

# RS Chairman and LS Speaker discuss COVID and meetings of Parliamentary Committees

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Vice President of India and Chairman of Rajya Sabha Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu held a meeting with Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla at Upa-Rashtrapati Niwas and discussed the situation regarding COVID-19 disease in the country, role being played by Members of Parliament and the feasibility of holding meetings of Committees of Parliament.

Both the Presiding Officers noted with satisfaction that the Members of Parliament are actively engaged in the fight against corona virus besides initiating welfare measures and supporting various humanitarian initiatives being taken up by both the governments and civil society. They were happy to note that MPs are with the people whom they represent when they need them the most.

Shri Naidu and Shri Birla also discussed the issue of feasibility of various Committees of Parliament holding their meetings at the earliest in the prevailing situation and in the context of restrictions on travel across the country. They felt that if the situation does not allow regular conventional meetings of the Committees in the near future, alternative means of enabling such meetings may be explored.

Accordingly, they have directed the Secretaries General of both the Houses to examine in detail the pros and cons of Parliamentary Committees holding meetings by video conferencing by taking into considerations the present Rules of Business of both the Houses of Parliament, the practices and experiences of various countries in respect of such virtual meetings and the time required to enable secure technology platforms required for such mode of meetings. The report of the two top officials of Parliament will form the basis for a considered decision by both the Presiding Officers in the matter.

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VRRK/MS/MSY/RK

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