Polity & Governance · GS - II

The Indian Constitution has provisions for holding joint session of the two houses of the Parliament. Enumerate the occasions when this would normally happen and also the occasions when it cannot, with reasons thereof.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Article 108; legislative deadlock; joint sitting; Money Bills; Constitutional Amendment Bills; parliamentary procedure

Model Answer

Introduction

Article 108 of the Constitution provides for a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament to resolve certain legislative deadlocks. It seeks to prevent prolonged disagreement between the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

When a Joint Sitting May Be Called

The President may summon a joint sitting when:

- One House rejects a Bill passed by the other House.
- The Houses finally disagree on amendments to a Bill.
- More than six months elapse without the other House passing a Bill, excluding periods specified by the Constitution.

The presiding officer is normally the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, followed by the Deputy Speaker or the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, as applicable.

When a Joint Sitting Cannot Be Held

- **Money Bills:** Under Article 109, the Rajya Sabha can only make recommendations on a Money Bill, which the Lok Sabha may accept or reject. A joint sitting is unnecessary.
- **Constitutional Amendment Bills:** Article 368 requires each House to pass the Bill separately with a special majority. A joint sitting cannot overcome failure to secure that majority in either House.
- **Dissolution of the Lok Sabha:** A joint sitting cannot be convened if the relevant Bill has lapsed due to dissolution, subject to constitutional provisions governing pending Bills and the President's notice.

Reasons

These exceptions preserve the special financial authority of the Lok Sabha and the separate constitutional consent required from both Houses for constitutional amendments.

Conclusion

Joint sittings provide a mechanism for resolving ordinary legislative deadlocks while respecting the distinct constitutional roles of the two Houses.

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