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Rajya Sabha sees highest productivity in 11 years

NEW DELHI, DHNS: ^{30/12/20} The outgoing year may have had just two sessions with no Winter Session of Rajya Sabha being held for the first time since 1984, but the Upper House created a sort of record in 2020 by clocking the highest annual productivity of 82.27% in the past 11 years despite having the lowest number of sittings.

Rajya Sabha held 33 sittings in all, with both the Budget Session (23 sittings) and the Monsoon Session (10) being impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic with each session losing eight sittings.

This is particularly important as the Upper House had the lowest number of sittings in a year.

Three other occasions when the Rajya Sabha met for less than 50 sittings in a year were 1999 (48 sittings) and in 2004 and 2008 (46 sittings each).

The pandemic led the government to do away with the Winter Session, which is usually held in November-December every year. This is the fourth time that the Rajya Sabha's Winter Ses-

sion is not happening, the last being in 1984 while the previous ones were in 1975 and 1979.

On the productivity side, 2020 was most productive since 2010. The productivity of Rajya Sabha during 2010-2020 ranged from 35.75% in 2018 to 78.42% in 2019 and 82.27 this year.

As the Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu had put it earlier, "the ship of Rajya Sabha sailing through stormy waters is being steadied".

The House spent a high of 57% of its time on legislative work during the monsoon session this year as against the general average of 28%.

A total of 39 Bills—12 during the Budget Session and 27 during the Monsoon Session—have been passed by the Rajya Sabha during 2020. The bills which cleared the Rajya Sabha hurdle included three Bills related to farm sector reforms, Direct Taxes Vivad Se Vishwas Bill, Bills amending salaries and allowances of Ministers and Members of Parliament.