

GS II

SYLLABUS: PARLIAMENT AND STATE LEGISLATURES—STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONING.

CHAIRMAN AND SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 6.

News: "A wide aisle."

Context: In a move that is unprecedented in India's parliamentary history, 60 Members of the Rajya Sabha have expressed a loss of confidence in the Chairman, who is also the Vice-President of India.

- **The Speaker must ensure the Lok Sabha's proceedings are uninterrupted.** To achieve this, **they must earn the trust of MPs** by being neutral in practice and perception.

Controversies with Office:

- **Perceived partisanship:** Speaker and Chairman often hail from political party in majority.
 - **Unlike Britain Parliament** speaker has no convention or compulsion to resign from the party membership.
- **Decision making powers:**
 - **Anti-defection cases:** Eg. Maharashtra Assembly 2019-20.
 - **Classification of bills as Money bill** e.g. Recent PMLA 2022 amendments done through money bill route, Aadhar as money bill in 2016.
- **Functioning related issues of house:**
 - **Admission of critical motions:** Eg. censure motion and no-confidence motion against the government.
 - **Allocation of time for discussion:** on important issues to the opposition members.
 - **Delay in key issues:** like recognition of Leader of Opposition after 2014 general elections.
 - **Hastily applying "guillotine" provisions** to cut short debates on contentious issues.

Removal of Presiding Officers of Parliament:

Chairman:

- **Grounds for Removal:** **not mentioned in the Constitution.**
- **Art. 67(b):**
 - Vice President may be removed from his office by a resolution passed by a **majority of all the then members of the Rajyasabha.**
 - After being passed in Rajyasabha, **Approval of Loksabha** with all then members of it is needed.
 - **At least a 14-day notice** has been given of the intention to move the resolution.
 - Vice President cannot preside as Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, during discussions on removal.

Speaker:

- **Grounds for Removal:** **not mentioned in the Constitution.**
- **Art. 94 and 96:**
 - House can remove the Speaker through a resolution passed by an **effective majority** (more than 50% of the total majority of the house present and voting).
 - **At least a 14-day notice** has been given of the intention to move the resolution.
 - Speaker cannot preside sitting of the house, during discussions on removal.

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PYQs

GS II 2020: 'Once a Speaker, Always a Speaker'! Do you think this practice should be adopted to impart objectivity to

the office of the Speaker of Lok Sabha? What could be its implications for the robust functioning of parliamentary business in India?

SPACE

PRE-CONTEXT

SPACE DEBRIS

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 20.

News: "Climate impact of exploring space passing below the radar."

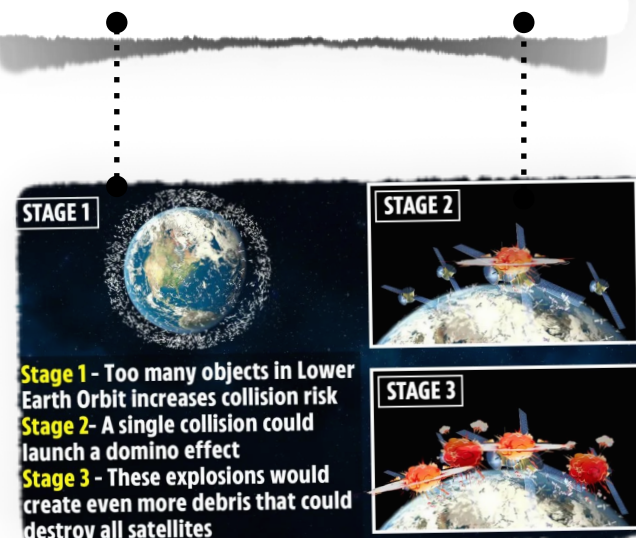
About Space Debris:

- **Orbital debris, or space junk, refers to defunct satellites, spent rocket stages, and pieces of satellites** produced when they break apart in low earth orbit (LEO).
- As of 2023, the **European Space Agency ESA tracks over 36,500 debris pieces larger than 10 cm** in orbit as of 2023. Hundreds of millions of smaller fragments (1 mm to 1 cm) pose significant risks despite being untracked.
- There is **no International agreement** to regulate space debris.

Consequences of Space Debris:

- **Kessler Syndrome hypothesises:** a tipping point where where debris collisions trigger more collisions, exponentially increasing debris density.
- **Service disruptions** Eg. Communication systems, weather forecasting etc.
- **Increased Collision Risks:** Debris traveling at velocities of **~7-8 km/s** can severely damage or destroy operational satellites.
- **Anti-Satellite (ASAT) Tests:** Intentional destruction of satellites by countries. Eg, India's ASAT test in 2019 and a Russia in 2021 generated hundreds of trackable pieces of debris.

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POLITY

PRE-CONTEXT

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 7.

News: "Chief Justices need longer tenures."

"Art. 124 & Art. 217 of Indian Constitution deal with the appointment of judges to higher judiciary."

Qualifications for Judge of the Supreme Court:

According to Constitution of India:

- A person must be a **citizen of India**.
- Have been a **High Court judge** for at least five years.
- Have been a **High Court advocate** for at least 10 years.
- Be considered a **distinguished jurist** by the President.

Collegium System:

- For **appointment and transfer of judges** in the higher judiciary in India.
- For **Supreme Court (SC) appointments**: collegium consists of **CJI plus 4 senior-most Supreme Court judges**.
- For **High Court appointments**: collegium consists of CJI plus 2 senior-most Supreme Court judges.
- CJI after consultation with collegium **recommends to President** for an appointment.
- Supreme Court Judges retire upon attaining the **age of 65 years**.

Evolution of Collegium:

- **1st judges case (1982)**: the word '**consultation**' only implies exchange of views.
- **2nd judges case (1993)**:
 - Word '**consultation**' = **concurrence**, advice by CJI (plus 2 judges) is binding on President.
 - If collegium reiterates, judicial appointments must be cleared (a healthy convention).
- **3rd Judges case: Collegium** (4 Judges + CJI).
- **99th CAA 2015: NJAC** (3 judicial members & 2 executive appointees): Declared Unconstitutional by SC.

Removal of Judges:

According to Judges Inquiry Act, 1968:

- A **removal motion** signed by 100 members (in case of Lok Sabha) or 50 members (in case of Rajya Sabha) is to be given to the Speaker/Chairman.
 - If the motion is admitted, then a **three-member committee** to investigate into the charges is constituted.
 - If the committee **finds the judge to be guilty of the charges (misbehaviour or incapacity)**, the House in which the motion was introduced, can take up the consideration of the motion.
- **Special majority**: Majority of total membership of the House & majority of not less than two thirds members present and voting.
- Once, the House in which **removal motion was introduced passes it with special majority, it goes to the second House which also has to pass it with a special majority**.
 - After the motion is passed, an address is presented to the President for removal of the judge.
- The **President** then passes an order removing the judge.

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TECHNOLOGY

PRE-CONTEXT

MALARIA

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 12.

News: "India accounts for half of malaria cases in Southeast Asia in 2023"

About Malaria:

Caused by:

- **Parasites:** *Plasmodium falciparum*, P. vivax, P. ovale, P. malaria.
- **Vector:** parasite infected **female Anopheles mosquitoes**.
 - These mosquitoes typically breed in clean, stagnant water bodies.

Common Symptoms:

High fever with chills, headache, sweating, nausea, and vomiting.

Epidemiology:

- Sub-Saharan Africa, South and South East Asia.
- **India:** parts of the **North-East, Central, and Eastern regions** of the country.

India's Initiatives:

- National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme.
- National Framework for Malaria Elimination 2016–2030.
- National Strategic Plan (NSP) for Malaria Elimination 2017–2022.

Malaria related developments:

- **RTS,S (Mosquirix) vaccine** has been piloted in certain African countries.
- **Genetic modification of mosquitoes** that slow the growth of malaria-causing parasites in the gut thereby preventing transmission of malaria to humans.
- **Genetic modification of parasites** causing malaria.

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MODERN HISTORY

PRE-CONTEXT

VAIKOM SATYAGRAHA (KERALA)

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 6.

News: "Vaikom – two States, two leaders and a tale of reform."

About Vaikom Satyagraha:

- Vaikom Satyagraha was a nonviolent protest **against caste discrimination** that took place from 1924 to 1925 in the Kingdom of Travancore (present-day Kerala)
- **Primary motive:** Temple entry rights and access to public roads for lower castes.
- **Key Leaders:** K. Kelappan, T. K. Madhavan, support from E. V. Ramasamy.
- **Mahatma Gandhi** supported the movement unconditionally and **visited Vaikom in 1925**.
- Satyagraha led **Maharaja of Travancore in 1936**, which allowed lower castes to enter Hindu temples in the princely state.

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GS II & ESSAY

SYLLABUS: GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND INTERVENTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT.

ONE NATION ONE SUBSCRIPTION

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "Has the government clarified its stance on ONOS?"

Context: India, with its immense pool of talent and resources, has the potential to reimagine this publishing ecosystem, fostering innovation in the workflow. establishing India as a leader in science and innovation.

About One Nation One Subscription (ONOS):

- ONOS promises to **provide equitable access to scholarly journals in all public institutions.**
- **Delivers scientific knowledge, as a public good** making ideally accessible to all.
- **To combat misinformation** and drive informed decision-making.

Differences:

- **Funding:**
 - **Commercial Publishing (CP):** Publishers generate revenue through direct sales of publications or subscriptions from individual buyers or institutions.
 - **ONOS:** **Govt. funds the scheme** through a centralised budget allocation.
- **Access:**
 - **CP:** Access to publications is based on individual or institutional subscriptions.
 - **ONOS:** promises to provide equitable access to scholarly journals in all public institutions.
- **Pricing:**
 - **CP:** Prices for publications and subscriptions are determined by market forces and publisher's costs.
 - **ONOS:** **A single, negotiated price** is set for all participating institutions.

Challenges with Commercial Publishing:

- **Challenges of Commercial Publishing:** Excessive subscription fees, inefficiencies, and resistance to innovation.
- **Publishers charging high fees** for access to work already supported by public institutions.
- **Only a few disciplines have fully transitioned to Open Access journals (called gold OA):** **Eg. Such as biological science.**
- **To tackle risks of reliance on western publishers** **Eg. lessons from COVID 19.**
- **Copyright Concerns:** Researchers lose control over their work as publishers hold the copyright **Eg. Taylor & Francis (T&F) and Microsoft controversy** over AI training.

Issues with ONOS:

- **Open Access Publishing Trend:** with over 53% of scientific papers being available for open access.
- **Subscription model raises questions:** about financial prudence, especially with free research articles available.
- **U.S. and EU mandates for publicly funded research to be freely accessible** by 2026 and 2027, respectively, further complicate the subscription model's viability.
- **By 2025, a substantial portion of research will be freely accessible online,** raising questions about ONOS's relevance beyond 2025.