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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Parliament Budget Session

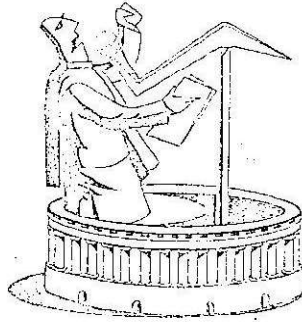
ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Times of India ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE 9/3/2024

## Give It A Chance

*If followed well, parliamentary process  
can improve quality of legislation*

The second half of Parliament's budget session began yesterday. The priority will be to complete unfinished tasks related to the Budget and to give effect to government proposals. In addition, the government indicated it has an ambitious legislative agenda and plans to introduce bills covering a wide spectrum of subjects. The current session is taking place in the backdrop of farmers persisting with their agitation against the three central farm laws, which were passed amidst controversy last September.

The events leading to the passage of the laws and their fallout highlight the importance of parliamentary debate. Parliament represents diverse interests and ideally legislation that goes through its scrutiny should cover all angles. The process lowers the probability of poorly designed laws and also provides an outlet for counterviews. It's a safety valve meant to avoid a situation such as the one where the government offered to negotiate clauses of



the farm laws and even temporarily suspend its operation during negotiations with representatives of agitating farmers. It's the duty of elected representatives to scrutinise legislation in detail and seek explanations from the bureaucracy. Parliamentary standing committees carry out this function all the time.

In the current session, government plans to table important economic legislation. Among them is a bill to establish a new development financial institution. Also on the agenda is a bill to regulate cryptoassets and introduce official digital currency. Getting the design right and anticipating consequences are essential if these legislations are to have an impact. These bills deserve an informed debate in Parliament and a thorough scrutiny through a parliamentary committee. Introducing laws in haste can not only undermine good intentions, it can also mask the extent of support they may draw from the silent majority. Only Parliament can offset these risks.

The government needs to take the initiative and reach out to the opposition. Opposition too must recognise the dignity of the institution of Parliament. The country benefits if Parliament functions smoothly and an opportunity is provided for meaningful debate. In this context, the idea of truncating the current session on account of elections to five assemblies makes no sense. The Parliament represents a much wider base than the states and Union territory headed for elections. It should continue to function and people deserve a full session. India's Parliament can do wonders if parliamentarians give it a chance.