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45 RS members take oath

36 are first-timers to the Upper House

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Forty-five of the 61 newly elected members took oath on Wednesday, and for the first time, the ceremony was held inside the Rajya Sabha hall when Parliament is not in session. Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu urged the new members "not to fall prey to the temptation of disrupting the proceedings of the House for short-term gains".

The BJP now stands at 85 members, more than double of the Congress, which is down to 40. Hence, the Rajya Sabha is no longer a roadblock to any legislation proposed by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government.

A little before the oath-taking ce-

emony commenced, BJP MP Jyotiraditya Scindia walked across the aisle to greet members from his former party, including Congress MP Digvijaya Singh.

Mr. Scindia won't be the only former Congress MP to be sitting in treasury benches after joining the BJP. He will be accompanied by the former chief whip of the Congress in Rajya Sabha, Bhubaneshwar Kalita, who recently joined the BJP.

Out of the 45 who took oath, 36 members were first-timers to the Upper House, and 12 members have been re-elected, including NCP leader Sharad Pawar, Congress leader Digvijaya Singh, and Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and Janata Dal-United leader Harivansh Narayan Singh.