

# COMMITTEE

---

# SYSTEM

---

Committee System is an important parliament committee in India. India have proved to be the backbone of parliament power and autonomy. Department related to standing committee is a landmark development in this regard.

In the words H.M Robert, "A Committee is a body of one or more persons appointed or elected by an Assembly or society to consider or investigate to take action in regard to certain matters or subjects or to do all these things."

The history of committees in India began with the establishment of first legislature in 1854. The legislative Council (1854-61) appointed a committee to consider what should be its standing order at its first sitting held on May 20, 1854. It was a four member committee appointed by a House of only twelve members. Since then committee system

in India has come to stay and today each House of Parliament has its own committees.

## FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

- (i) Committees generally carry out a number of functions covering a wide range of issues, which can be grouped under two broad categories deliberative and executive. Committee system as the watchdog for transparency and accountability and furthermore, it links the legislatures with the general public, by reporting on the failures of the government and forcing it to take remedial measures.
- (ii) The bulk of Parliamentary work involves passing numerous bills on various subjects. The number of bills Parliament handles in its day to day functioning makes it difficult for proper consideration. By using Committees, Parliaments smoothly carry out investigation, scrutiny and control of public accounts.
- (iii) Committees also influence the administrative process in a state. Going beyond their primary legislative functions, they give their views on various aspects of administration, thus providing a link between the law making (legislative) and the law implementing (executive) bodies. The committees point out

the lapses in administration and help maintain a high standard of governance. Thus, Committees bring efficiency to the administration. They bring the government under control and at the same time save it from deterioration.

(iv) Another important function of Committees is to bring in specialised contribution to the functioning of the legislature. The Committees are constituted by pooling talents and experiences from all point parties in the House. Committees, in each aspect of Parliamentary proceedings, tune up the debate and enhance the efficiency. Thus, the committee system provides a very useful forum for utilising a great deal of varied experience and ability, which may otherwise go waste in the House.

(v) Number of issues comes to the Parliament for discussion and decision. Parliament is not able to handle them all as it gets overloaded. Committees share the workload although they do not directly discuss the matters of policy. The overwork affects the efficiency of Parliament. It is therefore in the fitness of things that Parliament develops devolves some of its work to smaller bodies while retaining the privilege of the taking major decisions.

## TYPES OF COMMITTEE IN

INDIA

# Parliamentary Committee

Standing Committee

Ad hoc Committee

Standing Committee - This committee are constituted by the House or the speaker every year or from time to time, as the case may be, and permanent in nature in the sense that they examine ~~different~~ different issues and present their reports to the House or speaker from time to time during their term.

Functions - The Standing Committee consists of small groups of Members from both the Government and Opposition. Their functions are as follows -

1. Examine each Bill referred to the committee by Parliament, and make amendments to the Bills, to the extent agreed by the Committee.
2. Examine any subordinate legislation tabled in Parliament, and in Parliament within its category of affairs.
3. Scrutinise the govt. departments with responsibility within the committee's subject area.
4. Consider petitions and papers.

5. Review international treaties and conventions ratified by the govt. and monitor their implementation,
6. Perform any other functions and duties assigned by Parliament.

Standing Committees may be categorised as -:

- (i) Financial Committees e.g. Committee on Estimates, Committees on Public accounts, Committees on Public Undertaking.
- (ii) Subjects Committees or departmentally committees related standing joint Committees of the two houses.
- (iii) House Committees that are committees relating to day to day business of the house e.g. Committees on absence of Members from the sittings of the House, Business Advisory Committees, Committees on Private Members Bill and Resolutions and Rules Committees.
- (iv) Enquiry Committees, e.g. Committees on Government Assurance, Committees on sub-ordinate legislation, Committees on Papers Laid on the Table and Committees on the welfare of Scheduled Casts & Scheduled Tribes.
- (v) Service Committees, e.g. General Purpose Committee, House Committees, Library Committees and Joint Committees on Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament.

## Ad hoc Committees

Ad hoc Committees are appointed for a specific purpose and they become functus officio as soon as they have completed the task assigned to them and presented their reports.

Ad-hoc Committees may be broadly put into two categories -

- (i) Select or Joint Committees on Bills which are appointed to consider and report on particular Bills.
- (ii) Committees which are constituted from time to time to inquire into the report on specific matters. Eg. → Railway Convention Committees.

## COMMITTEES UNDER RAJYA SABHA

- Committees on House Affairs
- Committees on Human Resources and Development.
- Committees on Industry.
- Committees on Science & Technology environment & forest.
- Committees on transport, tourism & culture.
- Committees on personal, public, grievances and justice.
- Committees on Health and family welfare.
- Committees on Commerce.

## COMMITTEES UNDER LOK SABHA

- Committees on Agriculture.
- Committee on Information Technology.
- Committee on Defence.
- Committee on Energy.
- Committee on External Affairs.
- Committee on Finance.
- Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution.
- Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- Committee of Social Justice and Impoverishment.
- Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- Committee on Urban Development.
- Committee on Coal & Steel.
- Committee on Water Resources.
- Committee on Rural Development.
- Committee on Labour.
- Committee on Railways.