

Parliamentary Committees Introduction

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(3) Broadly, the Parliamentary Committees may be classified into the following categories:

- (a) Financial Committees
- (b) Departmentally Related Standing Committees;
- (c) Other Parliamentary Standing Committees; and
- (d) Ad hoc Committees.

(4) The Membership and tenure of the Parliamentary Committees are given below:-

A. Financial Committees

Sl. No.	Name of Committee	No. of Members	Tenure	Members nominated or elected.
1.	Estimates Committee	30	1 year	Elected by the Lok Sabha
2.	Public Accounts Committee	22(15LS+7RS)	1 year	Elected by the two House(s).
3.	Committee on Public Undertakings	22(15LS+7RS)	1 year	Elected by the two House(s).

B. Departmentally Related Standing Committees (DRSCs)

There are 24 Departmentally Related Standing Committees covering under their jurisdiction all the Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India. Each of these Committees consists of 31 Members - 21 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha to be nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha and the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, respectively. The term of Office of these Committees does not exceed one year. The names of the 24 Committees are as under: -

1. Committee on Commerce
2. Committee on Home Affairs
3. Committee on Human Resource Development
4. Committee on Industry
5. Committee on Science & Technology and Environment & Forests
6. Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture
7. Committee on Health and Family Welfare
8. Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice
9. Committee on Agriculture
10. Committee on Information Technology
11. Committee on Defence
12. Committee on Energy
13. Committee on External Affairs
14. Committee on Finance
15. Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution
16. Committee on Labour
17. Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas
18. Committee on Railways
19. Committee on Urban Development
20. Committee on Water Resources
21. Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers

22. Committee on Rural Development

23. Committee on Coal and Steel

24. Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment

Out of 24 Committees, 8 Committees (Sl. No. 1 to 8) are serviced by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat and 16 Committees (Sl. No. 9 to 24) by the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

C. Other Standing Committees

Sl. No.	Name of Committee	No. of Members	Tenure	Members nominated or elected.
1.	Business Advisory Committee	15	Not fixed. Can continue in office till reconstituted.	Nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha
2.	Committee of Privileges	15	Not fixed. Can continue in office till reconstituted.	Do
3.	Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House.	15	1 year	Do
4.	Committee on Empowerment of Women	30 (20 LS+ 10 RS)	1 year	Nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha and the Chairman, Rajya Sabha
5.	Committee on Government Assurances	15	1 year	Nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha
6.	Committee on Papers Laid on the Table	15	1 year	Do
7.	Committee on Petitions	15	Not fixed. Can continue in office till reconstituted.	Do
8.	Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions	15	1 year	Do

9.	Committee on Subordinate Legislation	15	1 year	Do
10.	General Purposes Committee	Not fixed	Not fixed.	Membership is <u>ex-officio</u> .
11.	House Committee	12	1 year	Nominated by the Speaker
12.	Joint Committee on Offices of Profit.	15 (10 LS + 5 RS)	For the duration of one Lok Sabha	Elected by the two Houses.
13.	Joint Committee on Salaries and Allowances of MPs.	15 (10 LS + 5 RS)	1 year	Nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha and the Chairman, Rajya Sabha.
14.	Library Committee	9 (6 LS + 3 RS)	1 year	Do
15.	Rules Committee	15	Not fixed. Can continue in office till reconstituted.	Nominated by the Speaker.
16.	Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes	30 (20 LS + 10 RS)	1 year	Elected by the two House(s).

D. Ad hoc Committees

Sl. No.	Name of Committee	No. of Members	Tenure	Members nominated or elected.
1.	Railway Convention Committee	18 (12 LS + 6 RS)	For the duration of one Lok Sabha	Nominated by the Speaker.
2.	Committee on Provision of Computers to Members of Lok Sabha	10	For the duration of one Lok Sabha	Do
3.	Committee on MP Local Area Development Scheme	24	1 year	Do

4.	Committee on Ethics	15	Not fixed. Can continue in office till reconstituted.	Do
5.	Committee on Food Management in PH Complex	15 (10 LS + 5 RS)	1 year	Nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha and Chairman, Rajya Sabha.
6.	Committee on Installation of Portraits/Statutes of National Leaders and Parliamentarians	12 (8 LS + 4 RS)	For the duration of one Lok Sabha	Do
7.	Joint Committee on Security in PH Complex	10 (7 LS + 3 RS)	1 year	Do
8.	JPC on Maintenance of Heritage Character and Development of Parliament House Complex	10 (7LS + 3 RS) + 3 <i>ex officio</i> members (Dy. Chairman, RS, M/o Urban Development, M/o Home Affairs) + 1 Special Invitee (M/o Parliamentary Affairs	For the duration of one Lok Sabha	Do
9.	JPC to examine matters relating to allocation and pricing of telecom licences and spectrum	30 (20 LS + 10 RS)	Till submission of Report	Names of Members included in the motion adopted by the House

A Minister is not eligible for election or nomination to the financial Committees, DRSCs and Committees on (1) Empowerment of Women (2) Government Assurances (3) Petitions (4) Subordinate Legislation (5) Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The procedure regarding functioning of DRSCs, serviced by Lok Sabha, has been enumerated in Rules 331C to 331Q of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. Rule 268 to 277 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Council of States (Rajya Sabha) govern DRSCs serviced by Rajya Sabha Secretariat.

The general procedure of working of the Committees is governed by the General Rules No. 253 to 286 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the General Directions No. 48 to 73A of the Directions by the Speaker relating to Parliamentary Committees, internal rules specific to the Committees and other relevant Parliamentary Conventions and Practices.

II. Functions of the Committees

(1) Estimates Committee:

(a) Report what economies, improvements in organisation, efficiency or administrative reform, consistent with the policy underlying the estimates may be effected; (b) suggest alternative policies in order to bring about efficiency and economy in administration; (c) examine whether the money is well laid out within the limits of the policy implied in the estimates; and (d) suggest the form in which the estimates shall be presented to Parliament. The Committee does not exercise its functions in relation to such Public Undertakings as are allotted to the Committee on Public Undertakings by the Rules of Procedure of Lok Sabha or by the Speaker.

(2) Public Accounts Committee

Examination of the statement of accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by Parliament for the expenditure of the Government of India, the annual finance accounts of the Government and such other accounts laid before the House as the Committee may think fit. In scrutinising the Appropriation Accounts of the Government of India and the Report of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India thereon, the Committee has to satisfy that : -

(a) the moneys shown in the accounts as having been disbursed were legally available for, and applicable to, the service or purpose to which they have been applied or charged; (b) the expenditure conforms to the authority which governs it; (c) every re-appropriation has been made in accordance with the provisions made in this behalf under rules framed by competent authority.

It shall also be the duty of the Committee to -

(a) examine the statement of accounts showing the income and expenditure of state corporations, trading and manufacturing schemes, concerns and projects together with the balance sheets and statements of profit and loss accounts which the President may have required to be prepared or are prepared under the provisions of the statutory rules regulating the financing of a particular corporation, trading or manufacturing scheme or concern or project and the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon. (b) examine the statement of accounts showing the income and expenditure of autonomous and semi autonomous bodies, the audit of which may be conducted by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India either under the directions of the President or by a statute of Parliament; and (c) consider the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General in cases where the President may have required him to conduct an audit of any receipts or to examine the accounts of stores and stocks.

(3) Committee on Public Undertakings

(a) Examine the reports and accounts of Public Undertakings specified in the Fourth Schedule to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha; (b) examine the reports, if any, of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on the Public Undertakings; (c) examine, in the context of the autonomy and efficiency of the Public Undertakings whether the affairs of the Public Undertakings are being managed in accordance with sound business principles and prudent commercial practices ; and (d) exercise such other functions vested in the Public Accounts Committee and the Estimates Committee in relation to the Public Undertakings as are not covered by clauses (a), (b) and (c) above and as may be allotted to the Committee by the Speaker from time to time.

(4) Departmentally Related Standing Committees

Till 13th Lok Sabha, each Standing Committee consisted of not more than 45 members 30 to be nominated by the Speaker from amongst the members of Lok Sabha and 15 to be nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha from amongst the members of Rajya Sabha. However, with restructuring of DRSCs in July, 2004 each DRSC consists of 31 Members - 21 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha.

With reference to the Ministries/ Departments under their purview, the functions of these Committees are:-

(a) consideration of Demands for Grants; (b) examination of Bills referred to by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha or the Speaker, Lok Sabha as the case may be; (c) consideration of Annual Reports; and (d) consideration of national basic long term policy documents presented to the Houses and referred to the Committee by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha or the Speaker, Lok Sabha, as the case may be and make reports thereon.

These Committees do not consider matters of day-to-day administration of the concerned Ministries/Departments.

The Departmentally Related Standing Committee System is a path-breaking endeavour of the Parliamentary surveillance over administration. With the emphasis of their functioning to concentrate on long-term plans, policies guiding the working of the Executive, these Committees are providing necessary direction, guidance and inputs for broad policy formulations and in achievement of the long-term national perspective by the Executive.

(5) Business Advisory Committee

Recommend the time that should be allotted for the discussion of such Government, Legislative and other business as the Speaker, in consultation with the Leader of the House, may direct to be referred to the Committee. The Committee, on its own initiative may also recommend to the Government to bring forward particular subjects for discussion in the House and recommend allocation of time for such discussions.

(6) Committee of Privileges

Examine every question involving breach of privilege of the House or of the members or of any Committee thereof referred to it by the House or by the Speaker. Also to determine with reference to the facts of each case whether a breach of privilege is involved and make suitable recommendations in its report.

(7) Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House.

Consider applications from members for leave of absence from the sittings of the House and examine every case where a member has been absent for a period of 60 days or more, without permission, from the sitting of the House.

(8) Committee on Empowerment of Women

(a) Consider the reports submitted by the National Commission for Women and to report on the measures that should be taken by the Union Government for improving the status/conditions of women in respect of matters within the purview of the Union Government including the Administrations of the Union Territories; (b) examine the measures taken by the Union Government to secure for women equality, status and dignity in all matters; (c) examine the measures taken by the Union Government for comprehensive education and adequate representation of women in Legislative bodies/services and other fields; (d) report on the working of the welfare programmes for the women; (e) report on the action taken by the Union Government and Administrations of the Union Territories on the measures proposed by the Committee; and (f) examine such other matters as may seem fit to the Committee or are specifically referred to it by the House of the Speaker and the Rajya Sabha or the Chairman, Rajya Sabha.

(9) Committee on Government Assurances

Scrutinize the assurances, promises, undertakings etc. given by Ministers from time to time and to report on the extent to which such assurances etc. have been implemented and to see whether such implementation has taken place within the minimum time necessary for the purpose.

(10) Committee on Papers Laid on the Table

Examine all papers laid on the Table of the House by Ministers (other than those which fall within the purview of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation or any other Parliamentary Committee) and to report to the House - (a) whether there has been compliance of the provisions of the Constitution, Act, rule or regulation under which the paper has been laid; (b) whether there has been any unreasonable delay in laying the paper; (c) if there has been such delay, whether a statement explaining the reasons for delay has been laid on the Table of the House and whether those reasons are satisfactory; (d) whether both the Hindi and English versions of the paper have been laid on the Table; (e) whether a statement explaining the reasons for not laying the Hindi version has been given and whether such reasons are satisfactory; and (f) such other functions in respect of the papers laid on the Table as may be assigned to it by the Speaker from time to time.

(11) Committee on Petitions

Consider and report on petitions presented to the House. Also to consider representations from various individuals, associations etc. not covered by the rules relating to petitions and give directions for their disposal.

(12) Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions

Allot time to Private Members' Bills and Resolutions, examine Private Members' Bills seeking to amend the Constitution before their introduction in Lok Sabha, and also examine such Private Members' Bills where the legislative competence of the House is challenged.

(13) Committee on Subordinate Legislation

Scrutinize and report to the House whether the powers to make regulations, rules, sub-rules, bye-laws etc. conferred by the Constitution or delegated by Parliament are being properly exercised by the executive within the scope of such delegation.

(14) General Purposes Committee

Advise the Speaker on such matters concerning the affairs of the House as may be referred to it by the Speaker from time to time.

(15) House Committee

Deal with all the questions relating to residential accommodation from members of Lok Sabha and also exercise supervision over facilities for accommodation, food, medical aid and other amenities accorded to members in members' residences and hostels in Delhi.

(16) Joint Committee on Offices of Profit

Examine the composition and character of the Committees appointed by the Central and State Governments and to recommend what offices should disqualify and what offices should not disqualify a person for being chosen as, and for being a member of either House of Parliament under article 102 of the Constitution. Scrutinize from time to time the Schedule to the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1959, and to recommend any amendments in the said Schedule, whether by way of addition, omission or otherwise.

(17) Joint Committee on Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament

Make rules, after consultation with the Central Government to provide for traveling and daily allowances, medical, housing, telephone, postal, water, electricity, constituency and secretarial facilities etc. to members of both Houses.

(18) Library Committee

Consider and advise on such matters concerning the Library as may be referred to it by the Speaker from time to time. Also to consider suggestions for the improvement of the Library and assist members of both Houses in fully utilizing the services provided by the Library.

(19) Rules Committee

Consider matters of procedure and conduct of business in the House and recommend any amendments or additions to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha that are considered necessary.

(20) Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

(a) Consider the reports submitted by the [National Commission for the Scheduled Castes and the National Commission for the Scheduled Tribes]* under article 338(5)(d) and 338A (5)(d) respectively of the Constitution and to report as to the measures that should be taken by the Union Government in respect of matters within the purview of the Union Government including the Administration of the Union Territories; (b) to report on the action taken by the Union Government and the Administrations of the Union Territories on the measures proposed by the Committee; (c) to examine the measures taken by the Union Government to secure due representation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in services and posts under its control (including appointments in the Public Sector Undertakings, Nationalised Banks, Statutory and Semi-Government Bodies and in the Union Territories) having regard to the provisions of article 335; d) to report on the working of the welfare programmes for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Union Territories; and (e) to examine such other matters as may deem fit to the Committee or are specifically referred to it by the House or the Speaker.

(21) Railway Convention Committee

Reviews the rate of dividend which is payable by the Railway Undertaking to the General Revenues as well as other ancillary matters in connection with the Railway Finance vis-a-vis General Finance and make recommendations thereon. It also suggests the level of appropriation to various funds of Railways like the Depreciation Reserve Fund, Development Fund, Pension Fund etc. The House or the Speaker may also refer to the Committee the ad hoc issues of public importance relating to the Railways and Railway Finances.

The Railway Convention Committees of 1949, 1954, 1960 and 1965 confined themselves only to the question of determining the rate of dividend payable by Railways during the succeeding quinquennium. Since 1971, the Railway Convention Committees have, in addition to recommending the rate of dividend payable by the Railways to the General Revenues, been also taking up for examination and report subjects which have a bearing on the working of Railways and Railway Finances.

(22) Committee on Provision of Computers to Members of Lok Sabha

Advise the Speaker in regard to supply of computers to members.

(23) Committee on MPLADS

(a) Monitor and review periodically the performance and problems in implementation of the MPLADS Scheme (Lok Sabha); (b) to consider complaints of members of Lok Sabha in regard to the Scheme; and to perform such other functions in respect of the MPLAD Scheme as may be assigned to it by the Speaker from time to time.

(24) Committee on Ethics

(a) Oversee the moral and ethical conduct of members; (b) examine every complaint relating to unethical conduct of member or connected with his parliamentary conduct referred to it and make such recommendations as it may deem fit; (c) frame rules specifying acts which constitute unethical conduct.

The Committee may also suo moto take up for consideration and investigation matters relating to ethics, including matters relating to unethical conduct by member wherever felt necessary and make such recommendations as it may deem fit.

The procedure which shall be followed by the Committee for examining complaints of unethical conduct of members, shall be, so far as maybe, the same as the procedure for inquiry and determination by the Committee of Privileges of any question as to breach of privilege of the House or a member.

The provisions of rules 315 and 316 relating to consideration of report of Committee of Privileges presented to the House and priority for consideration of such Reports by House would be applicable mutatis mutandis to the Reports of Committee on Ethics presented to the House.

(25) Committee on Food Management in PH Complex

Consider (a) the revision of rates of eatables served at Railway Catering Units located in Parliament House Complex; (b) the level of subsidy to be given for running Railway Catering Units in Parliament House Complex; (c) provision of excellent canteen services to members; and (d) other related issues.

(26) Committee on Installation of Portraits/Statutes of National Leaders and Parliamentarians.

Decide upon (a) the proposals for portraits of National Leaders/Parliamentarians to be put up in the Central hall if the space is available and if space is not available at other places in Parliament House complex; (b) about the statues of National Leaders/Parliamentarians to be put up in Parliament House and other parts of the Parliament House complex; (c) the acceptance of portraits and statues given by organizations and individuals from outside; (d) the places where portraits and statues can be put up; and (e) any other steps which can be taken to make Parliament House Complex more elegant and presentable.

(27) Committee on Security in Parliament House Complex.

(a) review the progress of work relating to installation of security equipment in Parliament House Complex, particularly, in the context of the recommendations made by the JPC on Security during 13th Lok Sabha; (b) consider the security aspects pending for consideration/decision; and (c) prepare a comprehensive report on Security for Parliament defining the threats and likely scenario in the future as well as the steps being taken to meet the same.

(28) JPC on Maintenance of Heritage Character and Development of Parliament House Complex

To formulate Policies, guidelines and programmes on conservation, restoration, rehabilitation and maintenance of works in Parliament House Complex in accordance with standard conservation principles and procedures; (b) to consider and approve proposals for acquisition of additional land, construction of new building/structures or development of existing buildings with Parliament House Complex; (c) to monitor and review the steps being taken for consideration of Heritage Character of Parliament House Building and development of existing and new building projects in Parliament House Complex in the light of the decisions of the committee; and (d) to consider any other related matters/issues referred by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha or the Speaker, Lok Sabha to the Committee.

(29) Joint Parliamentary Committee to examine matters relating to allocation and pricing of telecom licences and spectrum

(a) Examine policy prescriptions and their interpretation thereafter by successive Governments, including decisions of the Union Cabinet and the consequences thereof, in the allocation and pricing of telecom licences and spectrum from 1998 to 2009; (b) to examine irregularities and aberrations, if any, and the consequences therefore in the implementation of Government decisions and policy prescriptions from 1998 to 2009 and (c) to make recommendations to ensure formulation of appropriate procedure for implementation of laid down policy in the allocation and pricing of telecom licences.

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N.B. : The Committees at Sl.No. 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13 to 15, 19, 23 and 24 are single house (Lok Sabha) Committees. Similar Committees function in Rajya Sabha.