

Rajya Sabha passes historic GST Constitution Bill

Marking an end to the long and tumultuous debate on GST, the Rajya Sabha today approved the crucial 122nd Constitutional amendment to turn the bill into law. The Lok Sabha had already passed the key bill.

The bill will now go back to the Lower House to incorporate the amendments approved by the Rajya Sabha. The bill will also have to be approved by 50 per cent of all the state assemblies.

Main opposition Congress and most other parties eventually came on board after having created considerable roadblocks, after Modi government's assurance that the tax rates would be kept "as low as possible".

The Constitution (122nd Amendment) Bill, 2014 was approved by the Rajya Sabha with 203 votes in favour and none against. The debate witnessed a rare bonhomie among the government and the opposition.

Six amendments, including the one on scrapping the 1% additional tax, moved by the government were approved. The new regime will now subsume all indirect taxes including central excise duty and state VAT/sales tax.

After years of deliberation, the GST, touted as the biggest tax reform in Indian history since independence, has finally seen the light of day.

Source- The Economic Times dated 03-08-2016