

## **GST Bill on Monday in LS, Real Estate Bill not in this session**

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Constitutional Amendment Bill is likely to be introduced in the Lok Sabha on Monday, while the Bill to amend the Electricity Act, 2003, would be introduced on Friday. With little hope of the Rajya Sabha functioning normally, the Bills comprise the government's legislative agenda for the Lower House for the remainder of the ongoing winter session that concludes on Tuesday.

The Real Estate Regulation and Development Bill, which the government wanted to introduce in the ongoing session, will now be introduced in the next session. Members of Parliament have flagged the need for a more thorough study of the Bill before it is introduced in the House. Urban Development Minister M Venkaiah Naidu has acceded to the demand.

The government believes it is in a comfortable situation with the GST Bill as only the Trinamool Congress is not on board with it. If it is introduced in the Lok Sabha on Monday, it will be taken up for discussion and passage in the Budget session. The other important Bill to be introduced in the Lok Sabha is the one to amend the Electricity Act. It proposes 70 amendments such as giving consumers less than one megawatt of power a choice of distribution companies. The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act to allow plying of e-rickshaws. Minister of State for Finance Jayant Sinha introduced the Regional Rural Banks Amendment Bill. A Bill seeking to amend the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act to include the Leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha in a panel to select the chairperson and members of the anti-corruption body was also introduced in the Lok Sabha on Thursday.

Discussions on chit fund scams, prevalence of Japanese encephalitis and agrarian crisis are also listed for the next week in the Lok Sabha.

The government enjoys a comfortable majority in the Lok Sabha and hopes to utilise the remainder of the current session to introduce and ensure passage of Bills in the Lower House.

It has little hope of the Rajya Sabha functioning normally as the Congress, Trinamool Congress and the Left parties continue to be "aggressive".

However, the government has perceived a softening of the stand of Bahujan Samaj Party, Nationalist Congress Party and the Janata Parivar parties like the Samajwadi Party.

"My appeal to the Opposition: we propose, you oppose, let House dispose," said Parliamentary Affairs Minister Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday. The government has ruled out a statement from the Prime Minister while the Opposition is unwilling to settle for anything less than that.

The government believes the Opposition has "insulted the institution of the PM" the last time when the PM acceded to their demand to make a statement on the hate speech by Minister Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti.

“For the subsequent three days the Opposition was back to disrupting the proceedings,” a minister said, adding there was little compromise that can be reached when the various Opposition parties were unlikely to agree with each other.

*(Business Standard)*