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Monsoon session from Sept. 14

Parliament will have 18 sittings; protective measures in place amid pandemic

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The monsoon session of Parliament is likely to be held from September 14 to October 1. The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs, headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, has finalised these dates.

There will be 18 sittings and Parliament will meet with a host of protective measures in place to stick to physical distancing and other norms amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The budget session had ended abruptly on March 23 as the number of cases started spiralling.

Staggered sitting

As per the convention, Parliament has to meet within six months. This period was ending on September 23.

Arrangements are being



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made to have staggered sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. While both Houses usually function simultaneously, this time due to the extraordinary circumstances, one House will sit during the morning hours and the other in the evening, sources say.

According to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat, members of the Upper House will be

seated in both chambers and galleries during the session. Sixty Rajya Sabha members will be seated in the main hall, 51 in galleries barring the media gallery and the remaining 132 will participate in discussions while sitting in the Lok Sabha hall.

Similar seating arrangements are being worked out by the Lok Sabha Secretariat as well.

For the first time, large display screens and consoles for participation from galleries, ultraviolet germicidal irradiation, special cables between the two Houses and polycarbonate separators will be in place.

Politically also this session is expected to be a raucous one considering it is the first time Parliament is meeting amid the pandemic. Opposition parties have been protesting against the government for attempting to withhold GST payouts to States, limited financial support to State governments, large-scale job losses, among other things.

It is also the first meeting of Parliament since the June 15 face-off between the Indian and Chinese troops on the Line of Actual Control which killed 20 Indian Army personnel.