



Expunging in Parliament

For Prelims: Unparliamentary Words, Expunging, Article 105(2) of Constitution.

For Mains: Rules on Expunging, Procedure Related to Expunging.

Why in News?

A portion of a speech delivered by the opposition leader in the Lok Sabha on **February 7th, 2023** were **expunged from the records of Parliament** by the Speaker's orders.

- The **decision of what parts of a speech** are to be expunged lies with the **Presiding Officer of the House**.

What are the Rules on Expunging from the Record?

- Under **Article 105(2)** of the [Indian Constitution](#) , [Members of Parliament](#) enjoy immunity from court proceedings for their statements in Parliament.
 - **However, their speeches are subject to the discipline of the Rules of Parliament**, the "good sense" of its Members, and the **control of proceedings by the Speaker**.
- Rule 380 of the [Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha](#) gives the **Speaker the discretion to expunge any words or expressions** used in debate that are considered **defamatory, indecent, unparliamentary, or undignified**.

What are Unparliamentary Expressions?

- The **Lok Sabha Secretariat** has brought out a **bulky volume of 'Unparliamentary Expressions'**.
 - This book contains words or expressions that would likely be **considered rude or offensive in most cultures**. But it also contains content that would appear to be **fairly harmless and innocuous**.
- The Presiding Officers - **Speaker of Lok Sabha** and [Chairperson of Rajya Sabha](#) have the job of keeping such words out of Parliament's records.

How is the Decision to Expunge a Word (or portion of a speech) Taken?

- The decision to expunge a word or portion of a speech is taken by the Speaker under Rule 380, based on a **recommendation from the head of the reporting section**, taking into account the **context in which the word or sentence was used**.
- The **context is key in making the decision to expunge a remark**. The focus is on removing the minimum number of words.
 - Rule 381 says: The portion of the proceedings of the House so expunged **shall be marked**

by asterisks and an explanatory footnote shall be inserted in the proceedings as follows: **'Expunged as ordered by the Chair'**.

- The **expunged portions cease to exist in the records of Parliament and cannot be reported by media houses**, although they may have been heard during the live telecast of the proceedings.
- However, the **proliferation of social media** has introduced **challenges in implementing expunction orders**.

[Source: IE](#)

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