

## PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

Indian Constitution mentions two kinds of Parliamentary Committees – Standing Committees and Ad Hoc Committees. Any subject related to these committees is dealt with Article 118 (1) of the Indian Constitution.

**How many types of Parliamentary Committees are there?**

There are different types of parliamentary committees which are mentioned in the table below:

### Parliamentary Committee in India

Types of Committees	Categories of Committees	Sub-Categories of Committees
<b>Standing Committees</b>	Financial Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Accounts Committee</li> <li>Estimates Committee</li> <li>Committee on Public Undertakings</li> </ul>
	Departmental Standing Committees	Total-24 (Read the article below to know the names of the departmental committees)
	Committees to Inquire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee on Petitions</li> <li>Committee of Privilege</li> <li>Ethics Committee</li> </ul>
	Committees to Scrutinise and Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee on Government Assurances</li> <li>Committee on Subordinate Legislation</li> <li>Committee on Papers Laid on the Table</li> <li>Committee on Welfare of SCs and STs</li> <li>Committee on Empowerment of Women</li> <li>Joint Committee on Offices of Profit</li> </ul>
	Committees Relating to the Day-to-Day Business of the House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Advisory Committee</li> <li>Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions</li> <li>Rules Committee</li> <li>Committee on Absence of Members from Sitzings of the House</li> </ul>
	House-Keeping Committees or Service Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Purposes Committee</li> <li>House Committee</li> <li>Library Committee</li> <li>Joint Committee on Salaries and Allowances of Members</li> </ul>

<b>Ad Hoc Committees</b>	Inquiry Committees	Read the details below
	Advisory Committees	Read the details below

### Standing Committees

As given above that there are six types of standing committees in India. They are permanent in nature.

The details of all of these are given below:

#### 1. Financial Committees

There are three categories of Financial Committees:

- Public Accounts Committee – It examines the annual reports of the Government and scrutinizes the reports of Comptroller and Auditor General laid in the parliament by the President.
- Estimates Committee – It examines the estimates of the expenditure proposed by the government in the budget and suggests ‘economies’ in public expenditure.
- Committee on Public Undertakings- It examines the reports and accounts of public undertakings.

#### 2. Department Standing Committees

There are a total of 24 Departmental Standing Committees:- 8 under Rajya Sabha and 16 under Lok Sabha. The list of these committees is given in the table below:

#### Standing Committees – Departmental Committees

Committees under Lok Sabha		Committees under Rajya Sabha	
Name	Ministry/Department	Name	Ministry/Department
Committee on Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture</li> <li>• Food Processing Industries</li> </ul>	Committee on Commerce	Commerce and Industry
Committee on Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and Information Technology</li> <li>• Information &amp; Broadcasting</li> </ul>	Committee on Home Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Affairs</li> <li>• Development of NorthEastern Region</li> </ul>
Committee on Defence	Defence	Committee on Human Resource Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resource Development</li> <li>• Youth Affairs and Sports</li> </ul>
Committee on Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New and Renewable Energy</li> <li>• Power</li> </ul>	Committee on Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises</li> <li>• Small Scale Industries</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agro and Rural Industries</li> </ul>
Committee on External Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External Affairs</li> <li>• Non-Resident Indians Affairs</li> </ul>	Committee on Science & Technology, Environment & Forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science and Technology</li> <li>• Space</li> <li>• Earth Sciences</li> <li>• Atomic Energy</li> <li>• Environment &amp; Forests</li> </ul>
Committee on Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Company Affairs</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Statistics and Programme Implementation</li> </ul>	Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Aviation</li> <li>• Shipping, Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Tourism</li> </ul>
Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution	Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Committee on Health and Family Welfare	Health and Family Welfare
Committee on Labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour and Employment</li> <li>• Textiles</li> </ul>	Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law and Justice</li> <li>• Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions</li> </ul>
Committee on Petroleum & Natural	Gas Petroleum and Natural Gas	–	–
Committee on Railways	Railways	–	–
Committee on Urban Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban Development</li> <li>• Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation</li> </ul>	–	–
Committee on Water Resources	Water Resources	–	–
Committee on Chemicals and	Chemicals and Fertilizers	–	–

Fertilizers			
Committee on Rural Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Development</li> <li>• Panchayati Raj</li> </ul>	–	–
Committee on Coal and Steel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coal and Mines</li> <li>• Steel</li> </ul>	–	–
Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Justice and Empowerment</li> <li>• Tribal Affairs</li> </ul>	–	–

### Functions of these 24 Departmental Standing Committees are:

1. They work upon the demand for grants of the concerned ministries. They don't propose any cut-motion
2. They examine the bills of the concerned ministry
3. They work upon the annual reports of the ministries
4. They also consider policy documents presented the ministries before both the houses

### Facts about Departmental Standing Committees:

1. They don't consider day-to-day administration
2. They generally don't intervene into matters taken up by another departmental standing committees
3. Recommendations made them are advisory in nature, hence are not binding on the Parliament

### 3. Committees to Inquire

There are three types:

- Committee on Petitions – Whenever there is a petition on a bill or if there is any matter of general public importance, this committee examines those.
- Committee of Privileges – If any member of the house breaches the code of it, this committee acts upon it and proposes a suitable action. It is semi-judicial in nature. In Lok Sabha it has 15 members, in Rajya Sabha, it has 10.
- Ethics Committee – If any member of the house misconducts and shows indiscipline, this committee acts upon that and decides suitable action.

### 4. Committees to Scrutinize and Control

There are six types of these committees which are given below:

- Committee on Government Assurance – Whenever a minister makes any promise, or assure, or take any undertaking in Lok Sabha; this committee examines the extent of such promises, assurances and undertakings carried through by him/her. It has 15 members in Lok Sabha and 10 members in Rajya Sabha
- Committee on Subordinate Legislation – It examines whether the executives are exercising well, their powers to make regulations, rules, sub-rules and bye-laws delegated by the Parliament or conferred by the Constitution. In both the houses, it comprises 15 people
- Committee on Papers laid on the table – When ministers lay any paper on the table, this committee scrutinizes the credibility of the paper and if that paper complies with the provision of the constitution. It has 15 members in Lok Sabha and 10 in Rajya Sabha.

- Committee on Welfare of SCs & STs – It consists of 30 members. 20 are taken from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha. Reports of National Commission for SCs and National Commission for STs are considered by this committee
- Committee on Empowerment of women – The report of National Commission for women is considered by this committee.
- Joint Committee on Offices of Profit – This committee examines the composition and character of committees and other bodies appointed by the Central, state and union territory governments and recommends whether persons holding these offices should be disqualified from being elected as members of Parliament or not.

### **5. Committees relating to the day-to-day business of the house**

There are four types of this committee mentioned below:

- Business Advisory Committee – It regulates the time-table of the house.
- Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions – It classifies bills and allocates time for the discussion on bills and resolutions introduced by private members
- Rules Committee – If there is any need of amendment in the rules of the house, this committee makes a proposal
- Committee on Absence of Members – All the leave applications, applied by the member of the houses are taken up by this committee

### **6. House-Keeping Committees**

There are four types of this committee mentioned below:

- General Purposes Committee – Matters that do not fall under the jurisdiction of other parliamentary committees are taken up by this committee. The members of this committee comprise :
  - Presiding officer (Speaker / Chairman) as its ex-officio chairman
  - Deputy Speaker (Deputy Chairman in the case of Rajya Sabha)
  - Members of the panel of chairpersons (panel of vice-chairpersons in the case of Rajya Sabha)
  - Chairpersons of all the departmental standing committees of the House
  - Leaders of recognised parties and groups in the House and,
  - Other members as nominated by the presiding officer
- House Committee – The facilities given to the members of the houses in the name of residences, food, medical aid, etc are supervised by this committee
- Library Committee – The library of the houses and the amenities attached with it are managed by this committee

### **Ad-Hoc Committees**

There are two types of ad-hoc committees. They are temporary in nature.

The details of these committees are given below:

#### **1. Inquiry Committees**

These committees can be proposed by either house or can also be appointed by the speaker/chairman of the respective house. Few examples of Inquire Committees are:

- Joint Committee on Bofors Contract
- Joint Committee on Fertilizer Pricing
- Joint Committee to Enquire into Irregularities in Securities and Banking Transactions
- Joint Committee on Stock Market Scam, etc.

#### **2. Advisory Committees**

These committees are select or joint committees appointed for the matters of bills. They report on particular bills. They are different from the inquiry committees as the procedure that they follow are

laid down in the Rules of Procedure and also are directed by the Lok Sabha speaker or Rajya Sabha chairman.

## **MAINS**

### Table of Contents

- **Important Committees which act as Parliament's 'Watch Dogs' over the executive (Select and Joint)**
- **Committee on Estimates**
- **Committee on Public Undertakings**
- **Committee on Public Accounts**
- **Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions (Lok Sabha)**
- **Rules Committee (Lok Sabha)**
- **Committee of Privileges (Lok Sabha)**
- **Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (Lok Sabha)**
- **Committee on Petitions (Lok Sabha)**
- **Committee on Subordinate Legislation (Lok Sabha)**
- **Committee on Government Assurances (Lok Sabha)**
- **Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House (Lok Sabha)**
- **Joint Committee on Offices of Profit**
- **Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Joint)**
- **Railway Convention Committee (Ad-hoc)**
- **Committee on Empowerment of Women**

### **Important Committees which act as Parliament's 'Watch Dogs' over the executive (Select and Joint)**

1. Committees on Subordinate Legislation
2. Committee on Government Assurances
3. Committee on Estimates (Select committee of LS)
4. Committee on Public Accounts (PAC)
5. Committee on Public Undertakings (PUC)
6. Department Related Standing Committees (DRSCs) – (covered in our last post on [Parliamentary Committees Basics](#))

PS: The Committee on Estimates, the Committee on Public Accounts, the Committee on Public Undertakings (NB: These three comes under the category of Finance Committees) and DRSCs play an important role in exercising a check over governmental expenditure and Policy formulation.

#### Committee on Estimates

This Committee consists of 30 members who are elected by the Lok Sabha every year from among its members. A Minister is not eligible for election to this Committee. The term of the Committee is one year. The main function of the Committee on Estimates is to report what improvements in organisation, efficiency, or administrative reform, consistent with the policy underlying the estimates may be effected. They suggest alternative policies in order to bring about efficiency and economy in administration.

- NB: From time to time the Committee selects such of the estimates pertaining to a Ministry or a group of Ministries or the statutory and other Government bodies as may seem fit to the Committee.
- NB: The Committee also examines matters of special interest which may arise or come to light in the course of its work or which are specifically referred to it by the House or the Speaker.

#### Committee on Public Undertakings

The Committee on Public Undertakings consists of 15 members elected by the Lok Sabha and 7 members of Rajya Sabha. A Minister is not eligible for election to this Committee. The term of the Committee is one year.

The functions of the Committee on Public Undertakings are—

- (a) to examine the reports and accounts of Public Undertakings.
- (b) to examine the reports, if any, of the Comptroller and Auditor General on the Public Undertakings.



- (c) to 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.
- (d) such other functions vested in the Committee on Public Accounts and the Committee on Estimates 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.
- NB: The Committee does not, however, examine matters of major Government policy and matters of day-to-day administration of the Undertakings.

#### **Committee on Public Accounts**

This Committee consists of 15 members elected by the Lok Sabha and 7 members of the Rajya Sabha. A Minister is not eligible for election to this Committee. The term of the Committee is one year.

The main duty of the Committee is to ascertain whether the money granted by Parliament has been spent by Government “within the scope of the Demand”. The Appropriation Accounts of the Government of India and the Audit Reports presented by the Comptroller and Auditor General mainly form the basis for the examination of the Committee. Cases involving losses, nugatory expenditure and financial irregularities come in for severe criticism by the Committee. The Committee is not concerned with questions of policy. It is concerned only with the execution of the policy laid down by Parliament and its results.

#### **Business Advisory Committee (Lok Sabha)**

The Business Advisory Committee of Lok Sabha consists of 15 members including the Speaker who is the ex-officio Chairman. The members are nominated by the Speaker. Almost all sections of the House are represented on the Committee as per the respective strength of parties in the House. The function of the Committee is to 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. The decisions reached by the Committee are always unanimous in character and representative of the collective view of the House. The Committee generally meets at the beginning of each Session and thereafter as and when necessary.

#### **Committee on Private Members’ Bills and Resolutions (Lok Sabha)**

This Committee consists of 15 members and the Deputy Speaker is its Chairman when nominated as a member of the Committee. The Committee is nominated by the Speaker. The functions of the Committee are to allot time to Private Members’ Bills and Resolutions, to examine Private Members’ Bills seeking to amend the Constitution before their introduction in Lok Sabha, to examine all Private Members’ Bills after they are introduced and before they are taken up for consideration in the House and to classify them according to their nature, urgency and importance into two categories namely, category A and category B and also to examine such Private Members’ Bills where the legislative competence of the House is challenged. *The Committee, thus, performs the same function in relation to Private Members’ Bills and Resolutions as the Business Advisory Committee does in regard to Government Business.* The Committee holds office for a term not exceeding one year.

#### **Rules Committee (Lok Sabha)**

The Rules Committee consists of 15 members including the Speaker who is the ex-officio Chairman of the Committee. The members are nominated by the Speaker. The Committee considers matters of procedure and conduct of business in the House and recommends any amendments or additions to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha that are considered necessary.

#### **Committee of Privileges (Lok Sabha)**

This Committee consists of 15 members nominated by the Speaker. The function is to examine every question involving breach of privilege of the House or of the members of any Committee thereof referred to it by the House or by the Speaker. It determines with reference to the facts of each case whether a breach of privilege is involved and makes suitable recommendations in its report.

#### **Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (Lok Sabha)**

This Committee consists of 15 members nominated by the Speaker. Its function is to 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, (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.

#### **Committee on Petitions (Lok Sabha)**

The Committee consists of 15 members nominated by the Speaker. A Minister is not nominated to this Committee. The function of the Committee is to consider and report on petitions presented to the House. Besides, it also considers representations from individuals and associations, etc. on subjects which are not covered by the rules relating to petitions and gives directions for their disposal.

#### **Committee on Subordinate Legislation (Lok Sabha)**

The Committee consists of 15 members nominated by the Speaker. A Minister is not nominated to this Committee. The Committee scrutinizes and reports to the House whether the powers to make regulations, rules, sub-rules, by-laws etc. conferred by the Constitution or delegated by Parliament are being properly exercised by the executive within the scope of such delegation.

#### **Committee on Government Assurances (Lok Sabha)**

This Committee consists of 15 members nominated by the Speaker. A Minister is not nominated to this Committee. While replying to questions in the House or during discussions on Bills, Resolutions, Motions etc., Ministers at times give assurances or undertakings either to consider a matter or to take action or to furnish the House further information later. The functions of this Committee are to scrutinize the assurances, promises, undertakings etc. given by Ministers from time to time and to report to Lok Sabha 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.

#### **Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House (Lok Sabha)**

The Committee consists of 15 members who hold office for one year. The members are nominated by the Speaker. This Committee considers all applications from members for leave of absence from the sittings of the House and examines every case where a member has been absent for a period of 60 days or more, without permission, from the sittings of the House. In its report it makes recommendations with respect to each case as to whether the absence should be condoned or leave applied granted or whether the circumstances of the case justify that the House should declare the seat of the member vacant.

#### **Joint Committee on Offices of Profit**

This Committee consists of 15 members. Ten members are elected from Lok Sabha and five from Rajya Sabha. The Committee is constituted for the duration of each Lok Sabha.

The main functions of the Committee are to 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.

#### **Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Joint)**

The Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes consists of 20 members elected by the Lok Sabha and 10 members of Rajya Sabha are associated with it. The term of the Committee is one year. A Minister is not eligible for election to this Committee. The main functions of the Committee are to consider all matters concerning the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, falling within the purview of the Union Government and the Union Territories, to consider the reports submitted by the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and 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.

#### **Railway Convention Committee (Ad-hoc)**

The Railway Convention Committee is an ad-hoc Committee. It consists of 18 members. Out of these, 12 members are from Lok Sabha nominated by the Speaker and 6 members are from Rajya Sabha nominated by the Chairman. By convention the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Railways are members of the Committee. Besides this, Ministers of State in the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Railways respectively are also its members.

The main function of the Committee is to review the Rate of Dividend payable by the Railways undertaking to General Revenues as well as other ancillary matters in connection with the Railway Finance vis-a-vis the General Finance and make recommendations thereon. The Railway Convention Committee, 1949 was the first Committee after independence. This Committee and subsequent Committees confined themselves to determining the rate of dividend payable by Railways to General Revenues. Since 1971 the Railway Convention Committees have been taking up subjects for examination and report which have a bearing on the working of Railways.

#### **Committee on Empowerment of Women**

The Committee consists of 30 members, 20 nominated by the Speaker from amongst the members of Lok Sabha and 10 nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha from amongst the members of the Rajya Sabha. The term of the Committee is of one year. The Committee have been primarily mandated with the task of reviewing and monitoring the measures taken by the Union Government in the direction of securing for women equality, status and dignity in all matters. The Committee would also suggest necessary correctives for improving the status/condition of women in respect of matters within the purview of the Union Government. Besides, another important function of the Committee is to examine the measures taken by the Union Government for comprehensive education and adequate representation of women in Legislative bodies/services and other fields. The Committee would also consider the report of the National Commission for Women. The Committee may also examine such other matters as may seem fit to them or are specifically referred to them by the Lok Sabha or the Speaker and the Rajya Sabha or the Chairman, Rajya Sabha.

## **COMMITTEES OF RAJYA SABHA GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Introduction**

Parliamentary Committees play a vital role in the Parliamentary System. They are a vibrant link between the Parliament, the Executive and the general public. The need for Committees arises out of two factors, the first one being the need for vigilance on the part of the Legislature over the actions of the Executive, while the second one is that the modern Legislature these days is over-burdened with heavy volume of work with limited time at its disposal. It thus becomes impossible that every matter should be thoroughly and systematically scrutinised and considered on the floor of the House. If the work is to be done with reasonable care, naturally some Parliamentary responsibility has to be entrusted to an agency in which the whole House has confidence. Entrusting certain functions of the House to the Committees has, therefore, become a normal practice. This has become all the more necessary as a Committee provides the expertise on a matter which is referred to it. In a Committee, the matter is deliberated at length, views are expressed freely, the matter is considered in depth, in a business-like manner and in a calmer atmosphere. In most of the Committees, public is directly or indirectly associated when memoranda containing suggestions are received, on-the-spot studies are conducted and oral evidence is taken which helps the Committees in arriving at the conclusions.

The Committees aid and assist the Legislature in discharging its duties and regulating its functions effectively, expeditiously and efficiently. Through Committees, Parliament exercises its control and influence over administration. Parliamentary Committees have a salutary effect on the Executive. The Committees are not meant to weaken the administration; instead they prevent misuse of power exercisable by the Executive. It may, however, be remembered that Parliamentary control in the context of the functioning of the Committees may mean influence, not direct control; advice, not command; criticism, not obstruction; scrutiny, not initiative; and accountability, not prior approval. This, in brief, is the rationale of the Committee System. The Committees have functioned in a non-partisan manner and their deliberations and conclusions have been objective. This, in a large measure, accounts for the respect in which the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committees are held.

### **Types of Committees**

Rajya Sabha possesses an organised system of Committees. Appointments, term of office, functions and procedure for conducting business in these Committees are regulated under the provisions of the Rules and directions given by the Chairman from time to time.

The Committees may be classified as **Ad hoc Committees and Standing Committees**.

*Ad hoc* Committees are appointed from time to time to enquire into specific subjects. They are not named as such in the Rules of Procedure of Rajya Sabha but come into being on a specific motion and become *functus officio* immediately after reporting to the House on matters assigned to them.

*Ad hoc* Committees are generally Select Committees and Joint Select Committees on Bills.

*Ad hoc* Committees have, however, also been appointed by the House on other specific subjects, as in 1962, the House appointed an *ad hoc* Committee to consider its Rules of Procedure. In 1976 another Committee was appointed to enquire into the conduct of a sitting member of the House and in 1983 a Committee was constituted for reconciliation between the Nirankaris and Akalis. Again, on the 9th August, 1995 a fifteen-member Railway Wagon Committee was constituted to examine all the aspects relating to procurement of Railway Wagons.

The second category of Committees, namely, **Standing Committees** may be divided in terms of their functions under four broad heads:

#### **1. Committees to enquire—**

- (a) Committee on Petitions;
- (b) Committee of Privileges; and
- (c) Ethics Committee.

#### **2. Committees to scrutinise and control—**

- (a) Committee on Government Assurances;
- (b) Committee on Subordinate Legislation; and
- (c) Committee on Papers Laid on the Table.

#### **3. Committees relating to day-to-day business of the House—**

- (a) Business Advisory Committee; and
- (b) Rules Committee.

#### 4. House Keeping Committees—

- (a) House Committee;
- (b) General Purposes Committee; and
- (c) Committee on Provision of Computers to Members of Rajya Sabha.

There are some **Financial Committees of Lok Sabha** with which Members of Rajya Sabha are associated.

#### **These are:**

- (a) Committee on Public Accounts; and
- (b) Committee on Public Undertakings.

There are also **Joint Parliamentary Committees** on which members of both the Houses are represented.

These Committees are:

- (a) Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;
- (b) Committee on Offices of Profit;
- (c) [Parliamentary Committee to review the rate of dividend payable by the Railway Undertaking to the **General Revenues] (Railway Convention Committee);**
- (d) Committee on Empowerment of Women
- (e) Library Committee
- (f) Committee on Food Management in Parliament House Complex
- (g) Committee on Installation of Portraits/Statues of National Leaders and Parliamentarians in the Parliament House Complex
- (h) Committee on Security Matters in Parliament House Complex

Some other Committees of both the Houses are constituted under the provisions of law. For example, the Joint Committee of the Houses of Parliament constituted under section 9(1) of the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954.

The members of Rajya Sabha on the Committee on Public Accounts, the Committee on Public Undertakings, the Committee on Offices of Profit and the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are elected by the House, while **[members of the other Joint Committees are nominated by the Chairman]** The proportion of number of Members of the two Houses on these Committees is **approximately** in the ratio of 2 Members of Lok Sabha to 1 of Rajya Sabha.

Following is the list of Parliamentary Standing Committees which function in Rajya Sabha:

Sl. No.	Name of the Committee	No. of members in the Committee
1.	Business Advisory Committee	11
2.	Committee on Papers Laid on the Table	10

3.	Committee on Petitions	10
4.	Committee of Privileges	10
5.	Committee on Rules	16
6.	Committee on Subordinate Legislation	15
7.	Committee on Government Assurances	10
8.	General Purposes Committee	Not fixed
9.	House Committee	<b>10</b>
10.	Ethics Committee	10
11.	Committee on Provision of Computers for Members of Rajya Sabha	7
12.	Committee on Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme	10

Normally the Committees mentioned at Serial Nos. 1 to 9 are re-constituted every year but each one of them continues to hold office until a new Committee is nominated. The Committees at Serial Nos. 10 to 12 on the other hand generally continue with the vacancies arising therein from time to time being filled in. They are reconstituted when fairly a large number of vacancies such as due to biennial elections to Rajya Sabha arise. The functions, etc. of each of these Committees are described below in brief:—

(1) **Business Advisory Committee**— This Committee recommends the time that should be allocated for the discussion of the stage or stages of such Government Bills and other business as the Chairman in consultation with the Leader of the House may direct for being referred to the Committee. The Committee also recommends the time that should be allocated for the discussion of stage or stages of private Members' Bills and Resolutions. It has the power to indicate in the proposed time-table the different hours at which the various stages of the Bill or other business are to be completed. The Committee performs such other functions as may be assigned to it by the Chairman from time to time. The time-table in regard to the business of the Rajya Sabha as settled by the Committee, is reported by the Chair to the House, **which** is then notified in Rajya Sabha Parliamentary Bulletin Part- **II**.

(2) **Committee on Papers Laid on the Table**— The function of the Committee is to consider, after a paper is laid before the Council by a Minister whether :- (a) there has been compliance with the provisions of the Constitution or an Act of Parliament or any other law, rule or regulations in pursuance of which the paper has been so laid; (b) there has been any unreasonable delay in laying the paper before the Council and if so, whether a statement explaining the reasons for such delay has also been laid before the Council along with the paper and whether those reasons are satisfactory; and (c) the paper has been laid before the Council both in English and Hindi and if not, whether a statement explaining the reasons for not laying the paper in Hindi has also been laid before the Council along with the paper and whether those reasons are satisfactory. The Committee performs such other functions in respect of the papers laid on the Table as may be assigned to it by the Chairman from time to time. The reports of the Committee are presented to the House from time to time by the Chairman of the Committee or, in his absence, by any member of the Committee.

(3) **Committee on Petitions**—The functions of the Committee are: (a) to examine every petition referred to it, and if the petition complies with the rules, to direct that it be circulated in *extensor* or in summary form, as the case may be; and (b) to report to the House on specific complaints made in the petition after taking such evidence as it deems fit and to suggest remedial measures, either in a concrete form applicable to the case under consideration or to prevent recurrence of such case. The reports of the Committee are presented to the House by the Chairman of the Committee or in his absence by any member, of the Committee from time to time.

(4) **Committee of Privileges**— The Committee examines every question of privilege referred to it either by the House or by the Chairman and determines with reference to the facts of each case, whether a breach of privilege is involved and, if so, the nature of the breach, the circumstances leading to it and makes such recommendations as it deems fit. The Committee can also report to the House the procedure that may be followed by the House in giving effect to the recommendations made by the Committee. The reports of the Committee are presented to the House from time to time by the Chairman of the Committee, or in his absence by any member of the Committee. After the report is presented, a motion for consideration of the report may be moved by the Chairman of the Committee, or any other member of the Committee. Any member may give notice of amendment to the motion for consideration of the report in such form as may be considered appropriate by the Chairman. After the motion for consideration of the report has been carried, the Chairman or any member of the Committee or any other member, as the case may be, may move that the House agrees or disagrees or agrees with amendments, with the recommendations contained in the report.

(5) **Committee on Rules**— The Committee considers matters of procedure and conduct of business in Rajya Sabha and recommends any amendments or additions to the rules that may be deemed necessary. Reports of the Committee are presented to the House from time to time by the Deputy Chairman or in his absence by any member of the Committee. After a report is presented, a motion for consideration of the report may be moved by the Deputy Chairman or in his absence by a member of the Committee designated by the Chairman. By giving prior notice members can move amendments to the motion for consideration of the report. After the motion for consideration of the report has been carried, the Deputy Chairman, or in his absence any member of the Committee designated by the Chairman may move that the House agrees, or agrees with amendments, with the recommendations contained in the report.

(6) **Committee on Subordinate Legislation**— The functions of the Committee are to scrutinise and report to Rajya Sabha whether the powers to make rules, regulations, bye-laws, scheme or other statutory instruments conferred by the Constitution or delegated by Parliament are being properly exercised within such conferment or delegation, as the case may be. The Committee examines such rule, regulation, bye-law, scheme or other statutory instrument framed in pursuance of the Constitution or the legislative functions delegated by Parliament to a subordinate authority, irrespective of the fact whether it is required to be laid before the House or not and, in particular, considers: (a) whether it is in accord with the general objects of the Constitution, or the Act pursuant to which it is made; (b) whether it contains matter which in the opinion of the Committee should more properly be dealt within an Act of Parliament; (c) whether it contains imposition of any tax; (d) whether it directly or indirectly bars the jurisdiction of the Courts; (e) whether it gives retrospective effect to any of the provisions in respect of which the Constitution or the Act pursuant to



which it is made does not expressly give any such power; (f) whether it involves expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India or the public revenues; (g) whether it appears to make some unusual or unexpected use of the powers conferred by the Constitution or the Act pursuant to which it is made; (h) whether there appears to have been unjustifiable delay in its publication or in laying it before Parliament; and (i) whether for any reason its form or purport calls for any elucidation.

The Committee examines Bills which seek to delegate powers to make rules, regulations, bye-laws, etc. or amend earlier Acts delegating such powers, with a view to seeing whether suitable provisions for the laying of the rules, regulations, etc. before Parliament have been made therein. The Committee also examines representations made to it in regard to rules, regulations, bye-laws, etc. made or required to be made under an Act. The reports of the Committee are presented to the House from time to time by the Chairman of the Committee or in his absence, by any member of the Committee.

(7) **Committee on Government Assurances**— The functions of the Committee are: (a) to scrutinise the assurances, promises, undertakings, etc. given by Ministers from time to time on the floor of the House during Question Hour as also during discussion on Bills, Resolutions, Motions, Calling Attention notices, etc.; and (b) to report to the House on the extent to which such assurances, promises, undertakings, etc. have been fully or satisfactorily implemented, and when implemented, whether such implementation has taken place within the minimum time necessary for the purpose or whether there has been an inordinate delay in the implementation of assurances and if so, the reasons therefor. The Committee determines its own procedure in connection with all matters relating to the consideration of any question of assurances, promises, undertakings, etc. by it. The reports of the Committee are presented to the House from time to time by the Chairman of the Committee or, in his absence, by any member of the Committee.

(8) **General Purposes Committee**—The General Purposes Committee consists of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, members of the panel of Vice-Chairmen, Chairmen of all Parliamentary Standing Committees of Rajya Sabha, Leaders of recognised parties and groups in Rajya Sabha and such other members as may be nominated by the Chairman. The Chairman, Rajya Sabha, is the ex-officio Chairman of the Committee. The functions of the Committee are to consider and advise on such matters concerning the affairs of the House as may be referred to it by the Chairman from time to time.

(9) **House Committee**—The functions of the Committee are (i) to deal with all questions relating to the allotment of residential accommodation to Members of Rajya Sabha and to exercise supervision over facilities for accommodation so allotted and other amenities given to Members in their residences and hostels in Delhi/New Delhi; and (ii) to make appropriate recommendations in regard to matters of common interest to Members of both Houses of Parliament pertaining to their residences and other amenities. For this, it is a practice that the Chairmen of the House Committees of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha confer together.

(10) **Committee on Ethics**—With the incorporation of rules relating to the Committee on Ethics in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States *w.e.f.* July 20, 2004, the mandate of the Committee was widened to, apart from overseeing the moral and ethical conduct of Members, preparing a Code of Conduct for Members and to suggest amendments or additions therein from time to time in the form of reports to the Council; examining cases concerning the alleged breach of Code of Conduct by Members



as also cases concerning allegations of any other ethical misconduct of Member; and tendering advice to Members from time to time on questions involving ethical standards either *suo-motu* or on receiving specific requests. The Committee was also bestowed with the power to recommend imposition of sanctions such as censure, reprimand, suspension from the Council for a specific period and any other sanction for proven unethical behaviour or other misconduct and contravention of the Code of Conduct / rules on the part of the Members. The Committee consists of 10 Members and as per practice, the Leaders of top ten parties as per their numerical strength in the House are generally nominated to be the members of the Committee and in case the Leaders happen to be Ministers then the choice is extended to the Deputy Leaders of the parties. The Chairman is appointed from amongst the Members of the Committee. The reports of the Committee are presented to the House from time to time by the Chairman of the Committee or, in his absence, by any other Member of the Committee authorized by the Committee.

(11) **Committee on Provision of Computers to Members of Rajya Sabha**—This Committee was first constituted by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha on the 18th March, 1997 and has continued since then with vacancies therein being filled from time to time or the Committee being re-constituted as and when required. The Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha is the Chairman of the Committee. The Committee goes into all aspects relating to supply of Computers to Members of Rajya Sabha. It also reviews the hardware and software requirements of Members.

(12) **Committee on Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme**—Since a large number of complaints were being received from Members about non-implementation of various items of work under the Members of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) Scheme, it was felt that there should be some effective monitoring mechanism so that proper and quick implementation of projects under MPLAD Scheme could be achieved. With this **objective** in view, a ten-member Committee was constituted in Rajya Sabha on the 5th September, 1998. The Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha is the Chairman of this Committee.

#### **Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees:-**

The need to constitute some kind of subject Committees or the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees was being felt for the last several years. In 1989, in fact, three Standing Committees were constituted which dealt with Agriculture, Science and Technology and Environment and Forests. In 1993, it was finally decided to set up seventeen Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees each consisting of 15 members of Rajya Sabha and 30 from Lok Sabha to cover various Ministries/Departments of the Union Government in order to further strengthen the accountability of the Government to Parliament. With the addition of seven more Committees in July 2004 albeit with reduced membership of 10 from Rajya Sabha and 21 from Lok Sabha, the number of Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees was raised to 24 out of which 8 were placed within the jurisdiction of the Chairman, Rajya Sabha and 16 within the jurisdiction of the Speaker, Lok Sabha. Rules 268 to 277 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Conduct of States and Rules 331 C to 331 N of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha govern the Constitution and functioning of these Committees. The following are the 24 DRSCs with the Ministries/Departments allocated to them shown against each:-

**PART – I\*\***

Sl. No.	Name of the Committee	Ministries/Departments	
1.	Committee on Commerce		Commerce and Industry
2.	Committee on Home Affairs	(1)	Home Affairs
		(2)	Development of North-Eastern Region
3.	Committee on Human Resource Development	(1)	Human Resource Development
		(2)	Youth Affairs and Sports
		(3)	Women and Child Development
4.	Committee on Industry	(1)	Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises
		(2)	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
5.	Committee on Science & Technology, Environment & Forests	(1)	Science & Technology
		(2)	Space
		(3)	Earth Sciences
		(4)	Atomic Energy
		(5)	Environment & Forests
6.	Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture	(1)	Civil Aviation
		(2)	Road Transport and Highways
		(3)	Shipping
		(4)	Culture
		(5)	Tourism
7.	Committee on Health and Family Welfare		Health and Family Welfare
8.	Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice	(1)	Law and Justice
		(2)	Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions

**PART – II\*\*\***

9.	Committee on Agriculture	(1)	Agriculture
		(2)	Food Processing Industries
10.	Committee on Information Technology	(1)	Communications and Information
		(2)	Technology Information & Broadcasting
11.	Committee on Defence		Defence
12.	Committee on Energy	(1)	New and Renewable Energy
		(2)	Power
13.	Committee on External Affairs	(1)	External Affairs
		(2)	Overseas Indian Affairs

14.	Committee on Finance	(1) Finance (2) Corporate Affairs (3) Planning (4) Statistics and Programme Implementation
15.	Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution	Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
16.	Committee on Labour	(1) Labour and Employment (2) Textiles
17.	Committee on Petroleum & Natural Gas	Petroleum & Natural Gas
18.	Committee on Railways	Railways
19.	Committee on Urban Development	(1) Urban Development (2) Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation
20.	Committee on Water Resources	Water Resources
21.	Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers	Chemicals and Fertilizers
22.	Committee on Rural Development	(1) Rural Development (2) Panchayati Raj
23.	Committee on Coal and Steel	(1) Coal (2) Mines (3) Steel
24.	Committee on Social Justice & Empowerment	(1) Social Justice and Empowerment (2) Tribal Affairs (3) Minority Affairs

The Chairmen of the first **eight** Committees are appointed by **the** Chairman, Rajya Sabha and the remaining **Sixteen** by **the** Speaker, Lok Sabha.

These Department-related **Parliamentary Standing** Committees, which started functioning from the 8th April, 1993 superseded the three subject Committees set up in 1989.

While inaugurating the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee system in the Central Hall of Parliament on the 31st March 1993, the then Vice-President of India and the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri K.R. Narayanan observed that the main purpose of these Committees is—

"... to ensure the accountability of Government to Parliament through more detailed consideration of measures in these Committees. The intention is not to weaken or criticise the administration but to strengthen it by investing it with more meaningful Parliamentary support".

**These Committees are entrusted with the following functions: -**

(a) to consider the Demands for Grants of the related Ministries/Departments and report thereon. The report shall not suggest anything of the nature of cut motions;

(b) to examine Bills, pertaining to the related Ministries/Departments, referred to the Committee by the Chairman or the Speaker, as the case may be, and report thereon;

(c) to consider the annual reports of the Ministries/Departments and report thereon; and

(d) to consider national basic long term policy documents presented to the Houses, if referred to the Committee by the Chairman or the Speaker, as the case may be, and report thereon.

Provided that the Standing Committees shall not consider matters of day-to-day administration of the related Ministries/ Departments.

\*\* Committees within the administrative jurisdiction of Chairman, Rajya Sabha.

\*\*\* Committees within the administrative jurisdiction of Speaker, Lok Sabha.