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by

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on

**“Innovations in Parliamentary Procedure and Administration: Recent Developments
and Digital Transformation in Legislatures”**

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Innovations in parliamentary procedure and administration are essential for ensuring that legislatures remain effective, relevant and responsive in a rapidly changing society. The Indian Parliament has consistently remained open to embracing new ideas and innovations aimed at enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness.

Today, Legislatures across the world are at a critical point of transition, where time-honoured institutional practices are increasingly intersecting with the transformative potential of digital technologies. For Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of the Indian Parliament, digital transformation is not merely about adopting new tools, but about reimagining our procedural and administrative core to enhance transparency, inclusivity and efficiency.

Under the overarching vision of ‘Digital Sansad’ (Digital Parliament), this technological transition is defined by a shift from simple digitization to a dynamic and real-time legislative environment. Today Rajya Sabha is navigating this journey through a unified and an AI-powered ecosystem that serves as a bridge between the Parliament and the citizens, bridging linguistic divides, automating its administrative apparatus and empowering its human capital to lead this technological evolution.

The digitalization of the Rajya Sabha has evolved over a period of two decades into a sophisticated and unified digital ecosystem. What were once stand alone applications have now been consolidated into an integrated platform which facilitates a seamless experience for three key stakeholders - Members who have gained a secure gateway to all parliamentary services, the Secretariat which achieves greater operational efficiency and citizens who gain from enhanced transparency and accessibility to legislative data. This transformation marks a clear shift from digitization of archived records to a truly cohesive digital legislature.

This digital architecture has brought about a sea change in the manner in which Members of Parliament participate in the parliamentary processes. They can now submit notices for making use of various parliamentary devices such as

Questions, Zero Hour Submissions, Special Mentions and Calling Attention Motions through secure online channels by using a dedicated Members' Portal. This digital interface between the Members and the Secretariat has reduced the reliance over submission of physical papers to a very large extent thereby contributing in making the processes paperless considerably.

The technology stack underpinning this transformation is modern, scalable and designed for institutional longevity. The entire digital architecture is hosted on sovereign cloud platforms within India's National Informatics Centre network, ensuring data sovereignty, security and compliance with governmental norms. Robust data redundancy and connectivity infrastructure ensure that the digital architecture of the Parliament remains resilient to cyber attacks and functions in an unfettered manner.

The breadth of workflows touched by this digital transformation underscores its transformative potential. Among the areas being strengthened are: ease of participation; faster and streamlined processing of Notices; greater transparency in Business Scheduling; and real time monitoring through live Dashboards that give Presiding Officers and the Secretariat an at-a-glance view of the House proceedings, pending business and compliance indicators. The system also enables data-driven analysis of Members' participation and improves the follow-up with the executive by tracking digitally the replies of the Ministries to Parliamentary Questions, Action Taken Reports of the Committees, etc.

As part of the digital transformation, some of the initiatives/innovations undertaken in Rajya Sabha may be enumerated as follows:

- a. The Memorandum of Business, which guides the Presiding Officer in conducting the proceedings of the House, has been fully digitized to allow real-time updates and seamless access to critical procedural information.
- b. Lists of permitted notices for Zero Hour Submissions and Special Mentions are now uploaded on Multi Media Devices for easy reference by Members.
- c. The traditional system of recording proceedings has been transformed through the implementation of an e-Minutes application, which is integrated with core modules such as List of Business, Memorandum of Business and List of Speakers. This application, part of the Parliamentary Devices Processing System framework, enables precise and real-time recording of minute-to-minute proceedings of the Rajya Sabha. E-Minutes is a faster, more efficient and user-friendly application which ensures better accuracy and easy retrieval of information.

- d. Similarly, an e-Ballot system has been implemented for selecting notices related to Private Members' Resolutions and Zero Hour Submissions for a particular day.
- e. A dedicated software application has also been developed for the dynamic preparation and real-time updating of the List of Speakers, ensuring smoother conduct of debates in the House.
- f. A digital platform has been introduced for the preparation and publication of agendas and documents of the Business Advisory Committee streamlining internal workflows and improving accessibility while reducing dependence on physical documentation.
- g. The preparation of Parliamentary Bulletin Part-II has been significantly modernized through a CMS-based application, enabling user Sections/Branches to directly upload approved content with secure login credentials. The system provides a preview facility and allows prioritization, thereby eliminating manual compilation, minimizing errors and ensuring faster and more efficient dissemination of information.
- h. The Committee Meeting Admin App and Committee Management Information System have facilitated the transition of Committee meetings to an entirely digital format, where everything from the issuance of notices and agenda papers to the provision of meeting documents and the conduct of proceedings is managed through electronic mode.

Comprehensive Digital Transformation Initiative

Building upon this foundation, Rajya Sabha Secretariat has embarked upon a major digital transformation through '**Sampoorna Digital Sansad**' (Comprehensive Digital Parliament) project. This initiative aims to carry out a total and comprehensive revamp of the entire IT landscape of the Rajya Sabha and its Secretariat by leveraging technology to the maximum extent possible with a multi-pronged strategy. The project is a unified AI-based self-service portal designed to streamline operations. It incorporates automated ticket generation to address routine queries from MPs and the Secretariat, thereby freeing personnel to focus on complex legislative tasks. Overall, this platform seeks to enhance operational efficiency and to ensure seamless access to parliamentary services.

Harnessing AI and Machine Learning: Language, Transcription, and Beyond

To address India's vast linguistic diversity, the Indian Parliament is leveraging Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to bridge the gap between parliamentary proceedings and the public. By integrating advanced translation and transcription tools, the House is moving towards real-time accessibility of debates and documents in various languages included in the 8th Schedule to the Constitution of India, transforming a long-standing operational challenge into a parliamentary asset. This initiative ensures that Members' contributions are available to their constituents in their native language reinforcing the principle that linguistic inclusivity is a foundational pillar of an inclusive democracy.

In addition to the existing Simultaneous Interpretation Service, which provides simultaneous interpretation in all 22 languages included in the 8th Schedule to the Constitution of India, an **advanced AI-driven voice-to-voice translation technology** is being tested in collaboration with BHASHINI – India's national language translation mission. This initiative aims to enable real-time multilingual communication, combining indigenous innovation with global best practices to meet the diverse linguistic demands of India's parliamentary ecosystem.

As a significant push towards inclusive and technology-enabled governance, the Secretariat has also begun using artificial intelligence for real-time translation of daily parliamentary documents into various regional languages. At present, this facility is available in 10 major Indian languages included in the 8th Schedule to the Constitution of India.

Further, an **AI-Based Chatbot** is being developed to serve as a virtual parliamentary secretary, assisting Members of Parliament in navigating rules of procedure, tracking proceedings, monitoring questions and accessing legislative documents. This tool is expected to significantly enhance member support and operational efficiency, enabling Members to focus on their legislative responsibilities.

An **AI-powered video library** is also being developed to generate transcripts and offer context-based search capabilities for decades of parliamentary debates.

Digital Transformation of Personnel Management

Rajya Sabha Secretariat has overhauled comprehensively its administrative framework by transitioning to a paperless ecosystem, supported by the Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW) portal for the end-to-end digital processing of Annual Performance Appraisal Reports. Complementing this is the extensive use of e-Office for file movement; the large scale digitization of lakhs of physical files and papers; and the use of the Aadhaar Enabled Biometric Attendance System for real-time, tamper-proof attendance marking by the employees. By integrating specialized internal software like Personnel and Administration Management System for personnel records, electronic Immovable Property Returns and cloud-based analytical tools, the Secretariat has ushered in a more efficient personnel management defined by rapid data retrieval, resource economy and administrative transparency.

Capacity Building for a Digital Secretariat

Under the Sampurna Digital Sansad i.e. Comprehensive Digital Parliament initiative, the Rajya Sabha Secretariat is prioritizing the human dimension of technological transition through its Digital Training Programme for its employees. This programme aims to sharpen the digital proficiency and productivity of Secretariat officials and ensure a seamless shift towards technology-enabled administrative processes. Till date, the initiative has made significant strides towards its goal of training approximately 700 staff members, with 438 officials already benefiting from 17 successfully conducted cohorts of training. This focus on upskilling ensures that the legislative infrastructure is supported by a workforce capable of maintaining a high-performance and digital-first parliamentary environment.

Conclusion

Rajya Sabha's digital transformation represents far more than an institutional upgrade. It is a purposeful reimagining of how a legislature can serve its people in the 21st century. Through integrated digital platforms, AI-powered multilingual tools and modernized administrative systems, we have built an institution that is much faster, more transparent and more efficient. Collectively, these efforts signal a shift from mere procedural efficiency to purposeful governance reflecting our enduring commitment to a Parliament that is transparent, responsive and resilient and one that honours the trust of 1.4 billion citizens while standing confidently alongside the world's most forward-looking legislatures.