

F.No.5/43/2016-Admn.
Government of India
Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs

86-B, Parliament House
New Delhi- 110001

Dated: 15.02.2021

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Documentation of CoVID-19 response-reg.

The undersigned is directed to refer to National Disaster management Authority's D.O. No. 1-137/2020-Mit-II dated 21.01.2021 on the above subject and to state that response action of the Ministry towards COVID-19 pandemic is attached as **Annexure**.



(S.S.Bar)

Director to the Govt. of India
Tele No. 011 – 23034844

National Disaster Management Authority,
[Sh. G.V.V. Sharam, Member Secretary]
NDMA Bhawan, A-1, Safdarjung Enclave,

Copy to :- Sh. S.K. Sinha, Sr. Tech. Director for uploading on website of the Ministry.

Annexure**Government of India
Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs**

Developing knowledge management framework for integration of good practices and innovative approaches undertaken by Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs provides critical interface between the Government and the Parliament. The Ministry, though small in size, handles a large gamut of activities ranging from managing Legislative and Financial business of the Government, Parliamentary assurances, and Consultative Committees to welfare of Members of Parliament and organizing Youth Parliament Competitions. Work regarding Summoning and Prorogation of Parliament has also been assigned to this Ministry. Amidst Covid 19 pandemic this function was performed by this Ministry in close coordination with Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Secretariats under extraordinary circumstances by making some special arrangements.

Article 85(1) of the Constitution empowers the President to summon each House of Parliament to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit, but six months shall not intervene between its last sitting in one Session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next Session.

To meet this Constitutional requirement and for transacting essential legislative and other Business in the national interest, the Monsoon Session 2020 of Parliament was convened from 14th September, 2020 to 1st October, 2020 by making extra-ordinary arrangements while strictly adhering to the guidelines of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Home Affairs with regard to Covid 19 pandemic.

The timings and seating arrangements of both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha were altered to follow proper social distancing norms. Lok Sabha used Lok Sabha Chamber, Lok Sabha Public Gallery, Rajya Sabha Chamber and Rajya Sabha Public Gallery for its sittings while Rajya Sabha used Rajya Sabha Chamber, Rajya Sabha Public Gallery and Lok Sabha Chamber for its sittings.

As regards timings of the session, Lok Sabha sat from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. (with extended time, if required) daily except on 14th September, 2020 when they sat from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Rajya Sabha had its meetings from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (with extended time, if required) daily except on 14th September, 2020 when they met from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Monsoon Session, 2020 was scheduled to culminate on 1st October, 2020.

I/15295/2021

However, in view of COVID-19 pandemic risks, after some members tested Corona positive and with the sad demise of a Minister of State and some members, after transaction of essential business in a time bound manner, the session was curtailed and adjourned sine-die on 23rd September, 2020 with the consensus of all political parties. The session yielded 10 sittings spread over 10 days.

Despite being curtailed to only 10 sittings, record numbers of Bills were passed during the Session, 22 Bills (16 in Lok Sabha and 06 in Rajya Sabha) were introduced. Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha individually passed 25 Bills each. 27 Bills were passed by both the Houses of Parliament which is the best ever rate of passage of Bills per day i.e. 2.7 Bills. The productivity of Lok Sabha was approx. 167% and that of Rajya Sabha was approx. 100.47%.

Besides other Legislations, the Session also facilitated the enactment of following Bills to replace the Ordinances, which were promulgated during the inter-session period to mitigate the effects arising out of Covid-19 pandemic, by Acts of Parliament:-

- a. The Salary, Allowance and Pensions of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to reduce the salary payable to Members of Parliament by 30% for a period of one year commencing 01.04.2020.
- b. The Salaries and Allowances of Ministers (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to reduce the sumptuary allowance payable to each Minister by thirty per cent. for a period of one year commencing from the 1.4.2020.
- c. The Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to curb unprecedented acts of violence, including physical and mental harassment and damage to property during COVID-19 pandemic, and provides protection to healthcare service personnel.
- d. The Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2020 to temporarily suspend initiation of corporate insolvency resolution process under the Code, initially for a period of six months or such further period, not exceeding one year from 25th March, 2020, to provide relief to companies affected by COVID-19 to recover from the financial stress without facing immediate threat of being pushed to insolvency proceedings.

The preparatory meetings undertaken under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Secretary, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs with all stakeholders including Legislative Secretary and Secretaries/senior officers of all Ministries/Departments in connection with the Monsoon Session, 2020 of Parliament were held through virtual mode.

Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs coordinated and actively helped Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Secretariats in making the following special arrangements for the facilitation of the session:-

1. Question Hour and Private Members Business were dispensed with.
2. Only Unstarred Questions were allowed to be asked.
3. Laying of all Government Documents was undertaken by Minister of Parliamentary Affairs/Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs in both Houses.
4. Seating arrangements were made in the House for Members following social distancing norms.
5. Polycarbonate sheets were fixed on the seats of the Houses.
6. All documents were delivered digitally to Members.
7. Limited officers were allowed to sit on tables of the Houses and in the official galleries etc.

I/15295/2021

8. Public was not allowed to witness proceedings as these galleries were also used for members to maintain social distancing norms.
9. Special arrangements were made for medical facilities including RT- PCR/ antigen tests for MPs and officials of all agencies engaged in the conduct of Parliament session.
10. All MPs and officers allowed in the premises only on production of negative report of RT- PCR test.
11. Only two personal staff members of the ministers were allowed entry into Parliament House. PA/PS of MPs were not allowed entry in Parliament House. Only one fourth staff of political parties having offices in Parliament House were allowed entry.
12. Entry to Central Hall was restricted to only those members of Parliaments who were attending respective House at a particular time.
13. Both RSTV and LSTV provided direct feed of the proceedings of the Houses to each other.
14. Audio feed of both the Houses was integrated and interpretation done in one chamber was available to both Chamber.
15. Divisions/ voting was allowed only through voice vote and distribution of Slips.
16. A request was conveyed to Presiding Officers of both the Houses for relaxing the requirement of two day's advance circulation of copies of Bill Passed by one House and to be listed in the second House when there were no amendment in the Bill in the first House and copies of Bill as introduced had already been circulated to the Members.
17. Members were requested to come to Parliament just to attend proceeding of their respective House only.
18. Members were requested to leave the House and premise of the Parliament after completion of proceedings of his/her House. Minimal use of Central Hall by the Members was requested.
19. Government took steps to maintain quorum at all times in both the Houses- Lok Sabha (55) and Rajya Sabha (25).
20. Permission of Lok Sabha was sought though a motion to use its chambers for sitting of Rajya Sabha also.
21. Members were allowed to lay their speeches during proceedings of the Houses if they so desired.
