CHAPTER 3
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

3.1 STANDING COMMITTEES (HOUSE COMMITTEES) OF RAJYA SABHA

The following are the Standing Committees (House Committees) of Rajya Sabha consisting exclusively of Members of Rajya Sabha as provided in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States:

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The functions, etc. of each of these Committees are described below in brief:

3.1.1 Business Advisory Committee (Rules 30 - 37 of the Rules of Procedure)

The Business Advisory Committee is constituted under Rule 30(1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha. It consists of eleven members, including the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, nominated by the Chairman. The Chairman is the Chairman of the Committee. If the Chairman is for any reason unable to preside over
any meeting of the Committee, the Deputy Chairman acts as the Chairman for that meeting. The Quorum of the meeting is five. The Committee holds office until a new Committee is nominated. Normally the Committee is reconstituted every year.

A few other Members belonging to different political parties, which are not represented on the Committee are specially invited to attend the sittings of the Committee as Special Invitees.

The function of the Committee is to recommend 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 may also 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.

All proposals for late sittings of the House, dispensing with the Question Hour or lunch hour, extension of sittings of the House beyond the normal hours of adjournment and fixing additional sittings/cancellation of sittings are placed before the Committee for its recommendation.

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 and is then notified in Parliamentary Bulletin, Part-II.

The Committee may also generally identify matters of public interest in respect of which Calling Attention or Short Duration Discussion notices have been received, and which could be listed for being taken up in the House with the permission of the Chairman.

During the Budget Session, the Committee also decides on the Ministries whose working may be taken up for detailed discussion in the second half of the Session. The Committee may also perform such other functions as may be assigned to it by the Chairman from time to time.

3.1.2 Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (Rules 212H-212O of the Rules of Procedure)

The Committee on Papers Laid on the Table is constituted under Rule 212H of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha. It consists of ten Members nominated by the Chairman (212 I). The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Chairman
from amongst the members of the Committee (212J). If the Chairman of
the Committee is absent from any meeting, the Committee chooses another
member to act as Chairman of the Committee for that meeting. The
Committee holds office till the new Committee is nominated. Normally
the Committee is reconstituted every year in order to constitute a meeting
of the Committee, the quorum is five (212K).

The Committee was set up on the 3 March 1982 to examine papers
and documents tabled in the Rajya Sabha as part of a constitutional or
statutory obligation of the Government, in order to keep the Council and
its Members informed of activities and actions of the Government and
Government funded or Government aided bodies.

After a paper is laid before the Council by a Minister, the Committee
considers:

(a) Whether there has been compliance with the provisions of the
Constitution or the Act of Parliament or any other law, rule or
regulation in pursuance of which the paper has been so laid;

(b) Whether 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) Whether the paper has been laid before the Council both in
English and Hindi and if not, (i) 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 (ii) whether those
reasons are satisfactory (212H).

The Committee performs such other functions in respect of the papers
laid on the Table as may be assigned to it by the Chairman or the Council
from time to time.

A Session-wise Report is prepared with reference to all the papers
laid during a Session with regard to the above mentioned points. The
Committee may also examine and report on any specific paper laid on the
Table if circumstances so require. 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 (212M).

Member wishing to raise any matter with regard to tabling of
Government papers has to approach the Committee and not raise the
same in the House (212O).
3.1.3 Committee on Petitions (Rules 147 - 153 of the Rules of Procedure)

The Committee on Petitions is constituted under Rule 147 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha. It consists of ten members nominated by the Chairman. The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Chairman from amongst the members of the Committee (provided that if the Deputy Chairman is a member of the Committee, he/she is appointed as the Chairman of the Committee). If the Chairman of the Committee is absent from any meeting, the Committee chooses another member to act as Chairman of the Committee for that meeting. If the Chairman of the Committee is for any reason unable to act, the Chairman may appoint another Chairman of the Committee in his place. The Committee holds office till a new Committee is nominated. Normally, the Committee is reconstituted every year. The quorum of the Committee is five.

The functions of the Committee are to examine every petition referred to it, and, if the petition complies with the rules, 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 cases. 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. A copy of the Report after its presentation to the Council, is also sent to the first petitioner and to the Member countersigning the petition, if any.

On the 22 June 1976 the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, issued a direction to the Committee enabling it to frame rules for its internal working. Thereafter, the Committee at its sitting held on 30 August 1976 adopted a set of rules for its internal working. Under these rules, the Committee pursues with the Government the recommendations made in its reports presented to the House from time to time in order to ensure their effective implementation. The Ministries/Departments of the Government are asked to inform the Committee within six months from the date of presentation of the report, about the action taken or proposed to be taken by them on the reports. Where the Ministries/Departments find difficulty in implementing any recommendation, they are required to state the nature of the problem giving convincing reasons for the satisfaction of the Committee. The Committee is empowered, wherever necessary, to present further reports on the petitions considered earlier by it.
3.1.4 Committee of Privileges (Rules 187-203 of the Rules of Procedure)

Parliamentary Privileges are available to Members so that they may perform their Parliamentary duties without let or hindrance. Article 105 of the Constitution governs the powers, privileges and immunities of Parliament and its Members. Members can raise questions of breach of privilege in the House with consent of the Chairman. Members desirous of raising a question of breach of privilege are required to give notice in writing to the Secretary-General (Rule 188).

The questions of privileges may be referred to the Committee of Privileges either by the Chairman or by the House. Generally, the Chairman considers the questions of privileges in the light of the facts and circumstances of the case and if he is of the view that there is prima facie a case of breach of privilege involved in the matter, he may refer it to the Committee of Privileges for examination, investigation and report.

The Committee of Privileges is constituted under Rule 192 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha. It consists of ten members nominated by the Chairman. The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Chairman from amongst the members of the Committee. If the Chairman of the Committee is absent from any meeting, the Committee chooses another member to act as Chairman of the Committee for that meeting. The quorum for holding a meeting of the Committee is five. The Committee holds office till a new Committee is nominated. Normally the Committee is reconstituted every year.

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. As a practice, the motion for consideration of the report is moved only in case some action is recommended by 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.

3.1.5 Committee on Rules (Rules 216-220 of the Rules of Procedure)

The Committee on Rules is constituted under Rule 217 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha. It consists of sixteen members including the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman nominated by the Chairman. Hon’ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha is the Chairman of the Committee. If the Chairman is for any reason unable to act as the Chairman of the Committee, the Deputy Chairman acts as the Chairman of the Committee in his place. If the Chairman or the Deputy Chairman, as the case may be, is for any reason unable to preside over any meeting, the Committee chooses another member to act as the Chairman of the Committee for that meeting. The Committee holds office till a new Committee is nominated. Normally the Committee is reconstituted every year.

The Committee meets to consider matters relating to rules of procedure and conduct of business in the Rajya Sabha and recommends any amendments or additions to the rules that may be deemed necessary. The quorum for holding a meeting of the Committee is seven.

The 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. Members by giving prior notice 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.

The amendments to the rules as approved by the House come into force on such date as the Chairman may appoint.

3.1.6 Committee on Subordinate Legislation (Rules 204-212 of the Rules of Procedure)

The Committee on Subordinate Legislation of Rajya Sabha has been set up under Rule 204 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States to scrutinize and ensure that powers to make
rules, regulations, bye-laws, schemes or other statutory instruments hereinafter referred to as the ‘Order’ conferred by the Constitution or delegated by Parliament have been properly exercised within such conferment or delegation, as the case may be.

The Committee scrutinizes all ‘Orders’ whether laid on the Table of the Council or not, issued in exercise of powers delegated by Parliament as also those framed in exercise of powers conferred by the Constitution of India.

(i) The Rajya Sabha Committee on Subordinate Legislation was first constituted on the 30 September 1964. The Committee consists of fifteen members including the Chairman.

(ii) As per Rule 205(2), the Committee holds office until a new Committee is nominated. Normally, the Committee is reconstituted every year.

(iii) Parliament enacts laws from time to time by way of Central “Acts” and these Acts are implemented by the various Ministries/Departments of Government of India, i.e. the Executive. It is a well recognized principle that the law enacted by Parliament cannot be comprehensive enough so as to visualize each and every eventuality that may arise during the course of its implementation and make a provision for it in the Act in anticipation. In order to cover for such contingencies, the Central Acts generally contain a provision authorizing the Central Government to frame rules/regulations, etc. in certain specified areas to enable Government to carry out the objective of the Act. These rules/regulations framed in exercise of the powers conferred by an Act of Parliament is termed as “Subordinate Legislation”. In a similar manner, framing of Subordinate Legislation is also contemplated in the Constitution of India.

(iv) Directions issued by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha (10.4.1984)

“(a) The Committee on Subordinate Legislation may examine all ‘Orders’, whether laid before the Council or not, framed in pursuance of the provisions of the Constitution or a statute delegating power to a subordinate authority, to make such orders.

(b) The Committee may examine provisions of Bills which seek to—
(1) delegate powers to make ‘Orders’, or
(2) amend earlier Acts delegating such powers, with a view to see whether suitable provisions for the laying of the ‘Orders’ before the Council have been made therein.

(c) The Committee may examine any other matter relating to an ‘Order’ or any question of Subordinate Legislation arising therefrom."

Rule 209 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha lays down the functions of the Committee thus:

“After each rule, regulation, byelaw, scheme or other statutory instrument (hereinafter referred to as the ‘Order’) framed in pursuance of the Constitution or the legislative functions delegated by Parliament to a subordinate authority and which is required to be laid before Parliament, is so laid before the Council, the Committee shall, in particular consider:

(a) Whether the Order is in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution or the Act pursuant to which it is made;

(b) Whether the Order contains matter which in the opinion of the Committee should more properly be dealt within an Act of Parliament;

(c) Whether the Order contains imposition of taxation;

(d) Whether the Order directly or indirectly bars the jurisdiction of the Courts;

(e) Whether the Order gives retrospective effect to any of the provisions in respect of which the Constitution or the Act does not expressly give any such power;

(f) Whether the Order involves expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India or the public revenues;

(g) Whether the Order 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 laying before Parliament; and
(i) Whether for any reason, the form or purport of the order calls for any elucidation.”

Besides the functions as enumerated in Rule 209, the Committee goes into matters, where the ‘Orders’ as contemplated in the Constitution or envisaged in an Act of Parliament have not been framed or the framing thereof has been inordinately delayed.

In practice, the Committee scrutinizes all ‘Orders’ made by the Government of India or by any other subordinate authority ultimately responsible to the Government and which are published in the Gazette of India or laid on the Table. The Committee, however, does not scrutinize the ‘Orders’ which are made by the State Governments in exercise of the powers conferred on them by an Act of Parliament (for instance, ‘Orders’ made under the Motor Vehicles Act or Labour Laws enacted by Parliament). Similarly, the Committee does not scrutinize the rules which are made by the Supreme Court under Article 145, by the High Courts under the Code of Civil Procedure, and the rules made by the President in consultation with the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and the Speaker of the Lok Sabha under Article 98(3) of the Constitution.

During the course of scrutiny of the rules, regulations, etc., if any point in regard to exercise of rule-making power by the subordinate authority arises, clarifications are sought from the concerned Ministry/Department. The matter is then placed before the Committee, indicating the points referred and the Ministry’s comments thereon, in the form of a Memorandum, giving details of the provisions objected to and the grounds of objection. The Committee considers the memorandum and comes to its own conclusion. If it is considered necessary, the representatives of the Ministry are called to appear before the Committee to be heard in person for seeking further elucidations. The Committee may also call for views/suggestions of individuals of organizations on rules/regulations in appropriate cases for having relevant inputs before finalizing its recommendations. The observations and recommendations of the Committee on various points scrutinized by the Committee find place in its reports.

The Committee scrutinizes all the rules/regulations/statutory orders laid before the Council of States from time to time with a view to ensure that these are laid timely and properly. The Committee presents a separate report to the House in respect of the Subordinate Legislation laid before the Council during each session, pointing out the deficiencies and also making appropriate recommendations.
The Committee examines all new central Acts which provide for framing of Subordinate Legislation and takes up with the Government the timely framing of Subordinate Legislation contemplated therein.

The Committee also examines and scrutinizes representations having a bearing on the rules and regulations and other delegated legislation, which are presented to it by individuals, associations, institutions and private bodies. The Committee hears the petitioners, representatives of such associations and institutions and seeks clarifications on the points mentioned in the representations and also seeks necessary clarifications from the departments concerned before making its observations or recommendations.

The Committee, sometimes, undertakes on-the-spot study with a view to gain first-hand knowledge of facts.

The Committee presents its report to the Rajya Sabha from time to time.

The Committee has its own procedure for pursuing its recommendations and ensuring implementation thereof. The Committee also reports implementation matters to the House from time to time.

3.1.7 Committee on Government Assurances (Rules 212A-212G of the Rules of Procedure)

The Committee on Government Assurances which came into existence on the 1 July 1972 for the first time in the Rajya Sabha is constituted under Rule 212 (A) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha. The Committee consists of ten Members nominated by the Chairman and holds office until a new Committee is nominated. Normally, the Committee is reconstituted every year. The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Chairman from amongst the Members of the Committee. If the Chairman of the Committee is absent from any meeting, the Committee may choose another member to act as Chairman of the Committee for that meeting. In order to constitute a meeting of the Committee, the quorum is five.

The functions of the Committee are to scrutinise the assurances, promises, undertakings, etc. given by the Ministers, from time to time on the floor of the House and to report (a) the extent to which such assurances, promises, undertakings etc. have been fully or satisfactorily implemented; and (b) 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 reason therefor.
The Committee determines its own procedure in respect of all matters relating to the consideration of any question of assurances, promises, undertakings etc. in the Committee. The Committee Chairman has been authorized to grant extension of time for implementation of assurances in respect of cases where request of Ministries for such extensions from time to time does not exceed the period of one year.

The Report of the Committee is presented to the Rajya Sabha by the Committee Chairman or in his absence, by any Member of the Committee. Apart from specific cases of assurances, the report generally contains analysis of cases where the Government has taken a long time in the implementation of assurances, cases of requests for extension of time in implementation of assurances, assurances which do not appear to have fully or satisfactorily implemented, review of pending assurances, and assurances which have been recommended for dropping.

All the relevant details relating to assurances *e.g.* Assurance No., source and date, subject, extent of Assurance, reasons for pendency, extension given with date, date of the laying of Implementation Report and date of dropping, etc. are available on Rajya Sabha Website with software driven search facility.

### 3.1.8 General Purposes Committee (Rules 278 - 285 of the Rules of Procedure)

The General Purposes Committee is constituted under Rule 279 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States. It consists of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, members of the Panel of Vice-Chairmen, Chairmen of all Standing Parliamentary Committees of Rajya Sabha, Leaders of recognized 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 Committee holds office until a new Committee is nominated. Normally the Committee is re-constituted every year. Its functions 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.

The Committee has considered a variety of subjects of procedural, ceremonial and functional nature. The quorum of the Committee is one third of its total membership. A record of the decisions of the Committee is maintained and circulated to its members under the direction of the Chairman.

The Committee may, if it deems fit, make a special report on any matter that arises or comes to light in the course of its work which it may
consider necessary to bring to the notice of the Chairman or the House, notwithstanding that such matter is not directly connected with, or does not fall within or is not incidental to, its terms of reference. The Report of the Committee is presented to the Council by the Deputy Chairman or in his/her absence, by any Member of the Committee. The Committee may with the approval of the Chairman make detailed rules of procedure to supplement the provisions contained in the rules in Chapter XXIII.

3.1.9 House Committee (Rules 212P-212W of the Rules of Procedure)

The House Committee was set up for the first time in 1952. The House Committee consists of ten members nominated by the Chairman. The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Chairman from amongst the members of the Committee. The Committee holds office till a new Committee is nominated. Normally the Committee is reconstituted every year.

The functions of the Committee are, (i) to deal with all questions relating to the allotment of residential accommodation to Members of the 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. The Chairmen of the House Committees of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha confer together from time to time in this regard.

3.1.10 Committee on Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS)

The Committee on Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS), Rajya Sabha was constituted by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha on the 5 September 1998. It consists of ten Members including the Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha, who is also the Chairman of the Committee. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is the nodal Ministry pertaining to the MPLAD Scheme and responsible for the policy formation, release of funds and prescribing monitoring mechanism for implementation of the Scheme. The salient features of the Scheme are:—

(i) The works under the Scheme are to be developmental in nature, based on the locally felt needs and should lead to creation of durable assets of national priorities which should be available for public use at large. However, there is a list of works which are not permissible under the Scheme.
(ii) Elected Members of Lok Sabha can select/recommend works in their own constituencies. Elected Members of Rajya Sabha representing the whole of the State as they do, may select works for implementation in one or more districts as they may choose. Nominated Members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha may select works for implementation in one or more districts anywhere in the country.

(iii) The annual MPLADS fund entitlement per MP constituency is Rs. 2 crore. Each Member will have a choice to suggest to the District Collector works to the tune of Rupees two crores. The per year allocation of Rs. two crores will be released in two instalments of Rupees one crore each. The first instalment will be released in the beginning of the financial year. The second instalment of the fund will be released only when the balance amount of unsanctioned works is less than Rs. 50 lakh and the unspent balance is less than Rs. 1 crore and also Utilization Certificate for the previous financial year and the Audit Certificate for the funds released for MP concerned in the year prior to the previous year have been furnished by District Authority.

(iv) An MP may contribute up to Rs. 25 lakh for community infrastructure and public utility building works being done by registered society/trust, however, there is no upper limit on individual work to be executed by Government departments/agencies.

(v) An MP may contribute Rs. 50 lakh in a year for rehabilitation works in the event of the natural calamity of rare severity in any part of the country.

(vi) The Committee on MPLADS, Rajya Sabha does not directly involve itself with the monitoring of the projects executed under MPLADS. It, however, conducts periodic site visits to assess the works executed/being executed under MPLADS.

The MPLAD Scheme is administered through a set of Guidelines framed by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. The Guidelines are revised by the Ministry from time to time to incorporate suggestions and demands of Members of Parliament and to keep pace with changing times. The Committee on MPLADS provides valuable inputs and suggestions for revision of the Guidelines. The MPLADS Committee looks into all aspect of the list of works permissible under the guidelines. The Committee monitors the timely release of funds by the Ministry to the
District Collectors, proper and timely execution of the recommended works by the Members and suggests measures for removal of bottlenecks. It forwards the grievances of the Members to the Ministry and suggests measures for their speedy disposal. It also considers the proposals received from the Government/M.Ps requiring relaxation in the Guidelines and gives suitable recommendations.

The Committee holds meetings at regular intervals to examine various issues referred to it by the Members, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation and Lok Sabha Committee on MPLADS and recommends amendments to the guidelines wherever necessary.

The Reports of the Committee are presented to the House from time to time by the Chairman of the Committee.

3.1.11 Committee on Provision of Computer Equipment to Members of Rajya Sabha

This Committee was constituted by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha on the 18th March, 1997 and it considers issues ranging from norms for provision of computer hardware and software to be made available to Members from time to time to application of Information Technology in the functioning of Rajya Sabha and taking steps to increase the use of electronic mode for information dissemination to Members. The Committee functions to give effect to the Provision of Computer Equipment (Members of Rajya Sabha and Officers) Rules, 2008. The Committee consists of seven members who are nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha. The Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha is the Chairman of the Committee.

3.1.12 Committee on Ethics (Rules 286-303 of the Rules of Procedure)

The Committee on Ethics was constituted on the 4 March 1997 by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha to oversee the moral and ethical conduct of its Members and to examine the cases referred to it with reference to ethical and other misconduct of Members. Leaders/Deputy Leaders/Chief Whips/Whips of Parliamentary Parties/Groups in Rajya Sabha are normally nominated as Members of the Committee on Ethics.

Chapter XXIV relating to Committee on Ethics (Rules 286-303) was added to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States w.e.f. the 20 July 2004. Under these rules, the Chairman, from time to time, nominates ten Members to the Committee. The Committee so nominated shall hold office until a new Committee is nominated. Casual vacancies in the Committee are filled by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha (Rule 287).
The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha from amongst the members of the Committee. If the Chairman of the Committee is for any reason unable to act, the Chairman, Rajya Sabha may appoint another Member as Chairman of the Committee in his place. If the Chairman of the Committee is absent from any meeting, the Committee shall choose another Member to act as Chairman of the Committee for that meeting (Rule 288). The quorum of the Committee is five (Rule 289).

The Committee has the following functions (Rule 290), namely:—

(a) to oversee the moral and ethical conduct of Members;

(b) to prepare a Code of Conduct for Members and to suggest amendments or additions to the Code from time to time in the form of reports to the Council;

(c) to examine cases concerning the alleged breach of the Code of Conduct by Members as also cases concerning allegations of any other ethical misconduct of Members; and

(d) to tender advice to Members from time to time on questions involving ethical standards either *suo motu* or on receiving specific requests.

The Report of the Committee is presented to the Council by the Chairman of the Committee or in his absence by any Member of the Committee (Rule 298). As soon, as may be, after a report has been presented, a motion in the name of the Chairman of the Committee or any Member of the Committee may be put down that the report be taken into consideration (Rule 299). Any Member of the Council may give notice for amendment to the motion for consideration of the report in such form as may be considered appropriate by the Chairman (Rule 300). 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 Council agrees, or disagrees or agrees with amendments, with the recommendations contained in the report (Rule 301).

### 3.1.12.1 Declaration of Assets and Liabilities

The Committee also acts as record keeper and overseer of the declaration of assets and liabilities by Members, under the Members of Rajya Sabha (Declaration of Assets and Liabilities) Rules, 2004, framed by the Chairman, Council of States under sub-Section (3) of Section 75A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and Rule 292 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha).
Under Rule 3 of the Members of the Rajya Sabha (Declaration of Assets and Liabilities) Rules, 2004 every elected Member of the Council is required to furnish as in Form-I the following information to the Chairman, Rajya Sabha within ninety days from the date of his taking oath or making affirmation:—

(a) the movable and immovable property of which he, his spouse and his dependent children are jointly or severally owners or beneficiaries;

(b) his liabilities to any public financial institution; and

(c) his liabilities to the Central Government or to the State Governments.

Information so furnished by Members, is appropriately entered in a register known as “Register of Assets and Liabilities”. The information contained in the Register shall be made available to any person with written permission of the Chairman (Rule 4 ibid.).

Every Member after initial declaration shall also notify changes, if any, in the information so furnished by him as on the 31st day of March every year, by the 30 June of that year.

“Assets and Liabilities” includes declaration of movable and immovable assets of the Members of Rajya Sabha, their spouse and dependent children, owned in India as well as abroad and liabilities of the Members in India and abroad.

3.1.12.2 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

Members of Rajya Sabha are required to furnish declarations regarding five pecuniary interests i.e., Remunerative Directorship, Regular Remunerated Activity, Shareholding of Controlling Nature, Paid Consultancy and Professional Engagement in the prescribed form for registration in “Register of Members’ Interests”. The information contained in the Register shall be made available to the Members for inspection on request. It may also be given to the general public in accordance of such rules and procedure laid down by the Committee (Rule 293).

Every Member shall furnish the information as per the prescribed form within ninety days from the date on which he/she makes and subscribes oath or affirmation for taking his/her seat and shall also notify the changes, if any, in the information so furnished by him/her as on the 31 March every year, within ninety days from the date.

“Pecuniary Interests” means declarations by the Members of Rajya Sabha in respect of their pecuniary interests, in India as well as abroad.
Whenever a member has a personal or specific pecuniary interest (direct or indirect) in a matter being considered by the Council or a Committee thereof, he shall declare the nature of such interest notwithstanding any registration of his interests in the Register, and shall not participate in any debate taking place in the Council or its Committees before making such declaration (Rule 294). The said rule also lays down the procedure to be followed when the vote of a Member is challenged on a division in the House, on the ground of personal, pecuniary or direct interest in the matter to be decided.

3.2 STANDING COMMITTEES (General)

As per the rules governing the Standing Committees (House Committees), they hold office until new Committees are constituted. However, in practice, these Committees are re-constituted every year, barring certain occasions when due to biennial retirement of approximately one third of Members of Rajya Sabha and a number of vacancies arising in the Committees, the process of the re-constitution of Committees is deferred till the biennial elections are over.

The nominations of Members and appointment of Chairmen (except GPC, Business Advisory Committee and Committee on Rules, where the Chairman, Rajya Sabha is himself the Chairman of these Committees) are made by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, based on an informal mechanism whereby the quota of each major party, on the basis of their numerical strength, is worked out in a meeting of Leaders of Parties convened by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and the names of Members are obtained from the respective Party Leaders. The nominations of Members from smaller parties (having a strength of less than 5) including nominated/independent Members are made by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha taking into account their individual preferences, if any, and their areas of interest/specialization. Casual vacancies in the Committees arising from time to time are filled up by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha and in case a vacancy is caused by a Member belonging to a major party (having a strength of 5 or more), the same is generally filled by nomination of a Member from the party to which the outgoing Member belonged and, for this purpose, suggestion is invited from the party leader. The quorum to constitute sittings of these Committees is by and large 50% of their Membership except the Committee on Subordinate Legislation and General Purposes Committee, where the quorum prescribed is nearly one third of their Membership.

In so far as the General Purposes Committee (GPC) and the Committee on Ethics are concerned, the procedure is slightly different. Under Rule 279 (1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha), the Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha,
Members of the panel of the Vice-Chairmen, Chairmen of all Standing Parliamentary Committees of the Council, leaders of recognized parties and groups in the Council are nominated to the Committee in addition to such other Members as may be nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha. The Chairman, Rajya Sabha is the ex-officio Chairman of the Committee. This Committee is generally reconstituted after the process of reconstitution of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees and the House Committees is over.

As regards the Committee on Ethics, it is not reconstituted every year and though Rule 287(1) provides that the Chairman, Rajya Sabha shall, from time to time, nominate a Committee on Ethics consisting of ten Members, yet in actual practice, the leaders of major parties, as per their numerical strength in the House, are nominated to be the Members of the Committee and in case the leaders happen to be Ministers or otherwise cannot spare themselves, then the Deputy Leaders or Chief Whips/Whips of the parties are considered for nomination. After accommodating the leaders of major parties, if any vacancy is still left, then other Members from smaller parties/Nominated/Independent Members are nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha on this Committee having regard to their areas of interest/specialisation. Casual vacancies in the GPC and the Committee on Ethics are filled up in the same manner. Under Rule 288(1) the Chairman, Rajya Sabha also nominates the Chairman of the Committee on Ethics from amongst its Members.

3.3 FINANCIAL COMMITTEES

3.3.1 Committee on Public Accounts (Rules 308 - 309 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha)

The Committee on Public Accounts is primarily a Committee of the Lok Sabha and it has been provided in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The Committee consists of not more than fifteen Members from the Lok Sabha and seven Members from the Rajya Sabha for being associated with the Committee. They are elected by the respective Houses every year from amongst their Members according to the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. The Speaker, Lok Sabha appoints the Chairman of the Committee from amongst the Members of the Committee. The term of office of Members of the Committee is one year; it can, however, be extended in a special case by a motion adopted by the Houses. A Minister is not elected to the Committee and if any Member after his election to the Committee is appointed a Minister, he ceases to be a Member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.
A new Committee is elected every year before the expiry of the term of office of the outgoing Committee, but it enters upon office only on the expiry of the term of the previous Committee. Usually, the Committee is set up after the general elections when the new Lok Sabha is constituted and, thereafter, every year.

The main function of the Committee is to examine the Appropriation Accounts and the Annual Finance Accounts of the Government of India and such other Accounts laid before Parliament as the Committee may think fit. The Committee also examines statements of accounts of corporations, autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies (excluding public undertakings which have been allotted to the Committee on Public Undertakings).

The report of the Committee is laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha simultaneously with its presentation to the Lok Sabha. Generally, the Committee’s reports are not discussed unless there is a specific issue of serious nature.

3.3.2 Committee on Public Undertakings (Rules 312A – 312B of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha)

The Committee on Public Undertakings too is primarily a Committee of the Lok Sabha and it has been provided in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The Committee consists of fifteen Members of the Lok Sabha and seven Members of the Rajya Sabha for being associated with the Committee. The procedure in this respect is the same as is adopted in the case of Public Accounts Committee. The term of office of Members of the Committee is one year; it can, however, be extended in a special case by a motion adopted by the Houses. A Minister is not elected to the Committee and if any Member after his election to the Committee is appointed a Minister, he ceases to be a Member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.

The functions of the Committee are to examine the working of the Public Undertakings specified in the Fourth Schedule to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. Every Report of the Committee is laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha simultaneously with its presentation to the Lok Sabha.

3.4 DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEES (Rules 268—277 of the Rules of Procedure)

The following Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees are constituted under Rule 268 of the Rules of Procedure and
Conduct of Business in the Council of States and Rule 331C of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha:

1. Committee on Commerce;
2. Committee on Home Affairs;
3. Committee on Human Resource Development;
4. Committee on Industry;
5. Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests;
6. Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture;
7. Committee on Health and Family Welfare;
8. Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice;
9. Committee on Agriculture;
10. Committee on Information Technology;
11. Committee on Defence;
12. Committee on Energy;
13. Committee on External Affairs;
14. Committee on Finance;
15. Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution;
16. Committee on Labour;
17. Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas;
18. Committee on Railways;
19. Committee on Urban Development;
20. Committee on Water Resources;
21. Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers;
22. Committee on Rural Development;
23. Committee on Coal and Steel; and
24. Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment.

Each of the above mentioned Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees is related to the Ministries/Departments as specified in the Third Schedule to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States and consists of 31 Members, 10 Members nominated by the Chairman from amongst the Members of the Rajya Sabha and 21 Members nominated by the Speaker from amongst the Members of the Lok Sabha. As per Rule 74(1) relating to the Select Committee on Bills, which applies *mutatis mutandis* to the Department-related
Parliamentary Standing Committees, the quorum of the Committee shall be one-third of the total number of Members of the Committee. Out of the 24 Committees, the Committees mentioned against serial No. 1 to 8 are under the administrative control of the Chairman, Rajya Sabha and their Chairmen are appointed by him from amongst the Members of the Committee belonging to the Rajya Sabha. The remaining 16 Committees are under the administrative control of the Speaker, Lok Sabha who appoints their Chairmen from amongst the Members of the Committees belonging to Lok Sabha. A Member of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee holds office for a term not exceeding one year at a time. Allocation of seats in the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees to all the parties is done on the basis of proportional representation. Based on the numerical strength of various parties in Rajya Sabha, total slots available to each party in all the 24 Committees, as also the maximum slots available to each party in every Committee are determined. This allocation of slots is communicated to Leaders of all the major parties/groups in Rajya Sabha (having numerical strength of 5 or more) for recommending the names of their Members for nomination by Chairman, Rajya Sabha to the Committees. Nomination of Members belonging to smaller parties/groups (having numerical strength of less than 5) and Independent/Nominated Members is done by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha on the basis of requests received, professional background of the Member etc., subject to availability of vacancies in the Committees.

In case of major parties, any request for nomination/change in nomination should come through the concerned Party leader. A Member appointed as a Minister shall not be nominated as, or continue as, a Member of the Committee.

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.
These Standing Committees are barred from considering matters of day-to-day administration of the related Ministries/Departments.

After the general discussion on the Budget in the Houses is over, the Houses are adjourned for a fixed period (Budget recess), of about 3-4 weeks. During this period the Demands for Grants of related Ministries/Departments are considered by these Committees which also hear oral presentation from the Ministries. The Committees present their reports to both Houses at the commencement of the second half of the Budget Session.

At other times, Department-related Committees meet to consider Bills introduced in either House and referred to them, or matters of policy, including Annual Reports of the Ministries. Reports of Department-related Committees in addition to being presented/tabled in the Houses are also sent to the Ministries concerned but the recommendations are not binding, having only a persuasive value, as considered advice of a Parliamentary Committee.

Committees are assisted and served by Committee Sections, each headed by a Committee Officer/Assistant Director, and supervised by the Deputy Director and Joint Director/Director. A Joint Secretary generally coordinates the management of the respective Committee Sections. The Committee Sections make the arrangements for the Committee meetings, circulate papers for the meetings, provide background material, maintain the minutes and draft the Committee Reports under supervision of their Senior Officers.

Committee meetings are generally of two types:—meetings to consider memoranda and/or consider draft reports and meetings to hear evidence.

Meetings to hear evidence are formal and structured and all questions to the witnesses are to be put by Members with the permission of the Chairman.

The proceedings of the Committees are confidential. No Member or witness can make them public.

3.5 JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

3.5.1 Joint Committee on Offices of Profit

The Committee is constituted on adoption of a motion to that effect by the Lok Sabha and concurred in by the Rajya Sabha. The Committee consists of fifteen Members—ten from the Lok Sabha and five from the
Rajya Sabha—elected by respective Houses according to the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. A casual vacancy occurring in the Committee from amongst Members of the Rajya Sabha is filled on a motion adopted by the Lok Sabha recommending to the Rajya Sabha to fill that vacancy. The Committee is constituted for the duration of each Lok Sabha. The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the Members of the Committee.

The function of the Committee is generally to examine the composition and character of Government Committees and to recommend in relation to them what offices should or should not disqualify holders thereof for being chosen as and for being a Member of Parliament under Article 102(1)(a) of the Constitution of India. The Committee also recommends from time to time any amendments in the Schedule to the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1959. The Committee’s report is presented to the Lok Sabha and laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha simultaneously.

3.5.2 Library Committee

The Library Committee was first constituted by an announcement made by the Speaker in the Provisional Parliament on the 21 November 1950. This Committee is neither provided in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States nor in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The Committee consists of eight Members—five from the Lok Sabha nominated by the Speaker and three from the Rajya Sabha nominated by the Chairman and the Deputy Speaker. The term of the Committee is one year. The Committee does not present any report to the Houses or the Speaker.

3.5.3 Committee on Empowerment of Women

This Committee is provided in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The Committee consists of not more than thirty Members, twenty Members nominated by the Speaker from amongst Members of Lok Sabha and ten Members nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha from amongst Members of Rajya Sabha. A Minister shall not be a Member of the Committee, and if a Member, after his nomination to the Committee, is appointed as a Minister, he shall cease to be a Member of the Committee from the date of such appointment. The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the Members
of the Committee. The term of office of Members of the Committee is one year. The functions of the Committee on Empowerment of Women are:

(i) to consider the report submitted by the National Commission for Women and to report on the measures that should be taken by the Union Government for improving the status/conditions of women in respect of matters within the purview of the Union Government including the Administrations of the Union territories;

(ii) to examine the measures taken by the Union Government to secure for women equality, status and dignity in all matters;

(iii) to examine the measures taken by the Union Government for comprehensive education and adequate representation of women in Legislative bodies/services and other fields;

(iv) to report on the working of the welfare programmes for the women;

(v) to report on the action taken by the Union Government and Administrations of the Union territories on the measures proposed by the Committee; and

(vi) to examine such other matters as it may deem fit or are specifically referred to it by the House or the Speaker and the Rajya Sabha or the Chairman, Rajya Sabha.

The Report of the Committee is presented to Lok Sabha and a copy thereof is simultaneously laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha.

3.5.4 Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

This Committee is provided in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The Committee consists of thirty Members—twenty from the Lok Sabha and ten from the Rajya Sabha—elected by the respective Houses according to the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. The term of office of the Committee is one year. A Minister is not elected to the Committee and if any Member after his election to the Committee is appointed a Minister, he ceases to be a Member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.

The functions of the Committee are to consider reports of the National Commission for the Scheduled Castes and the National Commission for the Scheduled Tribes submitted under Articles 338(5)(d) and 338A(5)(d), respectively of the Constitution and to report to the Parliament as to the
measures that should be taken by the Union Government and action taken by Government on the measures proposed by the Committee; to examine the measures taken by Government to secure due representation of the SCs/STs in Services, etc. and to report on the working of welfare programmes for the SCs/STs in the Union Territories.

The Committee is generally set up after the general elections when the Lok Sabha is constituted and thereafter every year. A motion is moved and adopted for the purpose in the Lok Sabha recommending to the Rajya Sabha to nominate ten Members on the Committee. The Lok Sabha message in respect of the motion is reported to the House by the Secretary-General and thereafter on a Motion being moved by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs in the Rajya Sabha and its adoption by the House, the election programme is notified in Rajya Sabha Parliamentary Bulletin Part - II. The names of the Rajya Sabha Members elected to the Committee are conveyed by a message to the Lok Sabha by the Secretary-General.

3.6 STATUTORY JOINT COMMITTEES

3.6.1 Joint Committee on Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament

The Joint Committee on Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament is a statutory Committee constituted under the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954, for the purpose of making rules under that Act. It consists of five Members from the Rajya Sabha nominated by the Chairman and ten Members from the Lok Sabha nominated by the Speaker. A Member of the Joint Committee holds office for one year from the date of his nomination and any casual vacancy in the Joint Committee is filled by nomination by the Chairman or the Speaker, as the case may be. The Joint Committee elects its own Chairman. The Committee has also been empowered to regulate its procedure. The Committee does not present any report.

The function of the Committee is to make, after consultation with the Central Government, rules to provide for matters like medical, housing, telephone facilities, etc. and generally for regulating the payment of various allowances to which Members of Parliament are entitled under the Act. The rules made by the Committee do not take effect until they are approved and confirmed by the Presiding Officers of both the Houses and are published in the Gazette.

3.7 AD HOC COMMITTEES

Apart from the Committees mentioned above Committees may be set up on ad hoc basis to enquire into and report on specific matters or
such committees may be constituted either (i) by the House on a motion moved and adopted, or (ii) by the Chairman on the basis of the desire or consensus in the House, or (iii) jointly by both the Houses on the motion adopted by one House and concurred in by the other, or (iv) by the Presiding Officers of both the Houses in consultation with each other. They are called *ad hoc* Committees because they become *functus officio* after presentation of the report or conclusion of the assigned function or by efflux of time. *Ad hoc* Committees have been set up from time to time by all these modes. Specified number of Members are nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha and the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, as the case may be. The following *ad hoc* Committees are presently in existence in which Rajya Sabha Members are associated:—

(i) **Joint Parliamentary Committee on Wakf** — consisting of ten Rajya Sabha Members and twenty Lok Sabha Members;

(ii) **Parliamentary Committee to review the rate of Dividend payable by the Railway Undertaking to the General Revenues (Railway Convention Committee)** — consisting of six Rajya Sabha Members and twelve Lok Sabha Members;

(iii) **Joint Parliamentary Committee on Food Management in Parliament House Complex** — consisting of five Rajya Sabha Members and ten Lok Sabha Members;

(iv) **Joint Parliamentary Committee on Installation of Portraits/Statues of national leaders and Parliamentarians in Parliament House Complex** — consisting of three Rajya Sabha Members and six Lok Sabha Members excluding the Speaker who is the *ex-officio* Chairman of the Committee;

(v) **Joint Parliamentary Committee on Security Matters in Parliament House Complex** — consisting of three Rajya Sabha Members and six Lok Sabha Members excluding the Deputy Speaker who is the *ex-officio* Chairman of the Committee; and

(vi) **Joint Parliamentary Committee to examine the constitutional and legal position relating to Office of Profit** — consisting of five Rajya Sabha Members and ten Lok Sabha Members.

### 3.8 PARLIAMENTARY FORA

(i) A total of five Parliamentary Fora, as detailed below, have been constituted for the first time during the tenure of the Fourteenth Lok Sabha (2004-09) by the Speaker, Lok Sabha, and the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, in consultation with each other:—
(a) Parliamentary Forum on Water Conservation and Management;
(b) Parliamentary Forum on Youth;
(c) Parliamentary Forum on Children;
(d) Parliamentary Forum on Population and Public Health; and
(e) Parliamentary Forum on Global Warming and Climate Change.

(ii) These Fora are not provided for in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of either House and each one of them is governed by a separate set of Guidelines, approved by the Speaker, Lok Sabha and the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, which are more or less identical in nature. Each of the Forum consists of 31 Members – 10 from Rajya Sabha, to be nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, and 21 from Lok Sabha, to be nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha. The Speaker, Lok Sabha, is the ex-officio President of the Forums on Water Conservation and Management, Youth, Children and Global Warming and Climate Change whereas the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, is the ex-officio President of the Forum on Population and Public Health. The Forums have also the provision of ex-officio Vice-Presidents. Each of the Forum, has a provision for nomination of additional Members/Vice-Presidents besides a Member-Convener being appointed for conducting regular, approved programmes/meetings of the Forum.

(iii) The Members on the Forum are to be nominated from amongst the Leaders of Parties and Groups, or their nominees who have special knowledge/keen interest in the subject, with a special provision having been made in the case of Parliamentary Forum on Youth, where the Members to be nominated have to be preferably below the age of 40 years. The term of office of the Members of each of the Forum is co-terminus with their Membership in the respective Houses. Casual vacancies arising in the Forums are filled up in the same manner as prescribed for nomination.

(iv) Experts are associated in the various Fora as Special Invitees who may share their views/present papers during the meetings/seminars of the Fora. Meetings of the Fora are held from time to time, as may be necessary, during the Parliament Sessions
and the quorum prescribed by the guidelines for the meeting of each Parliamentary Forum is ten. Each Forum has been empowered to formulate its own procedure. The concerned Ministries of the Government of India render necessary assistance to the Fora in all matters including organizing seminars. Representatives from the concerned Ministries may be present during the meetings/seminars of the Fora. The Fora are to be apprised periodically by the Government of the impact of implementation of the suggestions/recommendations of the Fora.

(v) The broad aim and objective of these Fora are to equip the Members of Parliament with information and knowledge regarding issues and developments in the areas of Water Conservation and Management, Children, Youth, Population and Public Health and Global Warming and Climate Change and also to make the Members of Parliament aware of the seriousness of the situation and to enable them to adopt a result-oriented approach towards these issues. The Parliamentary Fora is not to interfere with or encroach upon the jurisdiction of the concerned Department-related Standing Committees or the Ministry/Department concerned.

3.9 PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP GROUPS (PFGs)

3.9.1 Introduction

To encourage bilateral relations, Indian Parliamentary Group (IPG) has decided to constitute Parliamentary Friendship Groups with other countries, in the Indian Parliament.

Each Friendship Group shall consist of at least twenty two sitting Members of Parliament (15 from Lok Sabha and 7 from Rajya Sabha) in proportion to the strength of Parties/Groups in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

The Speaker, Lok Sabha, shall appoint the President and two Vice-Presidents (one from each House) of the Friendship Group.

The management and control of all affairs of the Friendship Groups shall vest in the Executive Committee of the IPG.

3.9.2 Aims and Objectives

(i) to maintain political, economic, social and cultural contacts
between two countries;

(ii) to create favourable conditions for continuous development of inter-Parliamentary contacts, especially in the organization of talks, mutual exchanges and co-operation between the two Parliaments;

(iii) to assist in having exchanges of information and experiences on issues related to Parliamentary activities;

(iv) to promote co-operation between the delegations of the two countries while participating in the deliberations of international organizations and also in carrying out consultations on issues of mutual interest, as and when such opportunity arises; and

(v) to increase ties between member countries.

3.9.3 Meetings

Meetings of the Friendship Groups are arranged on the sidelines of visiting Foreign Parliamentary Delegations/Committees/Friendship Groups. These meetings are held within the Parliament House complex.