

# RS PASSES TWO BILLS AMID STIR OVER ARREST OF SANJAY RAUT

Relevant for: Indian Polity | Topic: Parliament - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these

The Rajya Sabha on Monday passed the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill and the Indian Antarctic Bill amid disruptions over the arrest of Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut. The amendments moved by the Opposition members to both the Bills were defeated after a voice vote and Vice-Chairman Bhuvaneshwar Kalita did not allow the demand for a division on the ground that the Opposition members were protesting from the Well of the House.

The Opposition members accused the government of misusing probe agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

As soon as the House assembled at 11 a.m., Shiv Sena's Anil Desai trooped into the Well to protest against Mr. Raut's arrest. Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu denied an audience to the member and adjourned the House till noon. "That has nothing to do with the House. ... You are harming interest of others. You cannot use the House," Mr. Naidu said.

At 2 p.m., the House took up the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill and soon after that the Indian Antarctic Bill was also taken up. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said all members recognise that terrorism was a serious threat and so were weapons of mass destruction. He said amendments were necessitated as the current law covered only trading and not financing of weapons of mass destruction.

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