# SENATE IS THE MOST POWERFUL SECOND CHAMBER IN THE WORLD

In most of the countries, upper house is given less powers as compared to the lower house. Upper house merely plays the role of a delaying chamber. Upper Houses in England and India can be cited as an examples. Some countries like Soviet Union, Switzerland, Canada etc, upper houses have been given equal powers with the lower house. The situation in America is quite different and this can be assessed from the following views.

1. **In Legislative field** – In America, ordinary bill can be introduced first in any house. However, it can be sent for the signature of the President only after the passage of the bill by both the houses. If differences crop up between the two houses regarding the passage of the bill, then a Joint Conference Committee of both houses is set up to resolve their differences. If even this committee fails to resolve the differences, then the bill lapses.

As compared to this, the legislative powers of the Rajya Sabha in India, House of Lords in England, Senate in Canada and House of Councilors in Japan etc are much less powerful than American Senate. In England, the House of Lords can delay ordinary bill for a maximum period of one year.

1. **In Financial Field** – Money bill is first introduced in the lower house but the Senate can make changes in the money bill except the change of the title. As against this, upper houses in countries like India, England have very limited financial powers. In England the house of Lords has delaying power of 30 days and in India Rajya Sabha has delaying power of 14 days over money bill.
2. **In Executive Field** – In America, Senate is partner in the exercise of executive powers of the President. For instance American President has to take the approval of the Senate over the treaties concluded with other countries and higher appointments. These are the special powers of the Senate which no other upper house in the world enjoys.
3. **In the Judicial Field** – The Judicial powers of American Senate are also much more than the upper houses of other countries of the world. For example (i) American Senate decide the disputes regarding the elections and qualifications of its members and debar any elected member from assuming his seat in the house. No other upper houses enjoy this power. (ii) The power to impeach the President, Vice President and high civilian officials are frame by the House of Representatives, Senate sits as highest court to investigate the charges and if 2/3 majority of the members of the Senate approves these charges, then the concerned official is removed from office.

Here it must be remember that in England, when the House of Lords sits as highest court only law Lords participate in the meeting.

Besides the above fields, the powers of the Senate in constitutional amendment and holding administrative investigations are also in no way less than the House of Representatives and upper houses of other countries of the world. Senate is really the most powerful second chamber in the world.