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HANDLING OF PARLIAMENTARY WORK IN MINISTRIES

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs serves as an important link between the two Houses of Parliament and the Ministries/ Departments, and helps the Ministries in handling parliamentary work in various ways.

Manual of Parliamentary Procedures in the Government of India

The Ministry reviews and updates instructions issued from time to time regarding parliamentary procedures for the Ministries of the Government of India. The Ministry has recently reviewed and updated the manual and the updated manual is also available to the Ministries on the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs' website (<http://www.mpa.nic.in>) and in the form of a CD, apart from the revised printed edition.

Planning and Co-ordination of Government Business

The Ministry plans and coordinates the Government legislative and other business in Parliament, and reviews it from time to time as per requirement/preparedness of the Ministries. There is a separate chapter on 'Legislative and Financial Business of the Government' in this Handbook (**Chapter-4**).

Ordinances

The Ministry arranges for laying by the Minister/Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, copies of the ordinances issued by the Ministries during the Inter-session period, on the Table of both the Houses of Parliament. (Details are provided in **Chapter-4** on '**Legislative and Financial Business of the Government**'.)

Private Members' Business

The Ministry co-ordinates action in respect of approval of the Government stand by the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions in the two Houses of Parliament (This is discussed in **Chapter-6** on '**Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs**').

Allotment of Rooms

The Ministry has forty eight rooms in Parliament House for allotment to Ministers during the Parliament sessions for the facility in handling Parliamentary business (**Annex-XIII-A**). The Ministry allots rooms in the Parliament House to Ministers/ Ministers of State (MOS) for various Ministries before each session of Parliament with the approval of the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. Private Secretaries to the Ministers, Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha Secretariats, President's Secretariat, Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Secretariat and all others concerned are intimated (**Annex XIII-B**).

As the number of rooms available are much less than the number of Ministers, it is not possible to allot rooms to all the Ministers. The order of precedence for allotment of rooms to Ministers is as under :

- (1) Cabinet Ministers
- (2) Ministers of State (Independent Charge)
- (3) Ministers of State

(Note: Four rooms (9-12) are set apart for the Prime Minister's Office and one room (27) for the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha. The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs occupies two rooms, viz., 14 and 15. Certain rooms are also set apart for Ministers of State, Parliamentary Affairs. Two rooms are reserved for the Leaders of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha i.e. room Nos. 43 and 44).

The Ministry has, however, been taking up the matter with the Speaker, Lok Sabha, for providing more rooms for allotment to all the Ministers.

Roster of Attendance

In order to ensure the presence of some Minister(s) to represent the Government in the two Houses all the time when the House sits, the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs prepares a roster of attendance of Ministers/Ministers of States (Independent Charge)/Ministers of State, in the two Houses, before every Parliament session and the Ministers/Ministers of State are informed in advance by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (**Annex XIII-C**). A circular is also sent to all others concerned (**Annex XIII-D**).

Coordination of work in respect of States under the President's Rule

When any of the State(s) is(are) under President's Rule, important Legislative business in respect of the State(s) may be taken up in the two Houses of Parliament. The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs coordinates action in that regard in consultation with the Ministries concerned/Ministry of Home Affairs/Ministry of Law and Justice.

Training Courses

The Ministry organises short duration training courses in Parliamentary Practices and Procedures for the officers of Ministries for providing procedural guidance and practical tips [Details are provided in **Chapter 16** on 'Training of Officials (Ministries/Departments, State Governments)'].

Matters raised during Zero Hour

Members of Parliament, with the permission of the Presiding Officers, raise various urgent matters of public importance during Zero Hour. The Ministry forwards relevant extracts from the proceedings of the House to the Ministries for their information and such action as they deem necessary (**Annex XIII-E**). In cases where there is a direction from the Presiding Officer or an assurance from the Minister/Minister of State, Parliamentary Affairs, the related extracts are forwarded to the Minister concerned by the Minister/Minister of State, Parliamentary Affairs, the same day (**Annex XIII-F**). For this purpose, an official from Legislative-II Section is deputed to the Official Galleries of each House during Zero Hour. Besides, one Under Secretary of

the Ministry is also deputed to the Official Gallery of each House during Zero Hour to take note of important developments in the Houses and bring the same to the notice of the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (**Annexes XIII-G & H**).

Matters raised under Rule 377/Special Mentions

The Ministry forwards to the Ministries concerned, weekly lists of the matters raised in the two Houses to enable them to counter-check the position with the extracts received from the Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha Secretariat. The Ministry has also formulated procedural guidelines to facilitate processing and replies to these matters. The Ministry reviews pending matters from time to time, sends reminders to Ministries, organizes meetings with Secretaries/senior officers concerned to expedite replies to pending matters (Details are provided in **Chapter-8** on 'Monitoring Replies to Special Mentions and Rule 377 Issues').

Nomination of Members of Parliament on Government Bodies

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs nominates Members of Parliament on the Committees, Commissions, Boards, etc. set up by the Government and the Hindi Salahkar Samities of various Ministries. (Details are provided in **Chapter-12** on 'Appointment of Members of Parliament on Committees etc.')

Election of Members of Parliament on Parliamentary Financial Committees and Committee on Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

The three Financial Committees, viz., the Public Accounts Committee, the Estimate Committee and the Committee on Public Undertakings, and the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are constituted for a term of one year. While the Estimate Committee consists of Members of the Lok Sabha only, the remaining three committees consist of Members of both the Houses. The Members are elected on these committees from amongst the Members of the House(s) according to the principle of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote, after Motions to this effect (**Annexes XIII-I to O**), which are moved by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs in the Lok Sabha and by the Minister of

State for Parliamentary Affairs from the Rajya Sabha, in the Rajya Sabha, have been adopted by the respective Houses. Further, when any vacancy(ies) occurs on these committees due to resignation or demise of the Members serving on the committees, such vacancies are filled through the process of election after Motion(s) to that effect moved by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs or the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, as the case may be, has/have been adopted by the Lok Sabha in case of a vacancy relating to a Member of the Lok Sabha and by both Houses in case of a vacancy relating to the Rajya Sabha.

Implementation of Assurances

The Ministry coordinates action in culling out and forwarding the extracts of assurances given by the Ministers in the Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha, scrutinises the Implementation Reports received from the Ministries, arranges for laying of the sets of Implementation Reports duly authenticated by the Minister/Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs on the Tables of both the Houses. The Ministry also reviews pending assurances and reminds the Ministries concerned from time to time to expedite fulfilment of the parliamentary assurances. Further, the Ministry processes the reports of Committees on Government Assurances, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and takes up the matter with the Ministries for further necessary action. (Details are provided in Chapter-9 on 'Monitoring Assurances'.)

Compliance of Recommendations of Parliamentary Committees

The Ministry processes the recommendations of general nature contained in the reports of the following Parliamentary Committees (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) impressing upon the Ministries the need for their strict compliance:

- (i) Committees on Papers Laid;
- (ii) Committees on Subordinate Legislation; and
- (iii) Committees on Petitions.

Advice to Ministries

References are often received from the Ministries for advice on various parliamentary/constitutional matters such as parliamentary privileges, anti-defection law, code of conduct for

Members of Parliament, declaration of assets and liabilities by the Members, expenditure on a sitting of Parliament, official dealings between Members of Parliament and administration, attendance before Parliamentary Committees, provision of papers to them, etc. Though these subjects do not exactly relate to the functions allotted to the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs under the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961, the Ministry examines the requests with reference to rules, conventions, precedents, legal opinions in consultation with the Ministry of Law and other Ministries concerned and sends suitable replies.

General Instructions

In order to ensure compliance with various instructions, directions of the Speaker, Lok Sabha/Chairman, Rajya Sabha in respect of supplying factual information about Parliament Questions/Calling Attention Notices, copies of annual reports, etc., circulars are issued to the Ministries from time to time. Whenever D.O. letters/instructions on such and other important matters are issued to Ministries/Departments, copies thereof should be endorsed to concerned officers/sections in the Ministries for necessary action. For example, copy of D.O. letters issued under the signature of the Secretary to Secretaries of various Ministries/Departments on the above matters may be endorsed to the Joint Secretary. Similarly, copy of D.O. letters/instructions issued to Ministries/Departments under the signature of Joint Secretary may be endorsed to the concerned Deputy Secretary in the Ministry and copies of such communications issued under the signature of Deputy Secretary may be endorsed to concerned Under Secretary and Section Officer in the Ministry.

Addresses and Telephone Numbers of Officers dealing with Parliamentary Work

The Ministry compiles a directory of office addresses and telephone numbers (office and residence) of officers dealing with parliamentary work in various Ministries and in the Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha Secretariats, and provides it to the Ministries for facilitating contact and reference. Telephone numbers of Joint Secretary (Parliament) and Parliamentary Units of various

Ministries/Departments are also available on the website of the Ministry.

Notes on Emerging Trends

About a week before the commencement of every Parliament session, a list of issues likely to be raised by Members in the two Houses is submitted by Legislative-II Section for the information of the Minister. Ministries/Departments concerned with these and other issues, which in the opinion of the Ministries/Departments are important and can be raised in the Houses, are requested to furnish Brief Notes thereon to the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to enable the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, in his capacity as the Government Chief Whip, to reply to any point which may be raised in the Houses on the above issues (**Annex XIII-P**). A copy each of the Brief Notes, as and when received from the Ministries/Departments, is submitted to the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs from the Rajya Sabha.