LOKPAL TIMELINE

1963

- The idea of an ombudsman first came up in Parliament during a discussion on budget allocation for the Law Ministry.
- The word Lokpal was coined by former Rajya Sabha MP and eminent jurist L.M. Singhvi.

1966

- The First Administrative Reforms Commission headed by then MP Morarji Desai recommended the setting up of two independent authorities – at the central and state levels, to look into complaints against public functionaries, including MPs.

1968

- The Lokpal Bill was introduced in Parliament by former Law Minister and member of the Rajya Sabha Shanti Bhushan but it was not passed.
- Eight attempts (1968, 1971, 1977, 1985, 1989, 1996, 1998 and 2001) were made to introduce Lokpal bills but they were not passed.

1995

- Common Cause filed a PIL in Supreme Court, seeking to establish an independent Lokpal at the Centre and reinforce the Lokayukta at the state level. Although the PIL was yet to be decided, it had significant outcomes, starting with the imposition of Rs. 50 lakh penalty on former Petroleum Minister, Capt. Satish Sharma, for abuse of his discretionary powers.

1999

- Review Petition on the 1995 petition was filed by Common Cause.

2002

- The Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution headed by former Chief Justice of India M.N. Venkatachaliah recommended the appointment of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas, with the PM not in its ambit.

2005

- The Second Administrative Reforms Commission chaired by former Union Law Minister Veerappa Moily recommended the establishment of Lokpal without delay.

2008

- In the 1995 pending PIL, the Bench directed Common Cause to file an additional affidavit, delineating the essential features of the Lokpal and Lokayukta.

2011

- Social activist and anti-corruption crusader Anna Hazare went on a hunger strike for an effective anti-corruption law.

2013

- Lokpal and Lokayuktas Bill, 2013, was passed in both houses of Parliament.

2014

- Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 (L&L Act) came into effect.
- Common Cause filed a PIL, challenging the arbitrary nature of the Search Committee Rules notified under the Act, which sought to undermine the independence of Lokpal.

2015

- Amendments to the L&L Act were proposed by the Parliamentary Standing Committee.
- In view of the enactment of the L&L Act, the SC dismissed the 1995 petition, saying it has become infructuous.

2016

- L&L Act was amended and mandated that public servants declare their assets and liabilities, as well as that of their spouses and dependent children.

2017

- The petition filed by Common Cause for appointment of Lokpal was disposed by the Supreme Court, holding that the L&L Act, was a perfectly workable piece of legislation.

2018

- Common Cause filed an application seeking the initiation of contempt proceedings against the executive for wilful and deliberate failure to fully comply with the Apex Court's 2017 judgment.

2019

- Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose has been appointed India's first Lokpal, followed by the appointments of eight other members of the Lokpal panel.