

## UPSC Civil Services Examination

### Political Science & International Relations

#### Topic: Veto Power – Indian Polity Notes

When a bill is introduced in the Parliament, Parliament can pass the bill and before the bill becomes an act, it has to be presented to the Indian President for his approval. It is on President of India to either reject the bill, return the bill or withhold his assent to the bill. The choice of the President over the bill is called his veto power. Veto Power of the President of India is guided by Article 111 of the Indian Constitution and makes an important topic for IAS Exam and its three stages - Prelims, Mains and Interview.

The topic, 'Veto Power' is a significant topic for UPSC Prelims and Mains GS-II exam from the perspective of Political Science subject. IAS aspirants should know the types of veto powers of President, the use of those powers and also the comparison of President's Veto Power with Governor's Veto Power.

This article will mention in detail about the types of veto powers of President and the comparison between his veto powers with that of the governors' of the state.

#### What are the three types of Veto?

The types of vetoes are given in the table below:

Types of Veto		
Absolute Veto	Suspensive Veto	Pocket Veto
The power of the President to withhold the assent to the bill is termed as his absolute veto	The power of the President to return the bill to the Parliament with or without consideration is called suspensive veto	The power of the President to not act upon the bill is termed as a pocket veto

#### Absolute Veto of the President

The facts about the absolute veto power of the Indian President are given below:

- When the President exercises his absolute veto, a bill never sees the day of the light. The bill ends even after passed by the Indian Parliament and does not become an act.
- President uses his absolute veto in the following two cases:
  - When the bill passed by the Parliament is a Private Member Bill
  - When the cabinet resigns before President could give his assent to the bill. The new cabinet may advise the President to not give his assent to the bill passed by the old cabinet.

**Note:** In India, the President has exercised his absolute veto before. In 1954, it was exercised by Dr. Rajendra Prasad as a President and later in 1991, it was used by the then President R Venkataraman.

#### Suspensive Veto of the President

The facts about the suspensive veto power of the Indian President are given below:

- President uses his suspensive veto when he returns the bill to the Indian Parliament for its reconsideration.
  - **Note:** If the Parliament resend the bill with or without amendment to the Indian President, he has to approve the bill without using any of his veto powers.
- His suspensive veto can be over-ridden by the repassage of the bill by the Indian Parliament
  - **Note:** With respect to state bills, state legislature has no power to override the suspensive veto of President. Governor can withhold the bill for the President’s consideration and even if state legislature resends the bill to governor and governor to President, he still can withhold his assent.
- When the Parliament resends the bill to the President, it has to follow only the ordinary majority in the houses and not the higher majority.)
- President cannot exercise his suspensive veto in relation to Money Bill.

### Pocket Veto of the President

The facts about the suspensive veto power of the Indian President are given below:

- The bill is kept pending by the President for an indefinite period when he exercises his pocket veto.
- He neither rejects the bill nor returns the bill for reconsideration.
- Constitution does not give any time-limit to President within which he has to act upon the bill. Therefore, the President uses his pocket veto where he doesn’t have to act upon the bill.
- Unlike the American President who has to resend the bill within 10 days, the Indian President has no such time-rule.

**Note:**

- The Indian President has exercised this veto power before. In 1986, President Zail Singh exercised this pocket veto.
- President has no veto power when it comes to the constitutional amendment bills.

### Summary of Veto Powers of President for UPSC

The table below gives the summary of President’s veto powers:

Types of Bills	President’s Actions
With regard to Ordinary Bills	President can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratify</li> <li>• Return</li> <li>• Reject</li> </ul>
With regard to Money Bills	President can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratify</li> <li>• Reject</li> </ul> President cannot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return</li> </ul>
With regard to the Constitutional Amendment Bills	President can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratify</li> </ul> President cannot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reject</li> <li>• Return</li> </ul>

