Laid on the Table</b>	2141 papers