

Committee System in India

With regard to reviewing a bill

Parliamentary Committees are essential components of any legislature. The support of the committees includes supervision, control and vigilance, and, sharing the heavy workload of the legislature. The Committee system ensures smooth functioning of the legislature by building consensus on critical issues and examining issues in greater details, which the legislature could not do for want of time and its large size.

Parliament being the apex institution in a democracy deal with a large number of issues concerning the nation -- political, economic, social, national security, foreign policy, science and technology, etc. Hence it is hard for them to deal with various issues of governance with greater detail and comprehension. Committees have been constituted primarily to share the responsibility. Committees have hence become indispensable in Parliamentary activities as they carry out various functions required for normal and effective functioning of Parliaments.

It is evident that the Committee system was devised to assist the Parliament in two of its basic functions--discussion of public affairs and scrutiny of the administration. 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 Standing Committees, Parliaments smoothly carry out investigation, scrutiny and control of public accounts.

Standing Committees hence allow more detailed and elaborate discussion as compared to the house; more accuracy and comprehension of each subject, treating specific issues in a non-partisan way, allowing more time to the Parliament by sharing its work, providing expert opinion and thorough knowledge of the subject. Generally, if the government uses

Committees, a greater number of bills can be passed and details of each bill can be looked into. Furthermore, it is usually in the Committees that, members are more interested in discussion with deeper involvement.

Hence in order to carry out the functions with speed and efficiency, Indian Parliament and Legislatives Assemblies in the states rely on the Committee system. Given the huge workload of any Parliament, Standing Committees have become essential.

With regard to rules and regulations

Generally the rules and procedures of the Indian parliament are decided by the committee on subordinate legislation. In modern times, it is not always possible for the legislatures to make laws providing every detail. It is this Committee which examines if the powers conferred by the Constitution or delegated under an Act passed by the legislature have been duly exercised.

This Committee also keeps a watch on the executive so that it does not exercise arbitrary, unguided and unspecified discretion under any rule. The Committee also ensures that the jurisdiction of the courts is not ousted directly or indirectly by the application of rules and regulations.