

COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES

Composition

The Committee on the Welfare of Other Backward Classes consists of 30 members, 20 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha to be elected in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote. This system of election ensures that each Party/Group is represented on the Committee in proportion to its respective strength in the two Houses.

Process of Election

2. For constitution of the Committee, a motion is moved in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs or Chairperson of the Committee, if in office, calling upon members of the House to elect from amongst themselves 20 members to the Committee on the Welfare of Other Backward Classes. After the motion is adopted, a programme fixing the dates for filing the nominations/ withdrawal of candidature and the election, if necessary, is notified in Lok Sabha Bulletin— Part II. On receipt of nominations, a list of persons who have filed nomination papers is put up on the Notice Board. In case the number

of members who has filed nomination papers is equal to the number of members to be elected, after expiry of time for withdrawal of candidatures, the members who filed nomination papers are declared elected and the result published in Bulletin–Part II. If the number of members who filed nomination papers after withdrawal is more than the number of members to be elected, election is held on the stipulated date and result of election published in Bulletin–Part II.

Association of Members of Rajya Sabha

3. Another motion is moved in Lok Sabha recommending to Rajya Sabha that the Rajya Sabha do join in the Committee and Communicate to Lok Sabha the names of Members elected from amongst the Members of the Rajya Sabha to the Committee. When, the motion moved in Lok Sabha is adopted it is transmitted to Rajya Sabha through a message. Rajya Sabha accordingly communicates the names of ten members to Lok Sabha.

Appointment of Chairperson

4. The Chairperson of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the members of the Committee.

Minister not to be a Member of the Committee

5. A Minister is not eligible to be elected as a member of the Committee and a member of the Committee after

being appointed as Minister shall cease to be a member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.

Term of Office

6. The Members of the Committee shall hold office for a period of one year from the date of the first sitting of the Committee which shall be reconstituted thereafter for one year at a time.

Functions of the Committee

7. (i) To consider the reports submitted by the National Commission for Backward Classes and to report to both the Houses as to the measures that should be taken by the Union Government in respect of matters within the purview of the Union Government including the Administrations of the Union territories;
- (ii) To report to both the Houses on the action taken by the Union Government and the Administrations of the Union territories on the measures proposed by the Committee;
- (iii) To examine the measures taken by the Union Government to secure due representation of the Other Backward Classes, particularly the Most Backward Classes, in services and posts under its control (including appointments in the

public sector undertakings, statutory and semi-Government Bodies and in the Union territories) having regard to the provisions of the Constitution;

- (iv) To report to both the Houses on the working of the welfare programmes for the Other Backward Classes in the Union territories;
- (v) To consider generally and to report to both the Houses on all matters concerning the welfare of the Other Backward Classes which fall within the purview of Union Government including the Administrations of Union territories; and
- (vi) To examine such of matters as may deem fit to the Committee or are specifically referred to it by the House or the Speaker.

Thus, the Committee have mandate to examine all the Ministries/Departments under Government of India and Union territories' administration. The Committee do not consider matters of day-to-day administration of the Ministries/Departments. The Committee also do not generally consider matters which are under examination by other Parliamentary Committees.

Selection of Subjects for Examination

8. The Committee soon after constitution, select such subjects as they may deem fit pertaining to the

welfare of Other Backward Classes particularly the Most Backward Classes and the measures taken by Union Government to secure due representation of OBCs, in services and posts under its control (including appointments in the public sector undertakings, statutory and semi Government Bodies and in the Union territories) having regard to the provisions of the Constitution. The Committee also examine matters of special interest to the welfare of Other Backward Classes which may arise or come to the light in the course of its working or which may specifically be referred to it by the House or by the Speaker.

Calling for Information from Government

9. The Committee call, in the first instance, preliminary material from the Ministries/Departments of the Central Government concerned with the subjects under examination on the basis of questionnaires sent to them. After studying the material, a further questionnaire for written replies is sent to them, if considered necessary.

Evidence of Officials/Non-Officials

10. The Committee take evidence of the representatives of the Ministries/Departments and Central Public Undertakings, etc., concerned with the subjects

under examination. The Committee can also take evidence of non-officials whose evidence is considered to be of help to the Committee in its investigation. Verbatim record of the proceedings is kept.

Ministers not called before the Committee

11. The Minister is not called before the Committee either to give evidence or for consultation by the Committee.

Study Tours

12. The Committee also undertake Study Tours to various States and Union territories to make on-the-spot study of the subjects under examination and also to study other problems concerning the Other Backward Classes. The discussions held during the tours are of informal nature and for the purpose of gathering information in connection with the subjects under examination by the Committee. During the tours, the Committee also meet the representatives of Other Backward Classes Employees Welfare organisations and associations and receive memoranda and representations from them relating to their problems. A brief record of the various discussions held during the tour is kept and detailed tour reports are prepared which are got approved by the Chairperson/Convener.

Report and Minutes

13. The conclusions of the Committee on a subject are contained in their report which, after adoption by the Committee, is presented by the Chairperson to the Lok Sabha. A copy of the Report is also laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha. Minutes of the sittings of the Committee are presented/laid along with the report on the Table of Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha respectively.

The Reports of the Committee are adopted by consensus among the members. Accordingly, there is no system of appending minutes of dissent to the Report.

Action Taken Reports

14. After presentation of Report to Lok Sabha, copies thereof are forwarded to the Ministry or the Department concerned which is required to take action on the recommendations and conclusions contained in the Report and furnish action taken replies thereon within three months.

Action Taken replies received from the Ministries/ Departments are examined by the Committee and then action taken reports of the Committee are presented to Lok Sabha and laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha in the usual manner.

Statements of Action Taken on Action Taken Reports

15. Replies received from Government in respect of recommendations contained in the Action Taken Reports are also laid on the Table of Lok Sabha/ Rajya Sabha in the form of Statements.

Disposal of Complaints/Representations

16. The Committee also receive complaints/ representations from the people belonging to the Other Backward Classes and also from various OBC Employees' Welfare Associations ventilating their grievances on matters pertaining to their welfare. The complaints/representations received are examined and cases felt genuine are referred to Union/State Government authorities for redressal or comments.

[The constitution and working of the Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes are governed by Rules 253 to 286 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha and Directions 48 to 73 of the Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha.]

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PREFACE

This Abstract is part of the Parliamentary Procedure Abstracts Series and describes the procedure regarding Committee on the Welfare of Other Backward Classes. It is based on the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the Directions issued by the Speaker under the Rules of Procedure and the Procedure and Practice of the Committee on the Welfare of Other Backward Classes. It is intended to serve as a handy guide for ready reference.

The information contained in this Abstract is, however, not exhaustive. It will, therefore, be prudent to refer to and rely on the original sources for full information.

NEW DELHI

Secretary General