

GABINET COMMITTEES AND PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES



Cabinet Committees

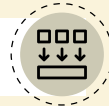


(Based on the Principles of Division of Labour and Effective Delegation).

Features of Cabinet Committees:

- Extra-constitutional in nature.
- They are mentioned in the Governments of India Transaction of Business Rules 1961.
- 2 types: Standing (Permanent) and Ad-hoc (temporary).
- Set up by PM according to the exigencies of the time and requirement of the situation.
- Their number, nomenclature, and composition varies from time to time.

Composition of Cabinet Committees:



- They usually include only Cabinet Ministers.
- However, the **non-cabinet Ministers are not debarred** from their membership.
- They not only include the Ministers in charge of subjects covered by them but also include other senior Ministers.
- Their membership varies from **Three to eight**.
- **Head of the Committee-**
- They are mostly headed by the **Prime Minister**.
- Sometimes other Cabinet Ministers also act as their Chairman.
- But, in case the Prime Minister is a member of a committee, he invariably presides over it.

Note: Prime Minister is part of six panels except for the **Committee on Accommodation and Committee on Parliamentary Affairs**.

Functions of Cabinet Committees:

- To sort out issues and formulate proposals for the Cabinet.
- To reduce the enormous workload of the Cabinet.
- To facilitate in-depth examination of policy issues.
- For effective coordination.
- **Note:** The Cabinet can review their decisions.

Important Cabinet Committees:

- At present, **8 cabinet committees** are functional.
- **1. The Political Affairs Committee:** deals with domestic and foreign affairs. Headed by PM.
- **2. Economic Affairs Committee:** directs and coordinates govt activities in economic affairs. Headed by PM.
- **3. Appointment Committee:** decides all higher level appointments. Headed by PM.

- **4. Cabinet Committee on Security:** It deals with issues relating to law and order, internal security etc. Headed by PM.
- **5. Parliament Affairs Committee:** looks after the progress of govt business in the Parliament. Headed by Home Minister.
- **6. Cabinet Committee on Accommodation:** determines the rules with regard to the allotment of government accommodation. Headed by Home Minister.

Note: Of all the Cabinet committees, the most powerful is the **political Affairs Committee**. It is also described as a “**Super-Cabinet**”.

Reconstitution of Cabinet Committees- 2019



- Recently the central government has reconstituted **eight key cabinet committees**.
- This includes creation of **two new committees**:

1. Cabinet Committee on Investment and Growth:

- It will identify key projects required to be implemented on a time-bound basis, involving investments \geq Rs 1,000 crore.
- It will prescribe time limits for giving approvals and clearances.
- It will also monitor the progress of such projects.
- Headed by the PM.

2. Cabinet Committee on Employment and Skill Development:

- It is supposed to provide direction to all policies, programmes, schemes and initiatives for skill development.
- It is required to enhance workforce participation and foster employment growth.
- The panel will set targets for expeditious implementation of all skill development initiatives
- Headed by the PM.

Parliamentary Committees



A Parliamentary Committee means a committee that:

- Is appointed or elected by the House or nominated by the speaker/Chairman.
- Works under the direction of the Speaker/ Chairman.
- Presents its report to the House or to the Speaker/Chairman.
- Has a secretariat provided by LS/RS.

Note: The **appointment**, terms of office, functions and procedure of conducting business are regulated as per rules made by the two Houses under **Article 118(1)** of the Constitution.

Classification:

- **Standing Committees:** Permanent in nature. Ex- Public accounts committee, Estimates committee.
- **Ad-hoc committees:** Temporary in nature. Ex - Committee on MPLAD scheme. Ad hoc committees have two sub-parts 1. Select committees (constituted for specific purpose and membership limited to one house only); 2. Joint parliamentary committees (Have member from both the houses).

Functions of Parliamentary Committees:

- To ensure the accountability of Government to Parliament.
- Members of the House get a glimpse into the working of Governments and understand the practical problems and constraints.
- Members can engage with domain experts.
- Committees also provide a forum for building consensus across political parties.




- Parliamentary committees investigate issues and bills proposed so that the Parliament can be well informed before making a decision of national importance.
- It enhances the ability of Parliament to scrutinize government policies.

Important Parliamentary Committees




A. FINANCIAL COMMITTEES



Name	Composition	Major Function
 <p>Public Accounts Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 members (15 LS, 7 RS). • A Minister is not eligible for election to this Committee. • Term: 1 year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ascertain whether the money granted by Parliament has been spent by the Government within the scope of the Demand. • Note: The CAG acts as a guide, friend and philosopher of the PAC.
 <p>Estimates Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 members (all from LS). • A Minister is not eligible for election to this Committee. • Term: 1 year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report what improvements in organization with the policy underlying the estimates may be effected
 <p>Committee on Public Undertakings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 members (15 from LS, 7 from RS). • A Minister is not eligible for election to this Committee. • Term: 1 year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine the reports and accounts of Public Undertakings.




B. DEPARTMENTALLY RELATED STANDING COMMITTEES



 <p>Departmentally Related Standing Committees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 members (21 from LS, 10 from RS). • A Minister is not eligible to be nominated to these Committees. • Note: In 2004, the number of DRSC's was raised to 24 (from 17). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of Demands for Grants. • Examination of Bills. • Consideration of Annual Reports. • Consideration of national basic long-term policy documents presented to the House.
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C. COMMITTEES TO INQUIRE





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 <p>-----</p> <p>Committee on Privileges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 members in LS. • 10 members in RS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine the cases of breach of privileges of the House. • Note: It is semi-judicial in nature.
 <p>-----</p> <p>Ethics Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not fixed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine the cases of misconduct and recommend appropriate action.

D. COMMITTEES TO SCRUTINISE AND CONTROL






 <p>-----</p> <p>Committee on Government Assurances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 members in LS. • 15 members in RS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine the assurances, promises, and undertakings given by ministers from time to time on the floor of the house.
 <p>-----</p> <p>Committee on Subordinate Legislation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 members in LS. • 10 members in RS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine whether the powers to make laws, rules, etc delegated by the parliament to the Executive are being properly exercised.
 <p>-----</p> <p>Committee on Papers Laid on the Table</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 members in LS. • 10 members in RS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It examines all papers laid by Ministers to see whether they comply with provisions of the Constitution, or the related Act or Rule.
 <p>-----</p> <p>Committee on welfare of SCs and STs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 members (20 from LS, 10 from RS). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the reports of NCSC and NCST. • To examine all matters related to the welfare of SCs and STs.

 <p>Committee on Empowerment of Women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 members (20 from LS, 10 from RS). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the report of National Commission for Women. • To examine the measures with respect to women.
 <p>Joint Committee on Office of Profit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 members (10 from LS, 5 from RS)). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine the composition and character of committees. • To recommend whether persons holding these offices should be disqualified or not.

E. COMMITTEES RELATING TO DAY-TO-DAY BUSSINEES



 <p>Business Advisory Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 members in LS. • 11 members in RS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It regulates the program and timetable of the House.
 <p>Committee on Private Members' Bill and Resolutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a special committee of the LS and consists of 15 members including the Deputy Speaker as the Chairman. • RS doesn't have such a committee. • The same function in RS is performed by Business Advisory Committee of the house. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To classify bills and allocate time for discussion on bills and resolutions introduced by private members. Private Member: An MP who is not a minister.
 <p>Rules Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LS: 15 members (Speaker as the chairman) • RS: 16 members (Chairman as its ex officio chairman) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To recommend necessary amendments to the Rules of the house.



Committee on
Absence of Members
from Sitzings of the
House

- It is a **special committee** of LS and consists of 15 members.
- No such committee in RS.

- Examines the case of members who have been **absent for 60 days** or more without permission.

F. HOUSE-KEEPING COMMITTEES



General Purpose
Committee

- In each House, this committee consists of the **presiding officer** (Speaker / Chairman) as its **ex-officio chairman**.
- Other members include:
 - Deputy Speaker,
 - Members of panel of chairpersons of all the departmental standing committees of the House,
 - leaders of recognised parties and groups in the House
- Such other members as **nominated** by the **presiding officer**.

- To consider and advice on matters concerning affairs of the house which **do not fall** within the jurisdiction of **any other parliamentary committee**.



House Committee

- LS: 12 members.
- RS: not fixed.

- This committee deals with residential accommodation of members and other amenities.



Library Committee

- 9 members (6 from LS and 3 from RS).

- To consider all matters relating to library of the Parliament.



Joint Committee
on Salaries and
Allowances

- 15 members (10 from LS, 5 from RS).

- To frame rules for regulating payment of salary, allowances, and pensions to MPs.