US SENATE

Senate is the upper house of the US congress. The units of the federation i.e states are given equal representation in the Senate. From every aspect, Senate is more powerful than the House of Representatives. In fact Senate is regarded as the most powerful second chamber in the world.

**Composition:** Each state has the right to send two representatives to the Senate. There being 50 states in America, Senate consisted of 100 members. Members are directly elected by the people.

**Qualifications 0f the Members:**

1. He must atleast be 30 years of age.
2. He must be citizen of America for the last 9 years.
3. He must be a resident of the states from which he is contesting the election
4. He must not hold any office of profit in the government.

Senate is a permanent house 1/3 of its members retire after every two years. Members are elected for the term of 6 years.

**The following are the main powers and functions of the Senate:-**

1. **Legislative Powers**: Ordinary bills can be introduced first in any of the two Houses but the approval of both houses is necessary for passing the bill.
2. **Financial Powers**- Although money bill is to be introduced first in the House of Representatives but Senate has equal power with the House of Representatives for passing the bill. Senate can make any change in the bill passed by the House of Representatives except changing the title.
3. **Executive or special power**- (i) Approval of the Senate is necessary for all the higher appointments made by the President. Senate has the power to reject the name proposed by the President. (ii) Approval by Senate 2/3 majority of Senate is also necessary for all the treaties concluded by the President. (iii) Senate can appoint investigating committees regarding administration.
4. **Constituent Power**- Senate also has the power to passed constitutional amendment bill along with the House of Representatives.
5. **Judicial Powers**- Senate investigates the charges framed by the House of Representatives for removing the President, vice President, Judges of the Supreme Court and other high civilian officers and after investigations if the Senate accepts the charges by 2/3 majority of the members present and voting then the concerned official is removed from office.
6. **Electoral Powers-** (i) If no candidate gets an absolute majority votes of the electoral college for election to the office of Vice President, then Senate elects the Vice President from amongst the first two candidates. (ii) Senate also elects its Pro- Tempore Chairman. (iii) When the office of Vice President falls vacant, then together with the House of Representatives Senate gives approval to the name proposed by the President.
7. **Power over foreign policy**- In America President prepared the foreign policy, however he has to take the approval of the Congress. Senate foreign Affairs Committee regulates Presidents’ power of formulating foreign policy. Together with House of Representatives, Senate makes a declaration about war and peace.