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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: parliamentary committee

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Deccan Herald ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE 8/12/2021

## Ensure 50% attendance: Naidu to House panels

SHEMIN JOY  
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Setting new targets for Parliamentary Standing Committees, Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu has asked heads of eight panels under the Upper House to take measures to ensure at least 50% attendance in meetings which should deliberate issues for at least two-and-half hours every time it meets.

Naidu wrote to Chairpersons of eight Standing Committees under

Rajya Sabha on February 12 with an analysis of the functioning of the committees since September 2017, after he became Rajya Sabha Chairman. Naidu emphasised the need for further improvement in attendance and duration "given the efforts and costs involved in holding meetings", sources said.

The analysis, shared with the panel chairpersons, showed that attendance has improved by 15% and meeting durations by around 16% since the reconstitution of committees in Sep-

tember 2019 over that of the previous two years. Though attendance has improved, the analysis showed, 54 meetings since September 2017 did not have requisite quorum and of this, 40% or 20 of them happened since September 2019. One of the reasons could be the MPs inability to reach Delhi during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Eight Standing Committees—home, transport, education, industry, commerce, personnel, science and technology and health—are under Rajya Sabha.