



# Public Accounts Committee Parliament of India

Hundred Years in the  
Service of the Nation  
(1921-2021)

## The Centenary Souvenir



Public Accounts Committee

Hundred Years in the  
Service of the Nation  
(1921-2021)



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Parliament of India

Public Accounts Committee

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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI



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Shri Om Birla, Speaker, Lok Sabha addressing the newly constituted Public Accounts Committee (17th Lok Sabha) in 2019.

PARLIAMENT OF INDIA, PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (2020-21)  
"Hundred Years of Public Accounts Committee (1921-2021)"



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# PREFACE

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Executive accountability to Parliament, in essence, to the people of India, is the guiding mantra of the system of parliamentary democracy that we have adopted for ourselves as a nation. The answerability of the executive to the people is enshrined in our Constitution and has been reinforced through precedents and procedures that the legislature has been devising from time to time. The evolution of the instrument of the Committees, starting with the constitution of Public Accounts Committee in 1921 is the most significant development in this regard. These Committees afford opportunities for a much closer and intense scrutiny of executive acts of omission and commission that may otherwise prove to be a tedious exercise in a plenary of the Parliament. The Public Accounts Committee has over the years acquired a well founded reputation of an uncompromising and tenacious watchdog of governmental spending and performance.

The prime function of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is to ascertain that monies granted by Parliament has been spent by Government “within the scope of the demand”. However, with the growing volume of public expenditure, particularly after the independence of the country and the attendant complexities, the need for greater Parliamentary vigilance over governmental spending has gained immediacy. As such, the task and responsibility of PAC has increased manifold. The mandate of PAC is no longer confined to detection of financial malfeasance causing losses to the public exchequer, nugatory expenditure and financial irregularities, but stretches into the domain of performance assessment of Government schemes, evaluation of efficiency in execution and feasibility of further cost savings.

As the PAC of Parliament of India celebrates its centenary this year, it can look back at its journey so far with satisfaction. During the course of these ten decades, the Committee have examined a wide array of subjects - schemes, projects, government procurement and expenditure from the public exchequer – and come up with reports and recommendations that have helped nudge governments on the path of fiscal prudence. The saga of transformation in the character and reach of the PAC and the 1699 reports presented to Parliament

so far, encapsulate the evolution of our nationhood, its development trajectory and the process of strengthening of the principles of executive accountability to peoples' representatives – in short, the deepening faith of our people in constitutional democracy and emergence of our Nation as an enlightened democratic polity. It is our effort to narrate this incredible journey of the PAC through this Centenary Souvenir.

The publication contains messages from dignitaries, articles that cover different aspects of working and achievements of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament of India, Parliaments of Commonwealth Countries and State Legislatures and relevant statistical information and write ups.

We are extremely grateful to the Hon'ble President, Hon'ble Vice-President, Hon'ble Prime Minister, Hon'ble Speaker and Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha for extending their wishes and words of encouragement, which have been incorporated in the Souvenir.

I take this opportunity to convey our gratitude to the Presiding Officers of the Parliaments of the Commonwealth and State Legislatures, who have consented to be part of this historic occasion.

We are also grateful to the former Speakers of Lok Sabha, Chairperson and Members of PAC (2021-22); former Chairpersons of the Committee, Chairpersons of Committee of Public Accounts of State Legislatures; the Comptroller and Auditor General and the former Comptroller and Auditor Generals and other dignitaries who have contributed articles for the Souvenir. The views expressed in their articles/write-ups are personal opinions of the contributors.

I would like to express my deep sense of appreciation for the dedicated team of officers of the Lok Sabha Secretariat led by Shri T. G. Chandrasekhar, Joint Secretary, who was ably assisted by Shri Tirthankar Das, Director, Shri Surya Ranjan Mishra, Director, and Smt. Bharti S. Tuteja, Additional Director. The officers worked tirelessly to make this publication a success.

I am sure, this publication will prove to be of a useful source of academic value for all those engaged in the study/research on working of Parliamentary Committee System in India.

NEW DELHI;  
December, 2021.

UTPAL KUMAR SINGH  
Secretary General  
Lok Sabha

## MESSAGES

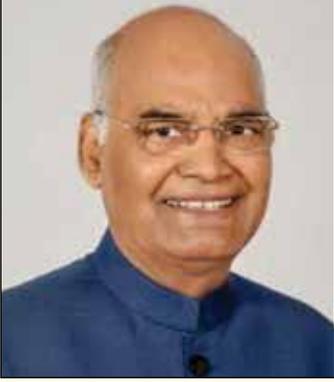






संदेश

THE PRESIDENT  
INDIA



NEW DELHI  
September 13, 2021

मुझे यह जानकर प्रसन्नता हुई है कि संसद की लोक लेखा समिति के 100 वर्ष पूरे होने के उपलक्ष्य में दिनांक 4-5 दिसम्बर, 2021 को संसद भवन परिसर में लोक लेखा समिति के शताब्दी वर्ष समारोह का आयोजन किया जा रहा है।

वर्ष 1921 में गठित और संसद की प्रमुख समितियों में अग्रणी लोक लेखा समिति ने भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखापरीक्षक की रिपोर्ट के आधार पर सार्वजनिक धन के व्यय की जांच के माध्यम से सरकारी धन का सदुपयोग सुनिश्चित करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है। संसदीय लोकतंत्र में प्रतिपक्ष की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका को देखते हुए वर्ष 1967 के बाद से इसके अध्यक्ष के पद पर प्रतिपक्ष के सदस्य की नियुक्ति लोक सभा अध्यक्ष द्वारा की जाने लगी है। यह हमारी लोकतांत्रिक व्यवस्था की परिपक्वता का परिचायक है।

लोक लेखा समिति के शताब्दी वर्ष के स्मरणीय अवसर पर, मैं इस समिति के अध्यक्ष, सदस्यों और अधिकारियों को अपनी शुभकामनाएं देता हूं और इस अवसर पर प्रकाशित की जा रही 'स्मारिका' के प्रकाशन की सफलता की कामना करता हूं।

रामनाथ कोविंद

राम नाथ कोविंद



संदेश

THE VICE PRESIDENT  
INDIA



NEW DELHI  
September 30, 2021

I am happy to know that the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament has completed 100 years of its functioning this year.

Established in 1921, the Public Accounts Committee is the oldest Financial Committee of Parliament, which can take legitimate pride in the contributions it has made over the years through its careful examination of the Appropriation Accounts and Annual Finance Accounts of the Government of India and the Annual Audit Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (C&AG).

With the constitution of the two Houses of Parliament in 1952 as per the Constitution of India, the PAC initially consisted only of 15 members from the Lok Sabha. From the year 1954-55, seven members from the Rajya Sabha were also associated with the PAC. Since then, it has been functioning as an effective federal fiscal monitoring institution.

Public Accounts Committee enjoys a pride of place in our Parliamentary committee system and the country's governance system as it plays a vital role in ensuring judicious and prudent use of the taxpayers' money and in securing the accountability of the Executive to the Parliament. Considering the large scale of public expenditure

which is rising over the years on various developmental activities of the country, the role of PAC assumes greater importance in terms of proper management and control of the public expenditure so that the taxpayer receives full value for his money in the form of overall development and welfare.

The Centenary of the Public Accounts Committee is an important milestone in the history of our Parliament. I am glad to know that a Conference will be organized on 4th-5th December, 2021 to mark this historic event. I wish the centenary celebrations of the Public Accounts Committee all success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Venkaiah Naidu', with a horizontal line underneath it.

(M. VENKAIAH NAIDU)

संदेश

THE PRIME MINISTER  
INDIA



NEW DELHI  
NOVEMBER 25, 2021

संसद की लोक लेखा समिति के 100 वर्ष पूर्ण करने के बारे में जानकर प्रसन्नता हुई। संसदीय समिति के रूप में व्यय निरीक्षण के सम्बन्ध में अहम् योगदान देने वाली लोक लेखा समिति के शताब्दी वर्ष समारोह पर स्मारिका का प्रकाशन सराहनीय है।

विश्व के विशालतम लोकतंत्र के रूप में हमारी यात्रा और उपलब्धियां आज पूरी दुनिया में एक नया विश्वास भरती हैं। संविधान से मिली शक्तियों ने हमें समानता व बंधुत्व के प्रगाढ़ भाव के साथ एक मजबूत, अटूट लोकतंत्र के रूप में सुप्रतिष्ठित किया है। लोकतंत्र के इसी जन सामर्थ्य के साथ देश निरंतर प्रगति की नयी बुलंदियों की ओर अग्रसर है।

कहा गया है – **समानो मन्त्रः समिति समानी।** अर्थात् हमारी मंत्रणाएं और समितियां एक प्रकार की हों। संसद की विभिन्न समितियों के समन्वय और संवाद और राष्ट्र के लिए सतत् कार्य करने की प्रतिबद्धता हमारी व्यवस्थाओं की बहुत बड़ी ताकत है।

लोक लेखा समिति की सौ वर्षों की यात्रा सिर्फ खातों का हिसाब-किताब देखने की नहीं, बल्कि उससे बढ़कर उत्पादकता और कार्य कुशलता में समयानुकूल मूल्य संवर्धन करने की शानदार मिसाल है, जिसने संसदीय परम्पराओं को देशवासियों की आशाओं व आकांक्षाओं की पूर्ति के लिए सदैव ऊर्जा दी है।

शुचिता और पारदर्शिता हमारे व्यक्तिगत जीवन में हों या सरकार में, ये हमारे मनोबल को बढ़ाने वाले होते हैं। सिस्टम में जब ट्रांसपेरेंसी आती है तो नतीजे भी हमें साफ-साफ दिखाई देने लगते हैं।

विभिन्न योजनाओं व नीतियों पर हुए खर्च के प्रति जिम्मेदारी का भाव जगाने में लोक लेखा समिति ने लगातार प्रतिबद्धता दिखाई है। समिति का चिंतन-मंथन हमारे सुधारों और नवोन्मेष का महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा है।

यह एक सुखद संयोग है कि लोक लेखा समिति की एक सदी की यात्रा का यह स्वर्णिम पड़ाव तब आया है जब हम देश की आजादी का अमृत महोत्सव मना रहे हैं। आज देश सामूहिकता की शक्ति के साथ 'सबका प्रयास' के मंत्र को लेकर आगे बढ़ रहा है। ऐसे में हमारी हर संवैधानिक संस्था का अमृतकाल का संकल्प, देश को नयी ऊंचाइयों पर ले जाने में अहम् भूमिका निभाएगा।

राष्ट्र की प्रगति की सशक्त भागीदार लोक लेखा समिति की एक सदी की यात्रा पर संसद भवन परिसर में हो रहे सम्मेलन व स्मारिका प्रकाशन से जुड़े सभी लोगों को बधाई व हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं।



नरेन्द्र मोदी

नई दिल्ली;

अग्रहायण 04, शक संवत् 1943

25 नवंबर, 2021

संदेश

THE SPEAKER  
INDIA



NEW DELHI  
November 8, 2021

भारत के समृद्ध संसदीय लोकतंत्र के गौरवशाली इतिहास में लोक लेखा समिति के 100 वर्ष पूरे होना एक उल्लेखनीय उपलब्धि है। इस ऐतिहासिक शताब्दी समारोह के अवसर पर प्रकाशित की जा रही इस स्मारिका से लोक लेखा समिति की 100 वर्ष की यह यात्रा हमारी भावी पीढ़ियों की स्मृति में सदैव जीवित रहेगी।

किसी राष्ट्र में लोकतंत्र की गहराई उस देश की लोकतांत्रिक संस्थाओं की सुदृढ़ता और उनके स्वतंत्र कार्यकरण से स्पष्ट होती है। हमारे संविधान निर्माताओं ने संसद की संकल्पना एक ऐसी सर्वोच्च संस्था के रूप में की थी जो कार्यपालिका की जवाबदेही सुनिश्चित करने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध हो। वित्तीय नियंत्रण एक ऐसा प्रभावी साधन है जिसके माध्यम से विधायिका कार्यपालिका पर निगरानी रखती है। इस कार्य में लोक लेखा समिति की अग्रणी भूमिका है।

वर्ष 1921 में अपने गठन से अब तक लोक लेखा समिति करदाताओं की धनराशि की निरंतर सुरक्षा कर रही है। अपने सभापतियों और सदस्यों की प्रतिबद्धताओं और सामूहिक प्रयासों से लोक लेखा समिति वर्षों से अपने उत्तरदायित्वों का सम्यक निर्वहन करने और राष्ट्रीय हित के मुद्दों पर सर्वसम्मति बनाने में सफल रही है। समिति के प्रतिवेदनों में जिस सहजता, सुगमता और तर्कसंगत तरीके से जटिल और तकनीकी मुद्दों को सुस्पष्ट किया जाता है, उससे समिति की उत्कृष्ट कार्यप्रणाली का पता चलता है। लोक लेखा समिति ने जिस प्रकार अपने विविध दायित्वों को पूरा किया है, नई चुनौतियों का सामना किया है, वित्तीय



जवाबदेही को सुनिश्चित किया है तथा वित्तीय खामियों को दूर करके समावेशी विकास की दिशा में नीतियां बनाने में सरकार का मार्गदर्शन भी किया है, यह निस्संदेह सराहनीय है।

मुझे आशा है कि देश की लोक लेखा समिति लोकतांत्रिक नींव को सुदृढ़ बनाने के अपने मूल उद्देश्य के साथ एक जीवंत संस्था के रूप में कार्य करती रहेगी। इस अवसर पर, मैं लोक लेखा समिति के सभापति और सदस्यों को हार्दिक बधाई और शुभकामनाएं देता हूं।



ओम बिरला

संदेश

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN  
RAJYA SABHA



NEW DELHI  
September 30, 2021

It is a great achievement in the annals of parliamentary history of India that the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has completed hundred years of its existence. Among the Committees of our Parliament, it is the oldest Parliamentary Committee. The Gladstonian reforms in Britain led to the creation of Public Accounts Committees in 1861. In India, the PAC was set up in 1921 under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. Shri Moti Lal Nehru as the then Member of the Central Assembly was also instrumental in setting up of this Committee. Though modeled on the pattern adopted in British Parliament, it functioned, more or less, as an adjunct of the Finance Department till 1950. However, with the coming into force of the Constitution of India in January 1950, the PAC underwent a radical change and became a full-fledged Parliamentary Committee.

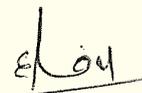
The PAC has proved to be by far the most potent instrument of Parliament for financial oversight and scrutiny. It has been described as the “conscience keeper” of the Government. The Committee keeps a vigil on the spending as well as the performance of the Government by evaluating the value for monies spent by the Government. It also makes recommendations to streamline the administration for efficient, speedy and economical implementation of policy. Throughout its history, the Committee has played a vital and significant role in probing the reasons for loose budgeting, ineffective control over expenditure and unsound financial administration.

As an eyes and ears of the Parliament, the PAC has always drawn the attention of the Houses to all instances of misappropriation and tendencies that weaken legislative oversight over public accounts. The Committee since 1950 has published a total of 1699 reports on various aspects making recommendations to ensure that the taxpayers receive best value for money on Government spending. Through its constant vigil over the administration and detailed examination of the accounts of the Government, the PAC has sought, over the years, to ensure financial discipline in governmental spending.

The PAC's power to scrutinise expenditure thus provides for parliamentary oversight over executive decisions and acts as a check on slackness, negligence and even wrongdoing on the part of the Executive. Presence of Members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in PAC brings together different shades of opinion in Parliament; it lends it greater force and authority.

To make the Public Accounts Committee more effective, stringent monitoring mechanisms needs to be evolved for more effective implementation of the PAC recommendations. The Government of the day should implement the recommendations of the PAC in right earnest and any exception has to be explained. The Ministries and Departments must ensure that the Action Taken Reports are submitted to PAC in time to prevent unnecessary delay. Further, as PAC relies mainly on the audit reports of the Comptroller and Auditor-General (CAG), there is also a need to expand the ambit of audit done by the CAG to audit any money spent from the Consolidated Fund of India. The recommendations of the Constitution Review Commission and those of the PAC itself to strengthen and improve it further also need to be given serious consideration.

On this historic occasion, I would like to congratulate all the Members of the PAC, the Members of Parliament as well as the citizens of the country and hope that the Committee continues to contribute towards maintaining the transparency and accountability of future Governments.



[HARIVANSH]

## CHAIRPERSONS, PAC SINCE 1921

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CHAIRPERSONS OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE  
(PARLIAMENT)



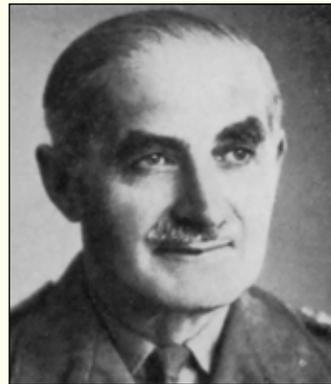
Mr. W. M. Hailey  
(1921-22)



Sir Basil P. Blackett  
(1922-27)



Sir Bhupendranath Mitra  
(1928)



Sir George Schuster  
(1929-31)



Sir Alan Parsons  
(1932)



Mr. A. H. Llyod  
(1933)



Sir James Grigg  
(1934-36 and 1938)



Mr. J. C. Nixon  
(1937)



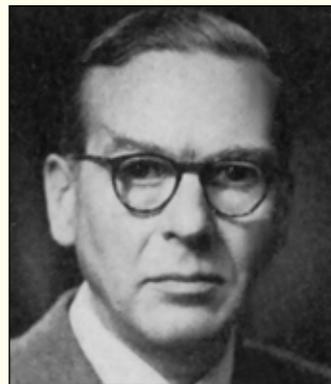
Sir Jeremy Raisman  
(1939-41 and 1943)



Sir Cyril Jones  
(1942 and 1944)



Sir Archibald Rowlands  
(1945)



Sir Eric Coates  
(1946)



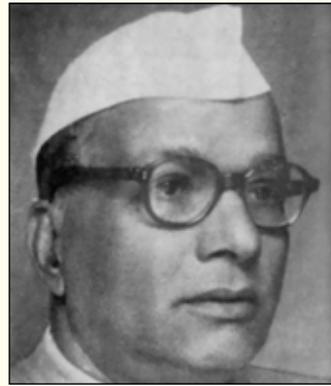
Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan  
(1946-47)



Shri R.K. Shanmukham Chetty  
(1947-48)



Dr. John Matthai  
(1946 and 1948-49)



Shri B. Das  
(1950-55)

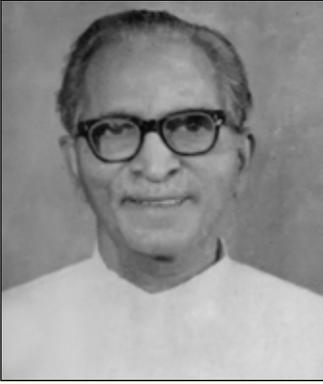


Shri V.B. Gandhi  
(1955-57)



Shri T.N. Singh  
(1957-58)





Prof. N.G. Ranga  
(1958-59)



Dr. P. Subbarayan  
(1959)



Shri Upendra Nath Barman  
(1959-61)



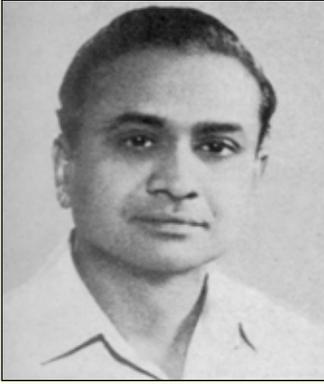
Shri C. R. Pattabhiraman  
(1961-62)



Shri Mahavir Tyagi  
(1962-64)



Shri R.K. Khadilkar  
(1964)



Shri R.R. Morarka  
(1964-67)



Shri M. R. Masani  
(1967-69)



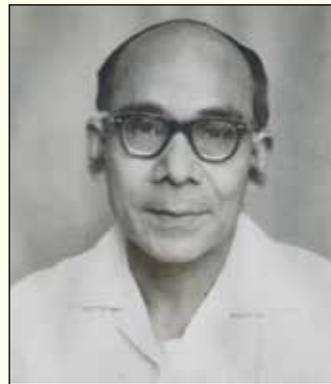
Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee  
(1969-70 & 1991-93)



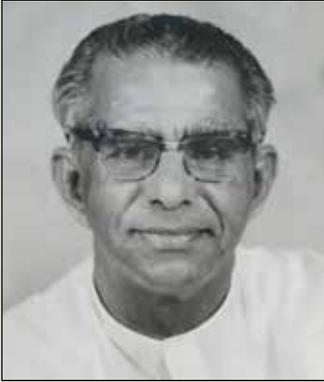
Shri Era Sezhiyan  
(1971-73)



Shri Jyotirmoy Basu  
(1973-75)



Shri H.N. Mukherjee  
(1975-77)



Shri C.M. Stephen  
(1977-78)



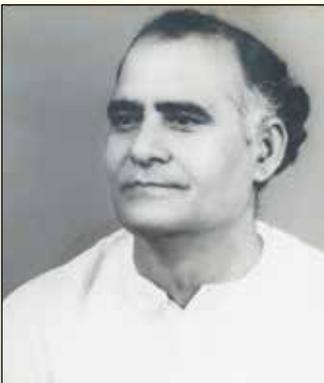
Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao  
(1978-79)



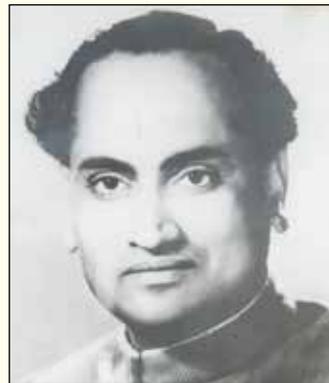
Shri T. A. Pai  
17.05.1979 - 30.07.1979



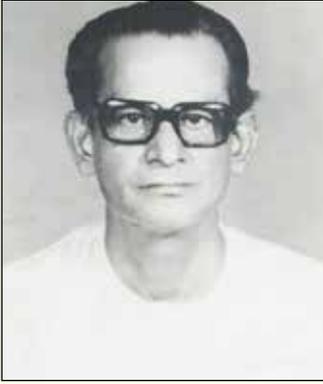
Shri R. Venkataraman  
(1979-80)  
02.08.1979 - 30.04.1980



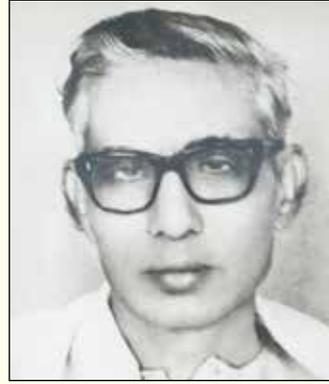
Shri Chandrajit Yadav  
(1980-81)



Shri Satish Agarwal  
(1981-83)



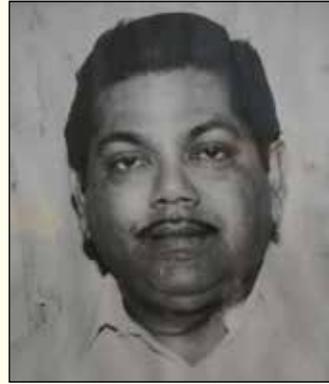
Shri Sunil Maitra  
(1983-84)



Shri E. Ayyapu Reddy  
(1985-87)



Shri Amal Datta  
(1987-88, 1988-89)



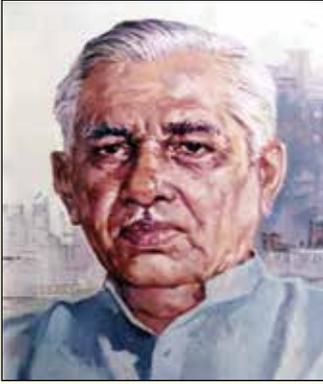
Shri P. Kolandaivelu  
(1989-90)



Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev  
(1990-91)



Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat  
(1993-95)



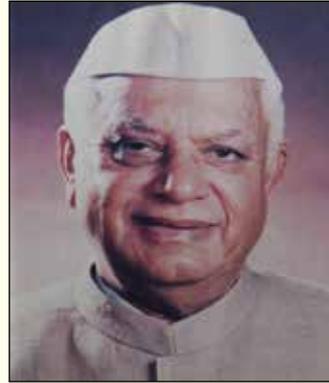
Shri Ram Naik  
(1995-96)



Dr. Murl Manohar Joshi  
(1996-97 & 2010-2014)



Shri Manoranjan Bhakta  
(1998-99)



Shri Narayan Datt Tiwari  
(1999-2002)



Shri N. Janardhana Reddy  
(2002)



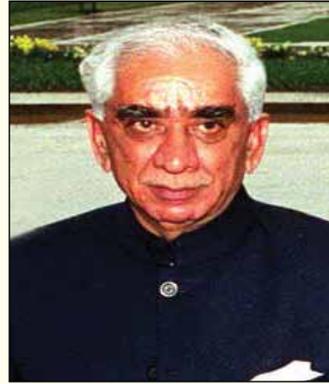
Sardar Buta Singh  
[2002-04]



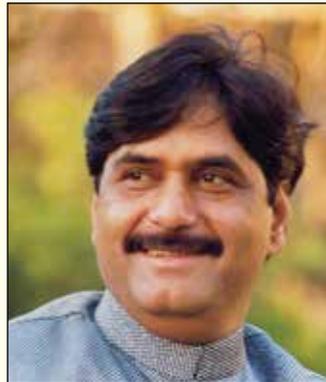
Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra  
[2004-08, 2008-09]  
[till 18-12-2008]



Shri Santosh Gangwar  
[2008-09]  
[23-12-2008 To 30-04-2009]



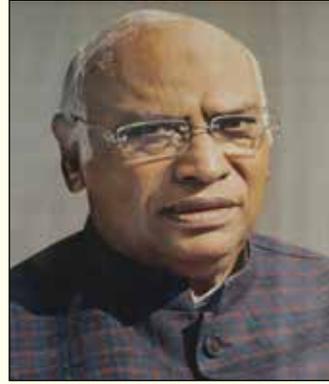
Shri Jaswant Singh  
[2009-2010]  
[w.e.f. 07.08.2009 to 31.12.2009]



Shri Gopinath Munde  
[2009-2010]  
[w.e.f. 06.01.2010 to 30.04.2010]



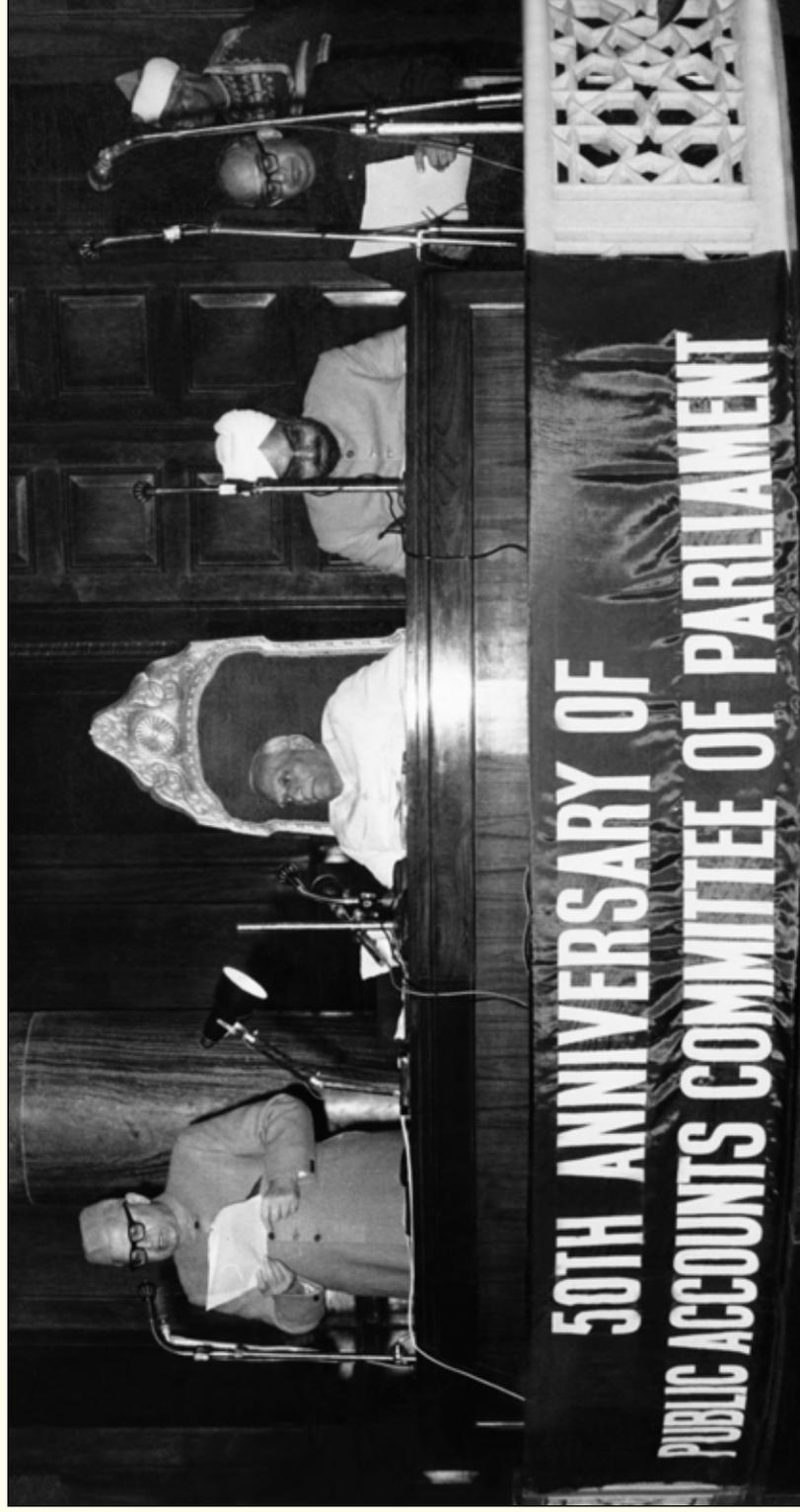
Prof. K.V. Thomas  
(14-08-2014 To 30-04-2017)



Shri Mallikarjun Kharge  
(2017-19)



Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury  
(2019-)



Vice-President, Dr. G.S. Pathak and Ex-officio Chairman of Rajya Sabha, speaking on the occasion of 50th Anniversary Celebration of Public Accounts Committee, on December 3, 1971. Hon'ble President V.V. Giri; Hon'ble Speaker

G. S. Dhillon and Chairman of Public Accounts Committee Era Sezhiyan are also seen in the Photograph





संसद और राज्य / संघ राज्यक्षेत्र विधानमंडलों की  
लोक-लेखा समितियों  
के सभापतियों का अखिल भारतीय सम्मेलन  
नई दिल्ली, ८-९ सितम्बर २०१५

ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF CHAIRPERSONS OF  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE OF  
PARLIAMENT AND STATE / UT LEGISLATURES

NEW DELHI, 8-9 SEPTEMBER 2015

All India Conference of Chairpersons of Public Accounts Committees of Parliament and State/UT Legislatures was held at New Delhi from 8-9 September, 2015. Smt. Sumitra Mahajan, Speaker, Lok Sabha addressing the gathering on 08 September, 2015.

## ARTICLES





# Accountability through the Public Accounts Committee

*By Meira Kumar  
Former Speaker, Lok Sabha, Parliament of India*

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It is heartening that Public Accounts Committee has completed hundred years. During the course of this long and eventful journey it has constantly added noteworthy value to its work which, no doubt, has enhanced its relevance in our parliamentary democracy. In a parliamentary democracy, the role of the Legislature is momentous. It enacts laws, lays down policies and formulates programmes for the welfare of the people. No money can be spent without the approval of the Legislature and no tax can be collected without the authority of law. When the Legislature enacts laws, lays down plans, programmes for the welfare of the people and provides funds for implementation, it, in turn has a right to oversee the manner in which they have been implemented by the Executive. In other words, the success of a parliamentary democracy depends upon the enforcement of accountability of the Executive to the Legislature.

## **Accountability of the Executive**

There are several instruments available to enforce accountability of the Executive to Parliament. This includes the Question Hour, raising of matters and having discussions under various rules of the House, and above all, the committee system. In view of the increasing governmental activities and also of the fact that the Legislature as a single body may not have the time to handle all issues threadbare, the committee system has been adopted not only by India but also by most democratic legislatures the world over. Amongst the various parliamentary committees, the Public Accounts Committee, plays a pivotal role in the enforcement of accountability of the Executive to the Legislature, in India.

## Evolution

The Public Accounts Committees, both at the Centre and in the Provinces, were constituted for the first time, under the Montague–Chelmsford Reforms, in 1921. The PAC at the Centre was partly elected and partly nominated. The strength of the Committee was fixed at twelve; eight members being elected and four nominated. The Finance Member was appointed *ex-officio* Chairman of the Committee. The Secretariat was provided by the Finance Department. During the days of the Interim Government and soon after the attainment of independence, the Finance Minister acted as the Chairman of the Committee. In 1950, while adopting the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) Rules to the Provisional Parliament, certain changes were effected in the constitution of the Public Accounts Committee to make it more effective. The membership of the Committee was increased to give adequate representation to various Parties and Groups in the House. A new sub-rule was added to provide for the appointment of a non-official as Chairman, by the Speaker. The Committee, thus became a full-fledged parliamentary Committee under the control of the Speaker. The Secretarial functions were transferred to the Parliament Secretariat (now Lok Sabha Secretariat). The Public Accounts Committee of Parliament is now constituted every year under Rules 308 and 309 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The Committee now consists of 15 members from Lok Sabha who are elected by the House every year from amongst the members and according to the principle of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote. Since, 1954-55, seven members of Rajya Sabha, elected on the same basis as in Lok Sabha, have also been associated with the Committee. A Minister will not be elected as a member of the Committee. If a member after his/her election to the Committee is appointed a Minister, he/she ceases 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 and his/her term of office is one year as that of the Committee. Upto the end of the Third Lok Sabha, the Chairman of the Committee was chosen from the majority

party in Parliament. The Speaker, for the first time, appointed a member of the Opposition as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee in 1967-68. This practice is being continued since then.

## **Functioning**

The functioning of the PAC of the Parliament is broadly governed by Rule 308 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. As per the provisions contained therein, the scope of examination of the PAC includes the Appropriation and Finance Accounts of the Government of India as presented to Parliament and the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on expenditure of various Ministries/Departments, Revenue Receipts, Annual Accounts and Audit Reports relating to autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies set up by the Government which are audited by the C&AG and laid in the House. In actual practice, the Committee, broadly performs the following functions:

- (a) examination of Appropriation Accounts, mainly, cases of excess expenditure incurred over voted Grants and Charged Appropriations; and
- (b) detailed examination of selected paragraphs/Reports of C&AG which have been laid on the Table of the House.

As regards the first function, it may be stated that the PAC, way back in its Report on Accounts in 1921, had recommended that “if after the accounts for the year are closed, the total grant under any demand has exceeded, the excess ought to be regulated by a vote of the Assembly”. This procedure was accepted by the Governor General in Council and has since been in vogue. In accordance therewith, if any money has been spent on the service in excess of the amount granted by the House for the purpose, the Committee examines with reference to the facts of each case, the circumstances leading to such an excess, and makes such recommendations, as it may deem fit. To facilitate speedy regularization of such excess expenditure by Parliament, the Committee presents a consolidated Report relating to all Ministries/Departments. After the recommendations of the PAC are received, the Government seeks to regulate the excess expenditure by introducing an Appropriation Bill on Excess Demands and obtain the vote of the House.

During the course of examination of Appropriation Accounts, the Committee takes note of the phenomenon of savings as well. It looks upon savings arising from incorrect estimation or other defects or procedure, no more leniently than it does upon cases of excess expenditure.

While examining Accounts/Reports, an important function of the Committee is to ascertain that money granted by Parliament has been spent by Government within the scope of demand. This implies that—

- (i) money recorded as spent against the Grant must not be more than the amount granted;
- (ii) the expenditure brought to account against a particular Grant must be of such a nature as to warrant its record against that Grant and against no other; and that
- (iii) the Grants should be spent on the purposes which are set out in the detailed demand and they cannot be spent on any new service not contemplated in demand.

The functions of the Committee extend beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy. The Committee, thus, examines cases involving losses, nugatory expenditure and financial irregularities. When any case of proved negligence resulting in loss or extravagance is brought to the notice of the Committee, it calls upon the Ministry/Department concerned to explain what action, disciplinary or otherwise it had taken to prevent recurrence. In such a case, it can record its opinion in the form of disapproval or pass strictures against the extravagance or lack of proper control by the Ministry/Department concerned.

Examination of observance of financial discipline, principles and system by the Executive is another important function of the Committee. The Committee is not, normally, concerned with questions of policy in a broad sense. But the Committee will be within its jurisdiction to point out whether, there has been extravagance or waste in carrying out that policy.

Since one of the functions of the Committee is to act as a check on unwise methods of expenditure, it examines the system of checks and balances obtaining in the Ministries/Departments. The Committee usually

concentrates more on the general control to secure economy and leave questions of internal administration to the Ministry/Department concerned.

While scrutinising Reports of C&AG on Revenue Receipts, the Committee examines various aspects of Government's tax administration. The Committee, thus, examines cases involving under assessments, tax evasions, non-levy of duties and misclassification, while identifying loopholes in the taxation laws and procedures and then makes recommendations with a view to checking leakage of revenue.

In the examination of Accounts relating to autonomous bodies as presented to Parliament by the Ministries concerned and Reports of C&AG thereon, the Committee examines the achievements of the Organisation with reference to laid down objectives and economy in expenditure. The PAC, in recent years, has been laying focus on the examination of Reports of C&AG seeking Performance Reviews/System Appraisals of centrally sponsored programmes, schemes, institutions, concerned with public welfare and development. In the process, it closely scrutinises the allocations, extent of utilisation and achievement of laid down objectives. It points out areas of weaknesses in the implementation of such programmes, schemes, etc. and suggests measures for corrections.

After detailed examination of the Appropriation Accounts and selected Audit paragraphs/Reports, the Committee presents its Reports to the Lok Sabha, a copy of which is laid in the Rajya Sabha as well. In order to enforce accountability of the Executive in respect of all paragraphs contained in the various reports of the C&AG, the Ministries/Departments concerned are required to intimate to the Committee through the Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure—Monitoring Cell, remedial/corrective action taken or proposed to be taken by them in respect of those paragraphs within a period of four months from the date of laying of relevant Audit Reports on the Table of the House.

### **Follow-up and Impact**

A Report has value, if it is properly followed up. The PAC, at the Centre, has over the years, evolved a system to ensure proper action on the recommendations contained in its Reports. Initially, the Committee watched the action taken by the Government through action taken



statements which were appended to the Committee's main Reports. However, in the sixties, the practice of presenting a separate Action Taken Report on each main Report was set in. In the Action Taken Reports, the Committee carefully examines the Government's replies. Where the Committee is not convinced of the reasons adduced by the Government for non-acceptance of the recommendations, the Committee reiterates them. Government's responsibility does not end with the Action Taken Report. As in the case of original/main Report, Government is required to intimate to the Committee, normally, within six months of the presentation of the Report, the action taken or proposed to be taken on the recommendations contained in the Action Taken Reports as well. Action taken notes on the recommendations contained in the Action Taken Reports are laid in the House in the form of a Statement without any further comments by the Committee. This system seeks to enable Parliament and the general public to appraise the Government's final replies to the recommendations of the Committee. This completes examination of a subject by the Committee.

From the very beginning, the recommendations of the PAC have found acceptance by Government in good measure. Generally, more than 70% of the recommendations of the Committee, had evoked positive response from the Executive. "Financial Committees (2019-20)—A Review" prepared by Lok Sabha Secretariat and laid on the Table of the House, has provided data regarding action taken by the Government on the observations and recommendations of the PAC in its Reports upon which Action Taken Reports were presented during 2019-20. As per this document, while 78.81% of the recommendations were accepted by Government, 0.85% were not pursued by the PAC in view of Government's replies, only 13.56% of the recommendations had been reiterated by the Committee due to unsatisfactory replies of the Government. The remaining 6.78% of the action taken replies were of interim nature. This clearly shows that a great majority of recommendations of the PAC continues to get acceptance from the Government.

There had been several important and path breaking recommendations of the PAC which had considerable impact during the last one hundred years. There were several instances where Government had taken recourse

to corrective measures in the implementation of various programmes, policies, projects, procedures and making improvements due to recommendations of the PAC. On the Receipts side also, in several cases, Government had amended Statutes, Rules and Orders, to check leakage and effect improvements, following the PAC's interventions from time to time. Those may not be recalled or recounted here. However, it can safely be concluded that the PAC had been instrumental over the years in controlling wasteful and avoidable expenditure, checking leakage of revenue and above all, in toning up administration.

### **Challenges Ahead**

To sum up, past 100 years have witnessed several developments in the financial structure of the country which had necessitated consequential changes in its management. The Public Accounts Committee, with the help of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, has been successful to quite an extent in meeting the emerging demands and enforcing financial discipline and thereby accountability of the Executive. Some critics say that the job of the PAC is merely a postmortem exercise. Indeed, the PAC's examination devolves around audited Accounts. But, over the years, it has provided meaningful insights to the deficiencies in the system which had enabled remedial and corrective action. This is not to suggest that the working of the PAC is beyond any academic discussion or review. In fact, there are challenges before the PAC. Certain State PACs, though not the PAC of Parliament, lagged in the examination of Appropriation Accounts and thereby delayed the process of regularisation of excess expenditure. The volume of governmental transactions has increased manifold over the years, particularly due to introduction of various programmes, policies and organisations for public welfare and as developmental efforts. Detection of new and more cases of irregularities has also come to the fore. Consequently, there has been a visible increase in the number of Audit Reports. But, has the PAC been able to render corresponding justice in detailed examination of those Reports? With the expansion of parliamentary activities, particularly, after the introduction of the Departmentally Related Standing Committees, is there adequate time available for members to handle the rising agenda before the PAC? Has the PAC been able to meet the challenges posed by technological

advancements and increasing digital activities? These are only illustrative issues. In fact, there are more areas of challenges before the PAC. When we are observing completion of successful 100 years, it is perhaps time that parliamentarians and others address these issues in a dispassionate manner for initiating necessary steps to make the functioning of the PAC more effective in enforcement of accountability of the Executive to the Legislature. I congratulate the Chairperson Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, the Members, the officers and the staff of the PAC for organizing the historic centenary celebration.

# **Public Accounts Committee as a Guardian of Probity in Public Life**

*By Sumitra Mahajan  
Former Speaker, Lok Sabha, Parliament of India*

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As a student of LLB, I always found the role of PAC quite fascinating. Later as an MP and then as Speaker, my impressions were further confirmed. Whenever I heard adverse commentaries by the media, the academia and the civil society, I gave the reference of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). It is against this backdrop that commemorating centenary year of PAC is a matter of great pride for all of us who have seen the working of PAC.

It is the oldest Parliamentary Committee in the country. The fact that it has continued its existence all these years in spite of creation of plethora of other Parliamentary Committees including the Departmentally Related Standing Committees in subsequent years speaks of its continued relevance in our Parliamentary edifice.

The Public Accounts Committee examines the accounts showing the appropriation of sum of money granted by Parliament for the expenditure of the Union Government, the Annual Financial Accounts of Government of India and such other accounts laid before Parliament with their respective Audit Reports as the Committee may deem appropriate.

In my view the rationale behind the Public Accounts Committee can be attributed to Article 265 of the Constitution which provides that no tax can be levied or collected except by authority of law. Further, Article 266(3) of the Constitution envisages that no money shall be spent out of

the Consolidated Fund of India or the Consolidated Fund of a State except in accordance with law and for the purposes and manner provided in the Constitution. Just to simplify, no money can be drawn or spent by the Government without prior sanction by Parliament at the Centre and by the legislatures.

Parliament grants hundreds of crores of rupees every year for meeting the expenditure of various Departments of the Government and makes specific appropriation for this purpose under different heads. Financial sanctions provide checks on the dispensation of public funds by the Ministries and it is the prerogative of Parliament to ensure that the sanctioned funds have been spent prudently, frugally following due diligence. However in view of its size and complexity of state activities coupled with dearth of time at its disposal, it is not possible for Parliament to scrutinise if the sum approved has been utilised properly or not. It has, therefore, delegated the task of scrutiny and control over the public expenditure to three Financial Committees of Parliament, *viz.*, Public Accounts Committee, the Estimates Committee and the Public Undertakings Committee.

### **The Responsibility**

In discharging its responsibility to scrutinise the public expenditure and to ascertain if due diligence has been exercised in incurring such expenditure, the Public Accounts Committee is guided by the Comptroller and Auditor General, who is regarded as the 'friend, philosopher and guide of the Committee'. Article 151 of the Constitution requires the Comptroller and Auditor General of India to submit its report(s) on the accounts of the Union and State Governments to the President or Governor as the case may be who will cause them to be laid before the Parliament or the State Legislature.

The Audit Reports, Finance Accounts and Appropriation Accounts after they are presented to the Parliament or State Legislature stand referred to the Public Accounts Committee, which takes cognizance with the reports of C&AG. The PAC however, has inherent powers to critique of the Nation's finances. So its mandate is broad and comprehensive; of

course it ought not override the jurisdiction of sister Parliamentary Committees. In scrutinising the Appropriation Accounts of the Government of India and the Reports of the C&AG, the PAC have to satisfy:

- (a) That the money shown in the accounts as having been disbursed were legally available for and applicable to the service or purpose to which they have been applied or charged;
- (b) That the expenditure conforms to the authority which govern it; and
- (c) That every re-appropriation has been made in accordance with the provisions made in this behalf under rules framed by competent authority.

The PAC has to ascertain that due diligence is scrupulously observed in such public spending. It is significant to note that since 1967, an important member belonging to Opposition Party has been appointed as the Chairman of PAC. Veteran Parliamentarians like M.R. Masani, Atal Behari Vajpayee, Jyotirmay Basu, Professor Hiren Mukherjee, Narasimha Rao, T.A. Pai, R. Venkat Raman, Jaswant Singh, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, just to name a few have occupied the position and discharged the responsibility with great distinction.

### **Way Forward**

In recent years, the activities of the Government have increased many fold, particularly public welfare measures resulting in huge investment. More over due to technological advancement, the economy has become more complex. All these developments are challenges before the Government, the Parliament and the Public Accounts Committee. It is necessary, therefore, that officers and staff who man the Parliamentary Committees including the Public Accounts Committee are encouraged specialisation and expertise to help and guide the Committees. The Secretariat can also consider to benefit from the research division of the Secretariat. During my tenure as Speaker, Hon'ble PM Shri Modi launched the Speaker's

Research Initiative (SRI) for enabling MPs understand and appreciate the intricacies and expectations of Parliamentary system and its working.

As we are celebrating the *Amrut Mahotsav*, I hope, efforts would continue to be made for enhancing the esteem, efficiency and credibility of the institution of Public Accounts Committee. With growing public interest and media scrutiny, much more efforts would be needed to keep the bar high at PAC.



Shri C.M. Stephen, M.P. and Chairman, Public Accounts Committee speaking on the occasion of inaugural function held at Parliament House, in New Delhi, on August 4, 1977.



## **PAC Centenary Year Enters India's 75th Independence Year**

*By Ram Naik  
Former Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,  
Parliament of India*

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India *i.e.* Bharat is the world's largest democratic country, having voting rights at 18 years to its citizens; male, female or transgenders. While India is observing 75th year of Independence, its Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is observing its centenary.

Before writing about the centenary of PAC, let me acquaint the readers briefly about myself. Presently I am at 87, enjoying good health. I started my career at 21 as an Upper Division Clerk in the Accountant General's Office in Mumbai. I have been M.L.A. for 3 terms (1978-1989) from Borivali constituency in Mumbai, 5 terms (1989-2004) as M.P. Lok Sabha from North Mumbai constituency, Minister of State (1998-1999) for Railways (Independent Charge), Home, Planning & Programme Implementation and Parliamentary Affairs and Cabinet Minister (1999-2004) for Petroleum & Natural Gas in Hon'ble Atal Bihari Vajapayee Government. Lastly I served as the Governor of Uttar Pradesh (2014-2019), the largest State of India.

It looks paradoxical that PAC is 100 years old while Independent India is 75 years old. The reason is that when the Britishers were ruling India, they had established PAC to look after Government financial accounts. It is therefore no surprise that during their Rule, PAC had 24 British Chairmen and only one Indian Chairman namely Shri Bhupendra Nath Mitro in 1928. Finance Member of the Executive Council used to be the Chairman of PAC.

After Independence in 1947, PAC had the Finance Minister as their Chairman. However after adopting the Constitution of India on 26th January 1950, PAC became the Parliamentary Committee, Chairman being appointed by the Speaker, Lok Sabha. PAC had originally 15 members from Lok Sabha only. Thereafter in 1954-55, Rajya Sabha also became part of PAC adding 7 members. Thus PAC has 22 members, elected by the system of proportionate representation of the political parties and Chairman to be appointed by the Speaker, Lok Sabha.

In another very important and healthy development in 1967- 68, the Chairman was appointed, for the first time from the Opposition Party. He was Shri M.R. Masani of Swatantra Party. Though the term of PAC members is one year, the Chairmanship of PAC in the following year used to go to the same party and same person. In view of this, Chairmanship went for 2 years to Swatantra Party followed by Jana Sangh, DMK, CPI(M), CPI, Congress(I) respectively.

Lok Sabha elections in 1989 saw BJP as the major Opposition Party. Thereafter when Congress (I) used to be in power, PAC would go to BJP and *vice-versa* when BJP would be in power, PAC would go to Congress (I).

The functions of PAC is to ascertain that money granted by the Parliament has been spent by the Government “within the scope of demand”. The functions of PAC also extends “beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy”.

The Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) plays very important role in the functioning of PAC. He examines the yearly accounts of the Government and after scrutiny submits the reports to the President and they are subsequently laid before the Parliament. These Reports are examined by PAC. C&AG has to attend every meeting of PAC and to cooperate with PAC to examine, study, discuss and to arrive at the conclusions in form of a Report to the Parliament. Note of Dissent is not allowed in PAC Reports. A Minister cannot become a member of PAC.

Since C&AG is the Constitutional authority he is duty bound to help PAC and most of C&AGs have done it efficiently. Probably due to this, some writers term him as ‘friend, philosopher and guide’ of PAC.

I personally feel that though well-intended, this description needs to be avoided. PAC is the creature of the Parliament. Hence calling C&AG as 'friend, philosopher and guide' belittles the position of PAC and the Parliament. He can be termed as 'a Watch Dog of Government Finances' or one can improve the wording by another better name.

I may end the article with my personal experiences as the Chairman of PAC during one year, 1995-1996 of the 10th Lok Sabha. I presented 16 Reports to the Parliament with co-operation of the members of PAC, C&AG and his Officers and also staff of the Parliament. These Reports include 6 reports for Ministry of Finance, 2 reports for Ministry of Defence, one report each for 8 Ministries *i.e.* Information, Culture, Surface Transport, Railways, External Affairs, Health, Urban Affairs and Communications. The proceedings gave insight to me as to how to look at the issues, conduct the proceedings and arrive at unanimous decisions for finalising the reports. This helped me in running the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for five years (1999-2004) which was recognised as the Golden Period of the Ministry.

The Report which attracted more public attention was about 'Injudicious Leasing of Aircraft' by the Ministry of Railways. It pertained to the purchase of an aircraft for Rs. 15 crore with a view to ensuring ready availability of an aircraft in exigencies such as accidents, natural calamities, etc. The aircraft was used for visiting accident sites only on six occasions involving 12 journeys, though 519 accidents had taken place. 70 journeys were undertaken by Officers for various other purposes. Out of these 20 journeys were taken exclusively for railway officials. Journeys were also undertaken for inauguration of certain projects, meetings with Chief Ministers and MPs. 15 journeys were undertaken exclusively by parties other than Railways. What was amazing that the aircraft was freely made available to other agencies and no efforts were made to recover necessary charges. It was only after the matter was pointed out by the Committee during evidence that the Ministry chose to raise the bills. There were other serious charges also.

To sum up, what I could not learn as a B.Com. student for 4 years, as an Upper Division Clerk in Accountant General's Office for 3 years,

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as Company Secretary, Chief Accountant and Management Consultant in Private Commercial Undertakings for 12 years, as an MLA for 3 terms and as an M.P. for 2 terms (1989-1994), in all 35 years, I could learn much more in one year (1995-1996) of PAC Chairmanship.

Long live PAC! Long live Parliament and also Democracy!! Good wishes to every one for 75th year of Independence and Centenary Year of PAC!!!

## **PAC, Parliament and Public Purse**

*By Murli Manohar Joshi  
Former Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,  
Parliament of India*

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Transparency and accountability are the hallmarks of a democracy. Abraham Lincoln had said that “Government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth”. Indeed, such a Government will not perish, if elections are free and fair on the one hand and the administrative transparency along with the financial accountability are ensured on the other. In a democracy, those holding power and positions of responsibility must be answerable for their actions. At this particular juncture of history of independent India, when we are going to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of India’s freedom, we must salute the wisdom of our leaders for building a system of checks and balances in our Constitution thereby fortifying the Indian governance with strong checks and balances such as the PAC and the CAG.

In a republican form of democracy, the sovereignty lies with the people who govern through their elected representatives, but the moot point is who controls the ‘public purse’. Did these elected representatives have any control on the national finances? In fact, it took more than eight centuries of engagement between the monarchy and the British Parliament to assert their right to control the public purse. In fact, it was Gladstone, the then Finance Minister in England who was responsible for converting the nominal control by Parliament into the real authority exercised by the elected. As a result, the Public Accounts Committee was constituted for the first time in April 1862, in British Parliament. However, the committee remained inactive till services of a full time expert of the CAG were placed at its disposal.

In India, the PAC was constituted both at the Centre and the provinces under the provision of the Govt. of India Act 1921. The PAC was then presided over by the Finance Member of Governor General’s Council. The PAC continued to function under the old Act even after

1947 with the Finance Minister as its Chairman. After the promulgation of the Indian Constitution, the Committee found its place as a full-fledged Parliamentary Committee under the control of the Hon'ble Speaker. However in 1967, a convention was established to appoint an opposition party member as the Chairperson of the PAC and Mr. M.R. Masani was the first MP to occupy this important office. This convention is now well established.

### **Governance in Ancient India**

Ancient India was fully familiar with monarchy and as well as with the republican system. According to Valmiki's Ramayana, Indian king was not a despot. He was bound under the discipline of *Dharma*, the moral code of righteous conduct. Mahabharata, describing a republic says that a republic (*ganarajya*) is normally a happy place, where the citizens are bound with a sense of unity; they *do not cheat each other*. The foundation of a republic in other words rests on *mutual trust*. The wealth, particularly *public wealth* should be under the control of dharma and the state (king) must confine itself only to the lawful and ethical sources of income.

Mahabharata says that no doubt the treasury is a source of power but the power of the state depends on the proper use of the state treasury for the welfare of the people. It warns that for *the king (now state) the interest of people is alone his interest, their well-of-being his well being and in their good his own good. Everything he has is for the sake of the people and for himself he has nothing*. Mahabharata repeatedly warns that the *foundation of the governance is truth and the relationship between the state and the people has to be transparent*.

Kautilya's Arthashastra says that treasury (**Vittam**) is the foundation of the state but **vittam**, or the finances, have to be collected in accordance with **dharm**a. The Arthashastra exhorts the king or the state to behave in a righteous manner and says, *"In the happiness of the people lies his happiness, in their welfare, his welfare."*

It is interesting to note that Arthashastra holds the state responsible for any failure to protect the public. "If a stolen property was not recovered and the thief could not be apprehended, the victim was compensated by the state". Kautilya, **thus, advocates the principle of responsibility and accountability of the state in its acts and administration**. That an idea like this was conceived by ancient Indian political thinkers as back as the 4th century BC is something remarkable.

Kautilya had also emphasised the importance of accounts and audit, and had prescribed that, “Accounts officers should be ready for the audit when the audit officers call him, not lie about the accounts and not try to interpolate an entry as if it was forgotten inadvertently. Failure to conform to any of the regulations was a punishable offence”.

### **Accountability and Transparency in Indian Constitution**

The Constitution of India has mandated the Comptroller & Auditor General of India as the auditor to the nation. In the Indian polity, the CAG along with the PAC is a powerful instrument for ensuring accountability of the executive to the legislature. There are financial rules to ensure standards of propriety, regularity and probity in receiving and spending public funds. The spending departments are accountable to the Parliament and State Legislatures for both the quantity and quality of their expenditure. Articles 148 to 151 of the Constitution prescribe a unique role for the CAG in assisting the Parliament to enforce the legislative accountability of the Government departments. The Parliament constitutes the PAC, setting the scope and the functions of the Committee.

### **PAC**

The Public Accounts Committee examines the accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by the House for the expenditure of the Government of India, the annual finance accounts of the Government of India and such other accounts laid before the House as the Committee may think fit. It shall also be the duty of the Committee to consider the report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General in cases where the President may have required the Comptroller and Auditor General to conduct an audit of any receipts or to examine the accounts of stores and stocks.

The functions of the Committee extend “*beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy*”. Another important function of the Committee is the discussion on points of financial discipline and principle. The detailed examination of questions involving principle and system is a leading and recognised function of the Committee.

PAC is, at first, an expert control – the Committee makes full use of an expert audit – aims of which are harmonized with its own. In a way it *exercises an eternal control on the bureaucracy*.

It is, secondly, a primarily financial control. As mentioned earlier, it is interested in economy and efficiency. One of its important functions is to discuss the points of financial discipline and principle. The detailed examination of questions involving principle and the system is a leading and recognised function of the PAC. Its influence and control in this sphere have been very useful and have resulted in introducing several reforms in the accountings procedures.

It is, third, a sort of judicial control and committee's recommendations have worked out as subtle yet powerful link between Parliament and Executive.

It is, fourth, a non-party control. This arises from the judicial nature of the Committee's procedure that has been appreciated throughout its existence. The Committee works out mostly on a non-party forum. The PAC is often been described as a Committee of judges putting aside, for the time, all party considerations. The questions in committee are never on the party lines.

It is, fifth, a control, the main effect of which is deterrent. From the evidence of witnesses who testify before it and from the knowledge and information provided by the audit and scrutiny of documents it is evident that, the reports would have the desired impact on the departments.

It is, finally, a control which though operating *ex-post facto* is not a mere *post mortem* but its decisions affect the future expenditure. It, thus, carries out a process and its continual improvement.

The PAC, thus chases the rupee, from where it comes and to where it goes and after reaching the destination, how it performs. Parliament can enforce the accountability of the Executive through its control over national finance. The PAC is the Parliament's instrument to enforce its authority.

When the Parliament is in session, it is mostly a show of numbers or lung power, but when the PAC is in session, the Parliament works. In the Parliament the game is between the ruling party and the opposition party, in PAC it is between the legislature and the bureaucracy. If the PAC remains vigilant and functions effectually, it becomes the real bulwark for democracy and liberty.



With globalization and privatization, it is not just the taxpayers' money that has to be safeguarded, but the assets of the nation as well. The wise and effective husbanding of public assets has emerged as a major responsibility of Government and therefore, the PAC along with C&AG is required to play a major role in reporting to Parliament whether public assets are being judiciously managed for the legislature to ensure that the assets are not sold to private players for a song. The PAC has major role in safe guarding the national assets.

Public spending on flagship programmes for improving health care, universal elementary education, sanitation, employment, rights of forest dwellers has increased by leaps and bounds. Government of India transfers huge amounts of funds every year directly to numerous district agencies and NGOs for implementing various developmental programmes and schemes. The release of funds directly to the implementing agencies is a paradigm shift. Ensuring proper financial management in such a highly decentralized set up is quite a challenging task for the CAG and consequently, for the PAC.

Enormous amounts have been invested in projects like Roads & Highways, Ports, Urban Development, Railways, Airports and other infrastructure sectors by different ministries. What concerns us here is that a large part of this investment also comes from the private sector with public-private partnership (PPP) mode as one of the preferred routes for implementation. The PPP infrastructure projects involve transfer of public assets, licensing, delegation of governmental authority for recovery of user charges, private control of monopolistic services and sharing of risk and contingent liabilities by the government. Factors which add value to a PPP proposal include innovations, potential for value for money like lower construction costs, lower operation costs, early project delivery, improved asset utilization, and better project management. Therefore, it is important to evaluate whether the above objectives have been efficiently achieved. Sound risk management procedures are, therefore, also vital. It is essential for the government to ensure that services being delivered through such arrangements to the users meet the agreed time, cost and quality standards. Protection of user interest and the need to secure value for public money demand that these arrangements receive adequate attention of oversight bodies like CAG, Committee on Public Accounts and Committee on Public Undertakings (PUC). This requires that the

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PAC and the PUC should be provided with competent and qualified technical backup.

With growing public consciousness, the need for greater accountability of persons or entities managing public resources is being increasingly felt, resulting in a greater demand for the transparency in accountability process for inclusive development to be put in place and operating effectively. Rapid industrialization and the concomitant urbanization and demographic changes over the last two centuries have put a severe strain on the earth's natural resources particularly the non-renewable ones. Proper auditing of their use has to be performed if we do not want to deprive the future generations of this wealth not produced by the present generation. Performance auditing of environmental activities involves ensuring that environmental programmes are conducted in an economical, efficient and effective manner. To strengthen public financial management, performance auditing in this context has to include an assurance about whether the indicators of environment-related performance (where contained in public accountability reports) fairly reflect the performance of the audited entity. The CAG has to work towards improving techniques for auditing the validity of performance measures. Obviously, this would require a highly competent, qualified and ever vigilant backup staff for enabling the PAC to scrutinise the reports forwarded for examining and reporting to the Parliament.

What is unique about environmental issues is that they are not restricted to political boundaries. Not only have the problems to be shared equally among geographically congruent nations but solutions have also to be collectively found. Public auditors will be more effective if they could synchronize their audit efforts. They can share good practices with each other. Civil society and non-Governmental organizations have played an extremely important role, not only in enhancing awareness but also in compelling government to take action. It is, therefore, essential that we all share knowledge and supplement each other's efforts for finding the solutions to the environmental issues. PAC believes in the dictum that 'eternal vigilance is the price of democracy and freedom'.

# **My Experiences as Chairperson of Public Accounts Committee**

*By K.V. Thomas  
Former Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,  
Parliament of India*

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It is indeed a significant milestone when Public Accounts Committee reaches 100th year on 4th December 2021.

As a former PAC Chairman having managed the Committee from 2014 to 2016, I congratulate the Chairperson and the present members of PAC for having decided to celebrate this important occasion and take the initiative in bringing this important constitutional instrument before the General Public and the Members of Parliament.

PAC is one of the most important Parliament Committees which go through the studies and findings of the CAG and other issues of public interest, study them and brings before the Parliament for appropriate action.

PAC has exclusive and important characters compared to other Parliament Committees. The issues considered by the PAC and the decisions taken on them are binding on the Government to implement within a time-frame. In PAC, all the members work together as a team even though they belong to different political parties and that too when majority of the members are from the ruling party while the Chairman is from the main opposition.

Another character of PAC is the various sub-Committees like Defence, Railways etc. which evaluate different issues that come before the PAC within a time-frame. Committee discusses them thoroughly, but nothing is leaked out to the public.

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As the Chairman of PAC of the three consecutive terms from 2014 to 2016, I had the privilege to present seventy-three important reports before the Parliament.

In the present context, when Parliament does not function due to difference of opinion between the ruling party and opposition and there is always chaos leading to the adjournment of House for days, it is the Parliamentary Committees which gives an opportunity for the Parliament Members to express their views on various crucial issues before them. Time has come for all the political parties to sit together, so that the Parliament can function without disruption and the issues of public interest are discussed and debated in the House.

As the sanctum sanctorum of democracy, there should be discipline in the Parliament. Instead of creating havoc in the house, both the ruling and opposition parties should respect the House and all issues and legislations should be discussed and debated honouring the tradition, culture and character of our democratic nation. As the largest democracy in the world, Indian Parliament should become the model for other Parliaments.

I submit that this occasion of centenary celebrations should be used for productive discussions, so that the pillars of democracy *i.e.* Legislature, Executive, Judiciary and Media; perform their responsibilities according to our constitutional framework.

# **The Hundred Years Journey of the Public Accounts Committee : Pivotal Committee in Ensuring Executive Accountability to Parliament**

*By Mallikarjun Kharge  
Former Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,  
Parliament of India*

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It gives me great pleasure to extend my heartiest congratulations and convey my best wishes to the Public Accounts Committee on completing 100 years on the working of one of the most important and potent parliamentary committees. But before that, it will be in the fitness of things to briefly dwell upon the Committee's historical background.

The PAC, which is the oldest Parliamentary committee, was first set up in 1921 as part of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms introduced by the British. The Committee then was chaired by the Finance Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

In the Central Legislative Assembly days since 1921, the functions of the Committee were confined to the scrutiny of the audited and appropriation accounts of the Governor-General in Council, with a view to satisfying itself that the money voted by the Assembly had been spent within the scope of the demand granted by the Assembly. The secretarial assistance to the Committee was rendered by the then Finance Department— a component of the Executive !

I would also like to allude to some observations made by some distinguished members of the House of Commons. Mr. Austen Chamberlain described the Committee on Public Accounts as "a Committee of judges...putting aside for the time all party considerations".

Further as is seen from the House of Commons Committee proceedings dating back to 1873, the questions asked in the Committee and the rare divisions which occur are almost never on party lines.

In India, the efficacy of the PAC ensuring executive accountability to the Parliament ensued after coming into force of the Constitution of India in 1950. It is the outcome of the foresight of the Founding fathers of our country that the PAC was made independent of the Executive with a view to preventing the misuse of the taxpayers' money.

It would be pertinent to note the following observations by the Speaker, Shri G. V. Mavalankar, Speaker First Lok Sabha in his address to the Public Accounts Committee on the 10 April, 1950:—

*"In a sense it might be said that the Committee's work is one of post mortem. But it cannot, therefore, be said, on that account that it is any the less important. In the first place, the very fact of consciousness, that there is someone who will scrutinise what has been done, is a great check on the slackness, negligence or absolution of the Executive. The examination, if it is properly carried out, thus leads to general efficiency of the administration. In a country-wide and huge administration, no individual officer or Minister can have an overall picture of the whole, and there is, therefore, natural tendency of departmentalism, and there is no incentive to economy. The investigations of the Public Accounts Committee, through the check that it can exercise, will exert an amount of influence both in respect of economies and policies, and the information the Members get in the PAC can be put to very great use for the work of the Standing Finance Committee as also for the Estimates Committee..."*

On the occasion of the Inaugural Function of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Public Accounts Committee on the 3 December 1971, Shri V. V. Giri, President of India, *inter alia* observed as follows:—

*"In a Parliamentary system, the Government functions in the broad daylight of public scrutiny of all its actions. The test of the responsible Government is harmony between the Legislature and the Executive; and in order to ensure that this harmony is real, Parliament has in its power several devices and methods sanctioned by procedure and*

*practice. One such important device is the Committee system. Of the various Parliamentary Committees, the Public Accounts Committee, the Estimates Committee and the Committee on Public Undertakings between them make a formidable combination in exercising Parliament's control over the executive. These three committees together form practically a kind of permanent vigilance cell over a wide area of governmental activities. They bring out faulty or negligent departmental management, and have therefore become effective instruments for the exposure of waste and inefficiency...."*

While PAC is a Committee under the control of the Speaker, Lok Sabha, Members of Rajya Sabha nominated to the Committee enjoy equal status.

In this context it would be interesting to note the genesis of this practice. Way back in 1952 itself the Rajya Sabha wanted the Committee on Public Accounts to be a Joint Committee of both Houses. The Rules Committee of the Rajya Sabha in its report submitted to the Chairman on 24 December, 1952, stated that Members of Rajya Sabha should have representation on the Public Accounts Committee of both Houses of Parliaments: "to avoid unnecessary duplication of work". The Secretary of Rajya Sabha accordingly took up the matter with his counterpart in the Lok Sabha, under the direction of the Chairman, Rajya Sabha. The Speaker, Lok Sabha referred the matter to the Rules Committee of Lok Sabha for consideration and the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee for his reaction. The Committee on Public Accounts passed a unanimous resolution that the suggestion for setting up a Joint Committee on Public Accounts or a separate Public Accounts Committee of the Rajya Sabha being against the principles underlying the Constitution was not acceptable to it. While there was a deadlock there nevertheless was a keenness to find a solution – a solution acceptable to both Houses of Parliament: striking a balance in preserving supremacy of Lok Sabha in financial matters but at the same time providing an opportunity to the members of the Rajya Sabha to give their sage counsel in financial matters. Eventually, it was decided that if the Lok Sabha passed an annual resolution of its own

will to seek the association of the members of the Rajya Sabha with the Public Accounts Committee, both objectives could be realised.

Thereafter on 12 May, 1953, Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, moved the following motion in the Lok Sabha:—

*“That this House recommends to the Council of States that they do agree to nominate seven members from the Council to associate with the Public Accounts Committee of this House for the year 1953-54 and to communicate to this House the names of the members so nominated by the Council.”*

There was a debate on this motion in Lok Sabha for two days. During the debate, there was opposition to this proposal. It was felt by Members it was an intrusion on the exclusive rights and privileges of the Lok Sabha under the Constitution. On 13 May 1953, the Prime Minister gave a detailed reply voicing his considered views on the entire gamut of issues involved. It will be worthwhile to take note of the following observations of Pandit Jawaharlal Ji to the apprehensions expressed that the powers of Lok Sabha were sought to be eroded by the motion:—

*“ There is no doubt about the powers of this House are regard to money and financial matters. It is on that basis that we proceed. There the matter ends...”*

As regards the association of Members of Rajya Sabha with the Committee as proposed in the motion, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Ji observed:—

*“...It is true, it is my desire and I think it should be the desire of the House to cultivate to the fullest extent possible co-operation and friendly relations with the other House, because in the nature of things and in the nature of the Constitution that we have, if we have not got co-operative relations, each can delay and hamper public welfare. The conception of the Constitution is that Parliament is an integrate whole we are all joined together in Parliament, shouldering the burden of Parliament, and looked up to by the people of India. I do submit that the motion that I have made does not in the slightest degree infringe on the powers or the authority of this House but is desirable thing from the point of view of co-operative effort of the*



*Houses, from the point of view of showing an example to the other countries and other Parliaments, as to how this complicated structure of our Constitution can be made to work smoothly and effectively and with goodwill."*

The Motion was adopted by the Lok Sabha on 24 December 1953.

Rajya Sabha considered a motion moved by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs on 13 May 1954, for concurrence in the motion of the Lok Sabha and nomination of seven members on the Committee for the year 1954-55. At the time of adoption of the motion, Chairman, Rajya Sabha *inter alia* observed as under:

*" We have a right to sit there now and our rights are absolutely the same as the rights of the other members. The point is that the rules which govern the deliberations of this Committee will be the rules of the other House I would advise the House to accept the motion and use the right to the best advantage."*

Subsequently, Shri G. V. Mavalankar, Speaker on 10 May 1954, clarifying some doubts raised by members when the motion recommending to Rajya Sabha to nominate seven members to associate with PAC was moved in the House of the People:

*"It (PAC) is not a Joint Committee. It is a Committee of the House of the People under the control of the Speaker. So far as the deliberations and votings and other things are concerned, they are of the same status. They are members after all. The only difference will be that they will be under the control of the Speaker of the House of the People and not under the control of the Chairman of the Council of States so far as their functioning in the PAC is concerned. That is the only difference...."*

Here I would like to record that the first Prime Minister of our country, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Ji's democratic initiative back then helped strengthen cooperative federalism by ensuring that the Council of States got an equal say in the Committee workings. While on the other hand, today we are witnessing all attempts to bypass the Parliament, especially the Upper House which is striking at the very roots of the democratic values and the spirit of the Constitution.

The Committee has been chaired by senior parliamentarians and stalwarts like Prof. N. G. Ranga, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Shri H.N. Mukherjee, Shri P.V. Narsimha Rao among others.

I, too, had the privilege of serving the Committee as its Chairperson for two terms. My experience as the Committee Chair has given me insight into its functionings, its potential and its effectiveness.

It is the duty of the PAC to examine the accounts of the Government of India and the audit reports by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) on the same, check that the expenses made by the executive are authorised by Parliament and have not crossed the limit authorised by Parliament. In this way, it is a check of the legislative branch on the workings of the executive as far as the financials are concerned.

In this context, I would also like to emphasise upon the critical importance of the C&AG whose appointment and powers and duties have been laid down in the Constitution itself. It plays a significant role in the audit of all the accounts and financial statements of the Government. C&AG has a phenomenal potential in ensuring fiscal discipline and transparency in Government spending if C&AG performs its functions in an unbiased, independent and dispassionate way without giving in to Government influence. While some C&AG reports have measured up to their mandate, some have been found wanting and inaccurate. It is in this context that the role of PAC becomes crucial to analyse the reports in-depth without any prejudice or bias.

Article 148 of the Constitution details the process of appointment, salary and conditions of service of the C&AG. Article 149 details the duties and powers of the C&AG. In the Constituent Assembly debates over these articles, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had said that the C&AG is “probably the most important officer in the Constitution of India” and that the duties of the C&AG “are far more important than the duties even of the Judiciary”, and as such, it should be given even more independence than the Judiciary. Shri T. T. Krishnamachari, another member of the drafting committee, argued for the name of the authority to be amended to “Comptroller and Auditor General” from the existing “Auditor General” to explicitly specify the nature of work to be carried out by the C&AG.

Since the C&AG reports are scrutinised by the PAC, having absolute impartiality in the appointment of the C&AG becomes of paramount importance to the proper functioning of the PAC.

One more feature of the PAC is that it a Committee under control of Speaker, Lok Sabha and only a Lok Sabha member is made the Chairperson of the Committee. This shows that people elected by the common citizens should always have the commanding authority over the workings of the Committee and this further solidifies the trust of the people in the sanctity of the PAC.

I find it pertinent to state here that while PAC had been working for a long time fairly without any fear or favour. However, in recent years, sometimes ruling parties have influenced like-minded PAC members to dilute the functioning of the Committee in dealing with critical issues like the Pegasus and other issues. This trend must be discouraged.

PAC examined several important issues over the years of all the Governments.

Before 1967, a ruling party member used to chair the PAC, but thereafter the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee was appointed from the Opposition Party. In Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha the practice of PAC being chaired by members from the Opposition Party commenced from 1959 itself.

This practice of appointing a member from the Opposition as the Chairperson of the Committee has strengthened the oversight function of the Legislature and ensured transparency in the financial spendings done by the Executive.

The reports of the PAC are one of the most vital tools for holding the executive accountable to the legislature. Various crucial issues of overspending or unjustified spending have been brought to light by the reports of the PAC in the past.

During my term as Chairperson, the PAC had presented 63 reports within a span of two years. It had been a fulfilling experience for me. Significantly, I was the lone member representing my Party in the Committee from Lok Sabha, and that too in the capacity as the Chairperson.

I had tried to take all members of the Committee in confidence and work in unison. I thank all the members of the Committee for their cooperation, and also the officials of the Committee Secretariat and the C&AG.

Based on the main proposals and suggestions emerging from the Conference of PACs of Lok Sabha and State Legislatures held in 2015, which are reflective of my own experience, I wish to take this opportunity to highlight some areas which could be improved to further strengthen the oversight mechanism of the PAC. For instance,

- (a) Need to set a time limit for Ministries to furnish Action Taken Reports on the recommendations of the PAC.
- (b) The C&AG should be made accountable to the legislature instead of the executive. Already, in countries like the UK and Australia, the central auditor is made accountable to the legislature, however, in India, the PAC has no say in the appointment of the C&AG.
- (c) Spending done under public-private partnerships should also be examined by the PAC as public money is spent on these partnerships and hence needs proper oversight.

In addition to the above, I wish to emphasise upon my following further views and suggestions:

In the Constituent Assembly debates, Shri H. N. Kunzru had argued for extending the duties of the C&AG to auditing independent corporations and other bodies outside the Government.

PAC should therefore *suo motu* call Government officials to check the progress of spending on specific Centrally-Sponsored Welfare Schemes and programmes like MGNREGA, Food Security, Compulsory Education, SC/ST Sub-Plans and other welfare measures which benefit the common citizens. Also such review should be done at least once a year and accordingly instructions may be given to State Governments for proper implementation of these welfare schemes.

Public Accounts Committees play a pivotal role in our democratic polity in ensuring executive accountability to the Parliament. PAC has shown its phenomenal efficacy in its 100 years journey and more particularly since 1950. I am sure that this Committee will continue zealously in its functioning and gainfully measuring up to its remit in the years to come.

# Public Accounts Committee: My Perception and Pespircacity

*By Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury  
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India*

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The famous words of Swami Vivekananda, **“Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached”** created an electrifying sensation in the body and minds of every human being. When I recollect this oft-quoted saying, I feel, these words can be identified as the philosophical tenets behind creation of the Public Accounts Committee. This Committee is one of the financial Committees created under the Indian Parliamentary System to ensure that expenditure made from public funds be prudently made, no wastage of resources occur, the money is not misappropriated, grants are not made hastily, the public is not put under increased financial burden and for the money spent, adequate results are obtained. From my experience, I can say with conviction that the Committee always remains alert, keep their eyes and ears open and do not stop till the envisaged objectives are achieved.

Commencing its journey in 1921, the Public Accounts Committee has successfully completed 100 golden years this year, for which we are celebrating the Centenary of PAC in India.

At this critical juncture of PAC’s journey, I, as Chairperson of PAC of Parliament, wish to share my perception and perspircacity about the Public Accounts Committee.

In a Parliamentary form of Democracy, Legislature plays a pivotal role. It plays three basic functions – Representative, Legislative and Oversight.

By representing the ‘will of the people’, the Legislature performs a representative function and thereby becomes a legitimate source of authority in democratic countries. Similarly, it performs a legislative

function because, besides introducing legislation, it has the power to amend, approve or reject Government bills. And by ensuring that the programmes and policies of the Government are implemented in accordance with the wishes and intent of the Legislature, it performs its oversight function.

One of the tools that a Legislature can use to further enhance oversight of the financial operations of Government is a specialized Committee. In India, the Committee is known as the Public Accounts Committee or the PAC. It is, in a way, the 'Audit Committee' of Parliament and as such is the core institution of public financial institutions.

Parliamentary engagement with the budget normally has several stages. First, Parliament votes public money, and subsequently, Parliament has to consider whether budget implementation really complied with its wishes or not. The audit of accounts has traditionally been performed by a body distinct from the Legislature – in India, it is performed by the C&AG. But it is the Parliament that is entrusted with the responsibility to consider the results of such an audit.

### **Historical Perspective**

The Committee on Public Accounts was first set up in 1921 in the wake of the Montague Chelmsford Reforms. The Finance members of the Executive Council used to be the Chairman of the Committee. The Secretariat assistance to the Committee was rendered by the then Finance Department (now the Ministry of Finance). This position continued right upto 1949. During the days of the interim Government, the Finance Minister acted as the Chairman of the Committee, and later on, after the attainment of Independence in August, 1947, the Finance Minister became the Chairman. The Committee on Public Accounts underwent a metamorphosis with the coming into force of the Constitution of India on 26th January, 1950 when the Committee became a Parliamentary Committee, functioning under the control of the Speaker with a Chairman appointed by the Speaker from amongst the members of Lok Sabha elected to this Committee. Till 1966-67, a senior member of the ruling party used to be appointed by the Speaker as the Chairman of the Committee. In 1967, for the first time, a member from the opposition in Lok Sabha, was appointed as Chairman of the Committee by the Speaker. This procedure continues till date. This, I believe, was an epoch-making change in the history of PAC.

The PAC has traditionally occupied a heightened status over other Committees in the Legislature. In many countries, it is the oldest Committee. The historical fact that the PAC tends to be one of the oldest of all Parliamentary Committees indicates that its importance as the legislative apex for financial oversight and scrutiny has long been recognized.

### **Working of PAC**

The Comptroller and Auditor General submits his report to the President, who causes to be laid before the Legislature concerned, which in turn refers it to the Committee on Public Accounts. The Committee examines the Government's accounts in the light of the audit report with the assistance of the C&AG.

Thus, the exact content of the work of the PAC depends largely on what it receives from the Audit institution. The C&AG is "the acting hand of the Committee" and "its guide, philosopher and friend". The departmental heads take note of the Audit observations and take appropriate remedial measures to plug the loopholes in the system or to streamline the system for better results. The examination of the report by the Public Accounts Committee extends 'beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy'. The purpose of this comprehensive review is to ascertain whether the executive has observed the principle of prudent house-keeping in national expenditure.

The Committee has highlighted through its various reports instances of excess expenditure, wrongful re-appropriation, failure to execute approved plans and programmes within the stipulated time leading to under-spending or over-spending, wrongful classification of expenditure at the last leg of the financial year leading to temporary parking of funds, which become a possible source of misuse, poor accounting system, lack of expenditure control mechanism, poor value for money, unauthorized expenditure in violation of Legislative sanction etc.

Over the past two decades, there has been a shift in focus of public administration and accounting around the world, with increasing emphasis on good governance and accountability of government entities. Good Governance is the ultimate aim of Parliamentary scrutiny. A key component of examination of subjects by PAC has been evaluation of flagship programmes in the socio-economic sector and assessing the outcomes of devolution by the Government. Recent and on-going subjects taken up for examination cover development programmes in health, education, employment and irrigation sector. In addition, sustainable development and environmental conservation have also become key

concerns of the Committee. The Public Accounts Committee of India has a long tradition not only in relentlessly highlighting instances of inefficiency, waste and indiscretion in the implementation of policies and programmes approved by Parliament but also making constructive suggestions for ensuring that the Government revenues are properly collected and utilized for the intended purposes.

The present PAC (2021-22) have selected for examination some important subjects like Agriculture Corporation Insurance Schemes for Flood Control Forecasting, National Rural Drinking Water Programme, Rejuvenation of River Ganga (Namami Gange), Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana etc. The examination of these schemes/programmes by the Committee will certainly result in expeditious and effective implementation, thereby galvanizing the system and promoting the process of **good governance**. This also ensures that the fruits of development reach the real beneficiaries, the people, thereby ensuring '**value for tax-payer's money**'.

I would like to place on record that the Committee has presented so far 1699 reports since its inception and around 70 percent of the recommendations made by the Committee have been accepted by the Government.

Moreover, the observations/recommendations of PAC attract official as well as public attention. Though the suggestions of the Committee may or may not be accepted by the Government in entirety, they, nevertheless receive full consideration. The Government, before finally deciding to write to the Committee the reasons for not being able to implement the recommendations, reviews and evaluates the soundness of the policy or the decision on which the Committee had given their observations/recommendations. Thus, to my mind, PAC exerts influence in two ways—**First**, its suggestions and criticism give useful direction and guidance not only for regulating its present policies but also in the formulation of their future guidelines. **Second**, the fact that their activities and achievements are being examined by a Parliament body acts as a deterrent on spending in excess and slackness in functioning. In a way, it would be appropriate to say that since inception, PAC has been playing a pivotal role in assuring executive accountability to Parliament in an effective manner. At times, the response of the executive is exceptionally prompt and the Government has been found to have taken corrective action in the light of the suggestions given by the Committee even before the presentation of PAC report to Parliament.



**Success Factors**

With regard to PAC practices and procedures, there is again a fairly strong consensus among legislative experts regarding the Committee's success factors. The proactive procedures such as keeping the transcripts of the meetings, adequate preparation before Committee Meetings, Follow-up Procedure on Govt. action regarding Committee recommendations and close working relationship between the Members of the various political parties lead to the success factors.

With my perspicacity as the Chairman of Parliamentary PAC, I would like to share my objective assessment of the success factors of PAC.

**Vastness of Scope**

One of the success factors, I feel, is the vast scope of the Committee. The power to oversee all public expenditure provides the PAC with a broad mandate and target audience. It gives the PAC a vantage point with respect to a wide range of public services and an entry point into administration of many departments and agencies even if other Parliamentary Committees are involved in their policy aspects. The wider the PAC mandate, the greater its potential to deter waste and wrongdoing and encourage better management of public resources.

Another problem that has been noticed is that sometimes the tabling of the accounts and audit reports are delayed, leaving PAC to deal with old issues until new reports are available. Similarly, there are times when the heavy workload of old reports delays getting to the most current ones.

**Free Choice**

The power to choose subjects for examination by the Committee without Government Direction and advice is yet another success factor. This power provides the PAC with the freedom of action to focus on relevant and important matters. Having a broad scope mandate is of little use if the Committee is unable to identify major issues or if the Government directs the Committee to keep away from these issues. I feel that the Committee can be most effective if they can initiate enquiries on their own as necessary, without having to write for a specific reference from the Government. The elements of speed and even of surprise are often important here: if the Committee can act quickly to select incisive issues, and if the choice and timing cannot be predicted by the Government and the public service, the Committee's enquiries can have a deterrence effect.

## **Solid Technical Support**

Besides the vast scope and free choice for choosing the subjects for detailed examination, what really helps the Committee's investigation is the good advice from the Legislative Auditor and assistance of the experienced Committee Secretariat in comprehending the subject, making in-depth analysis and pursuing them to a logical conclusion. The Legislative Auditor is usually the chief support for the Committee – 'the friend, philosopher and guide'. Similarly, the PAC Secretariat provides the executive support staff with sound knowledge of public administration.

## **Vision of the Committee Members & Effective Chairing**

The success of the PAC does not depend exclusively on institutional design, but it also and more importantly, depends on the behaviour of its members and the functioning of the Committee itself.

I feel that the most important success factor of PAC is the vision and competence of the Committee Members and effective chairing.

The co-operation of all members despite their political differences, clear focus on accountability and the ability of individual members to probe reluctant witnesses enable the Committee to obtain empirical data and useful information for effective analysis and arrive at constructive recommendations. Strong support, guidance and effective chairing not only ensure improved follow-up but also help in translating the vision and mission of the Committee into tangible accomplishments.

When I say 'effective chairing', I refer to all the great leaders who have had shouldered the responsibilities as PAC Chairpersons right since the Committee's inception and the guidance rendered by them at different phases in the evolutionary process. As we all know, two former Prime Ministers, Shri P.V. Narsimha Rao ji and Shri Atal Bihari Bajpayee ji and many eminent persons have served as Chairpersons of PAC and have taken the Committee to its highest glory. Efforts have always been made at every stage to upkeep the esteem historically attached to the Committee and under no circumstances, to allow any intention, overt or covert, to compromise the dignity of the Committee and its Chair. As Chairperson of the present Parliamentary PAC, I take this opportunity to commend the roles played by those luminaries as Former Chairpersons of PAC for steering the Committee successfully at every stage in its historical growth.

## **Major Concerns**

It, however, remains a matter of concern when it comes to the

question of fixing individual responsibility of the officials on account of irregularities. The bureaucracy uses all possible means to put forth reasoning to defend the actions. This is an area which needs to be considered to find possible remedies so that the officials found guilty are brought to book and made accountable.

An empowered CAG is yet another concern, which needs to be examined. There has been a debate going on in this regard. To enhance public perception, the institution of CAG should be headed by a multimember body (may call Board of Audit) comprising of minimum three members just like Election Commission of India. A three-member Board of Audit will act as its own internal control: members will balance and curb possible aberrations. It will go a long way in enforcing more rationality, more transparency and accountability within the organization, including CAG office.

I would like to sum up by saying that in order to achieve Government accountability, a robust and highly effective relationship between C&AG and PAC is essential. While C&AG is charged with auditing the accounts of the executive, PAC is responsible for using the information provided to exercise Parliamentary oversight by holding the Executive accountable.

### **Conclusion**

Learning from the experience as Chairman of PAC of Parliament, I can tell you that despite any adverse situation, if the members of the Committee remain firm on their focus on accountability amidst their ideological differences, examine issues in a value-free and unbiased manner, devoid of any impulses or compulsions, the Committee can not only achieve the noble objectives, but also, as I have mentioned earlier, can move towards making **good governance** a success which will provide adequate **value for taxpayer's money**. Success of PAC will not only be a step forward in strengthening parliamentary democracy but will also be a stepping stone towards building a strong and corruption free India.

I would like to conclude, by quoting a few lines from Ravindranath Tagore's Gitanjali:

Let my Country be a place

“Where the mind is without fear and head is held high and  
The tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection”

Finally, I would like to pray with the Poet:

“Into that Heaven of Freedom, Let my Country awake”

# Public Accounts Committee as an Effective Means Of Parliamentary Oversight of Public Expenditure

*By Opiyo Wandayi  
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,  
Kenya National Assembly*

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## Background

In 1761, John Otis, an American Lawyer is credited for having observed that “*Taxation without representation is tyranny*”. In essence, he implied that in a functional governance system, it would be adrift for the governed to entrust their taxes in the hands of a Government in which they have no representation for purposes of influencing priorities on the utilization of their taxes. The statement became a clarion call for the inevitable need to democratize governance and create avenues for representation and participation of the governed. The realization of representation in Government created a higher need for ensuring that the exercise of power is executed with transparency and accountability, and is subjected to independent oversight and audit. Consequently, the gains of democratization made it imperative that parliaments, as the representative institution for the people, put in place mechanisms for auditing and questioning the utilization of public monies raised by the Government.

Indeed, Joachim Wehner, in his introduction to the *Contributing Paper for the Handbook for Public Accounts Committees* notes that there is a global trend towards greater openness in Government finances, based on a belief that transparent budgetary practices can ensure that funds raised by the State for public purposes will be spent as promised by the Government, while maximising the benefits derived from spending. He goes on to state that one crucial component of a transparent system of resource allocation involves an **independent assurance of the**

**integrity of public budgeting through an audit process, and the scrutiny of its outcomes by the representatives of the people,** in the form of Parliament.<sup>1</sup> Suffice to say that, the centrality of Public Accounts Committee in actualizing the aspirations of the people to have a transparent and an accountable Government need not be over-emphasized.

### **The Kenyan Experience**

The history, evolution and functioning of the Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly of Kenya dates back to the pre-colonial period when the legislative function of the then *Kenya Colony* was exercised through the *Legislative Council (LEGCO)* and has its forerunner as the Public Accounts Committee of the UK House of Commons, which was established in 1861 as part of the *Gladstonian Reforms* initiated by William Gladstone during his reign as the Chancellor for Exchequer in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>2</sup> The concept of Public Accounts Committees as agents of parliamentary oversight of public expenditure spread to many other jurisdictions in both Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth countries. As the concept gained prominence, Public Accounts Committee assumed the ultimate purpose of securing the accountability of the executive arm of Government for its use of public-sector resources and to motivate improvements in internal financial control and service efficiency<sup>3</sup>, which elevated the Committee or its variants to a heightened status over other committees in the legislature.

The *Gladstonian Reforms* also found footage in Kenya in 1948 when the *LEGCO* of the then Kenya Colony established a Committee, paralleled to the *Westminster* model, with the responsibility of exercising

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<sup>1</sup> Joachim Wehner, [2002]; Contributing paper for the Handbook for Public Accounts Committees commissioned by the Association of Public Accounts Committees [APAC] in South Africa, Budget Information Service Institute for Democracy in South Africa [IDASA].

<sup>2</sup> UK Houses of Parliament - Holding Governments to Account – 150 Years of Public Accounts Committee.

<sup>3</sup> ODI [2008]: Enhancing accountability for the use of public sector resources: How to improve the effectiveness of Public Accounts Committees, Background Paper for the 2008 Triennial Conference of Commonwealth Auditors General.

oversight over public investment and expenditure. In order to support effective audit of public funds by the *LEGCO*, the Colonial Government, through *Exchequer and Audit Ordinance* established the Office of Controller and Auditor-General. The Office was created as an independent Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) responsible for undertaking public sector audits and submitting reports on such audit to the *LEGCO* for review by the Public Accounts Committee. When Kenya attained independence in 1963, the independence Government inherited the colonial public audit framework by Parliament through the Public Accounts Committee on one hand and the role of SAI in public audit through the Office of the Controller and Auditor-General.

Since independence to date, the effectiveness of Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly of Kenya as an effective means of parliamentary oversight of public expenditure has been progressively improving as a result of constitutional, statutory, procedural and structural reforms.

### **Establishment and Mandate of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in Kenya National Assembly**

In Kenya, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is a select Committee of the House deriving its mandate from Standing Order 205, which provides that:

*“There shall be a select committee to be designated the Public Accounts Committee which shall be responsible for the examination of the accounts showing the appropriations of the sum voted by the House to meet the public expenditure and of such other accounts laid before the House as the Committee may think fit.”*

The primary mandate of PAC is therefore, to oversight the expenditure of public funds by Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) or any other entity. The Committee executes its mandate on

the basis of annual and special audit reports prepared by the Office of the Auditor-General every financial year or upon request by the Committee, respectively. In a nutshell the purpose of PAC is to ensure that the budget as approved by Parliament is properly implemented. Traditionally the focus of audit has been regularity and propriety, however, increasingly the focus has also changed to “value for money”.

### **Key Milestones that have enhanced the functioning of the Public Accounts Committee as an effective means of parliamentary oversight of public expenditure**

From 1963 to date, Kenya has made tremendous milestones that have improved the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight of public expenditure through audit Committees, particularly the PAC. Some of the notable milestones are highlighted below –

#### **(1) Autonomy of Parliament and its implications on the effectiveness of the PAC**

The doctrine of *supremacy and independence* of Parliament is the foundational rock on which the ability of Parliament to effectively function as the people’s watchdog over the other arms of Government is anchored. From 1963 until 1999, running of Parliament was domiciled in the Office of the President as a department. It was therefore commonplace for the operations of Parliament to be directed from the presidency, hence, the institution could not authoritatively undertake public audit independently. This was further orchestrated by the fact that the country was one-party State and so the party forming Government would still be the one whose members were entrusted to undertake parliamentary audit of public expenditure. When multiparty was re-introduced in 1992 after the repeal of section 2A of the then Constitution, there was clamour to entrench independence of Parliament by delinking it from the Executive. This heightened in 1999 and culminated in the enactment of the Parliamentary Service Commission Act in 2000, effectively removing parliamentary operations from the Office of the President.

The realization of autonomy of Parliament had positive implications on the functioning of House Committees including the PAC, given that the National Assembly took full control of its operations, particularly resourcing the PAC in terms of budget and staffing. This milestone translated to better oversight by PAC.

## **(2) Structural reforms**

The effectiveness of today's PAC has been enhanced through certain deliberate procedural decisions that have taken place across the successive Parliaments since independence in order to refine the manner in which the Committee is structured in terms of its mandate, membership, life and operations.

### **Splitting the Committee based on mandate**

In terms of the mandate, there have been continuous reforms aimed at refocusing PAC to a narrower mandate as possible so as to improve efficiency by ensuring that the committee does not deal with overflowing in tray of public audits. It is widely understood that one of the key attributes of an effective Parliamentary Committee is reasonable scope of mandate. Where the mandate is too expansive, there is a high likelihood that a Committee would be constrained from effectively discharging its mandate.

At inception, PAC was responsible for reviewing audit both public investments and expenditure by public entities, which are two distinct areas altogether. The first initiative to improve how PAC functions was to **split the Committee based on mandate**. A journey in the history of the committee system of the National Assembly of Kenya is replete with instances where the House consciously shed off certain functions from the purview of PAC to other Audit Committees. In 1979, the National Assembly amended its Standing Orders and hived out Public Investments Committee (PIC) from the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). The rationale for the split was to ensure that PAC has reasonably sizeable



mandate for it to effectively deliver on the core mandate of auditing public expenditure while PIC would review and audit public investments or undertakings.

Even after shedding off audit of public investments to the Public Investments Committee, the rising number of local authorities and establishment of several special Funds aimed at sparking growth in certain sectors of the economy or categories of the population increased the workload of PAC. Some of the Funds included the Local Authorities Transfer Fund (LATF), established in 1998, the Constituencies Development Fund (CDF), presently known as the *National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NG-CDF)*, Equalization Fund, Political Parties Fund, Judiciary Fund, Youth Enterprise Development Fund, among other Funds.

In order to sustain PAC's impetus of remaining current in its audits by handling a reasonable scope of mandate, the National Assembly amended the Standing Orders to allow further splitting of the PAC by establishing two new Audit Committees to handle audit of specialized Funds. First was the Local Authorities Fund Accounts Committee to handle audit of local authorities, and later on in 2017, the House established *Special Funds Accounts Committee (SFAC)*, which is now tasked with the responsibility of conducting oversight of accounts of public expenditure of newly created special funds, including the Equalization Fund, Political Parties Fund, Judiciary Fund, NG-CDF, among others.

The rationale for the splitting of PAC has been to increase its efficacy in oversight of public expenditure by ensuring that the Committee concentrates on a reasonable mandate of reviewing audited accounts of mainstream national Government Ministries and Departments.

It is however notable that whereas the hiving off of the mandate of the Committee and subsequent transfer to other Committees such as PIC and the SFAC, there are still new emerging areas of work that the Committee finds itself inundated with and hence there may be valid

arguments for a further relook of its mandate to make the Committee more effective. The new areas touch on matters that historically and traditionally are not purely “audit” related and a close look at the Public Audit Act No. 34 of 2015 reveals that the mandate of the Committee may also extend or call for an examination of the policies and internal controls of public bodies in seeking to examine the accounts showing the appropriations made to meet public expenditure. It is also worth noting that the other new emerging area relates to the fact that the national budget has over the years increased and it now stands at Kenya Shillings (Kshs) 2.9 Trillion this being the budget for the financial year 2020-21 which is nearly 25.9 Billion U.S. Dollars. In the fiscal year 2020-21, the Government expenditure in Kenya was Kshs 2.2 trillion which is around 20 Billion U.S. Dollars. With this in mind, it subsequently follows that the work of the Committee is humongous noting the Committee has to examine the accounts showing the appropriations of sum voted to meet the public expenditure of nearly 20 Billion U.S. Dollars in addition to the supplementary budgets that have often been made to meet additional unforeseen government needs for which no funds had been appropriated. To this end, the examination and scrutiny of public expenditure by the Committee certainly extends beyond the 20 Billion U.S. Dollars.

Finally, the other emerging issue relates to national debt. According to the 2021 Budget Policy Statement, Kenya’s public debt as of June 2020 stood at Sh 7.06 trillion, which is equivalent to 65 percent of GDP or 62.9 Billion Dollars. It is however said that the national debt may even be bigger as there are conflicting reports from the National Treasury on the actual figures of the public debt. To this end, the international financial institutions have raised questions on the principal risks associated with the debt, in particular the loans and guarantees and more particularly the sustainability of the amount of debt both actual and potential. There may, hence, be need for an analysis to be undertaken to examine what is the total stock debt of the country, the sources of the debt and the

nature of the guarantees given by the National Government, the assumptions underlying the debt management strategy and the sustainability of the amount of debt.

In light of the foregoing, there is a valid case for further reviewing the mandate of the Committee to hive off other special audits that may have a bearing on policies and internal controls of public bodies. There may also be need to create and establish other separate Committees to deal with the special audits and in particular a new Committee to exclusively deal with the national public debt and all the ensuing issues that are highlighted herein.

### **Review of Membership**

The purpose of auditing Government expenditure from public funds is best achieved if the body undertaking the audit is not part of the Government. It has therefore become an established practice in many parliaments to entrust Audit Committees in the hands of the opposition parties and members. In Kenya, before the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament, there was no express provision obligating the House to draw majority of members of the PAC from the opposition, although by practice, this could happen.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament amended the Standing Orders and expressly provided that parties other than the party or coalition of parties forming National Government would have majority of one member, so as to leverage on objectivity of oversight of Government. This is also replicated in PIC and SFAC, in which the parties or coalition of parties not forming the national Government has a majority of one member. PAC and PIC are chaired by a Member from party or coalition of parties not forming the National Government while SFAC is chaired by an independent Member of Parliament. The milestone of allowing the opposition a majority of one member in the membership of PAC, coupled with the practice of having the Committee chaired by a member from the parties not forming the National Government has improved the effectiveness of

PAC by eliminating conflict of interest and possible compromise that would have arisen were the Committee chaired and dominated by members of the party forming the national executive. The mischief for such an arrangement is to ensure that the 'opposition' which ordinarily prides in being the '*alternative Government*' in waiting takes charge of the machinery responsible for exercising oversight over the executive on public expenditure.

### **Aligning the term of the Committee to the life of Parliament**

Audit of public accounts is such an arduous task that takes so much time to conclude, given the gargantuan volumes of documents that the Committee must scrutinize before making unqualified recommendations on culpability or otherwise of the Executive for financial impropriety. This means that for PAC to meaningfully conclude an audit, it requires consistency in its membership because a turnover in the course of the term of Parliament interferes with the course of ongoing audit.

Up to the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament (2007 – 2013), the Standing Orders provided for re-constitution of the PAC in the course of the term of Parliament. Then, Standing Order 205(4) provided that the PAC constituted at the beginning of the term of Parliament would serve for three calendar years and the successor one would serve for the remainder of the term of Parliament. This practice meant that the National Assembly of Kenya experienced a turn-over of membership in the third year, and since there was no guarantee that resourceful members would be re-appointed to the Committee, possibilities of re-constituting the Committee with totally new members existed. This practice was observed to interruptive on ongoing audits and had negative effects on the efficiency of the Committee.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Parliament amended the Standing Orders in 2017 and tied the life of the PAC to the term of Parliament. This progressive practice

has improved the grounding of members in oversight of public expenditure by serving longer and also encouraged higher standards of objectivity without fear of being dropped from the Committee when being reconstituted as was the practice before 2017.

### **(3) The Place of the Constitution in strengthening Public Audit**

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 is emphatic on financial probity with respect to public expenditure, accountability and transparency. The post 2010 constitutional dispensation was a major breakthrough for public audit and served to bolster the place, role and efficacy of the PAC.

First, Article 201 of the Constitution elaborates on the fundamental principles that “...shall guide all aspects of public finance in the Republic...” The principles are, *inter alia*:

201(a) *there shall be openness and accountability, including public participation in financial matters;*

201(d) *public money shall be used in a prudent and responsible way; and*

201(e) *financial management shall be responsible, and fiscal reporting shall be clear.*

The PAC places very high premium on these principles, among others, which guide the entire process that culminates in the Committee’s audit reports. The constitutional framework provide a clear direction to the Committee in undertaking public audit review.

Secondly, the Constitution provides for *direct personal liability for financial impropriety* by an accounting officer or any other public officer to whom public funds are entrusted for public good, during office and after leaving office. Article 226(5) of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) is emphatic that –

*“If the holder of a public office, including a political office, directs or approves the use of public funds contrary to law or instructions, the person is liable for any loss arising from that*

*use and shall make good the loss, whether the person remains the holder of the office or not."*

In making its recommendations, the PAC has hoisted high this constitutional provision as the basis for holding each individual Accounting Officers and other Public Officers directly and personally liable for any loss of public funds under their watch. The Committee has severally invoked this provision in its recommendations to hold those responsible personally accountable and also to serve as a deterrent measure.

Third, the 2010 Constitution *strengthened the Office of the Auditor-General*, which supports the PAC in undertaking public audit by originating audit reports. Under Kenya's repealed Constitution, the Auditor-General, who prepared reports that forms the basis for parliamentary audit of public funds was fused together with the Office of the Controller of Budget. Section 128 of the repealed Constitution thus established the Office of Controller and Auditor-General as an office under the Public Service. Whereas the Constitution envisaged that the office would function without direction or control of any person or authority, the fact that it loosely hanged within the architecture of the mainstream public service made it impossible for the office to function effectively, independently and render unfettered audit reports to Parliament. Quite often than not, the office found itself functioning at the behest of the Executive and holders of the office could be transferred without notice, thereby affecting the audit process.

The 2010 Constitution enhanced effectiveness of the audit process by strengthening the Office of Auditor-General in the following respects –

- (i) Article 229 of the Constitution delinked the office of Auditor-General from the public service and established it as an Independent Office under the Constitution. Effectively, the holder of the Office now enjoys security of tenure.

- (ii) The Constitution also separated the Office of the Auditor-General from the Office of Controller of Budget. This is a major constitutional milestone that left the Auditor-General to purely concentrate on matters of audit and not double up as the Controller of Budget.
- (iii) Under the current Constitution, the Office of Auditor-General now draws its funding directly from the Consolidated Fund and not from the Ministry where it was domiciled under the repealed constitution.

The above gains have positively impacted on the effectiveness of the PAC of the National Assembly to undertake financial audit because the office of Auditor-General provides detailed audit reports without undue influence from the executive as would have been when the office was an appendage of the Executive under the line Ministry.

Fourthly, the 2010 Constitution contributed to enhancing parliamentary audit of public funds and centrality of the PAC in the audit process **by linking parliamentary audit to allocation of resources** by Parliament to the national and county levels of Government. Article 203(2) of the Constitution categorically provides that the equitable sharing of revenue between national and county Governments shall be based on the **most recent audited accounts** of revenue received, as approved by the National Assembly. This cardinal constitutional principle in the 2010 Constitution marked a major milestone in improving the effectiveness of PAC of the National Assembly because it enhanced the centrality of public audit in the budget process.

Consequent to this high expectation and the ramifications it has on allocation of revenue, the Executive treats parliamentary audit seriously, has become more responsive to parliamentary audit and addresses audit queries more seriously now than ever before. The net effect of this

milestone has been better utilization of public resources by the Executive in order to ensure there is value for money that would form the basis for sharing of revenue in subsequent financial years. Internally, the expectation on Parliament approving reports as a basis for sharing of revenue between the two levels of Government made it imperative for the PAC to clear backlog of audit reports in order to be as current as possible in terms of the FY audited.

In response to the expectations set out in Article 203(2) of the Constitution, the PAC from the 11th Parliament onwards worked on clearing the backlog of public audit that had lagged for nearly five Financial Years back. The current PAC in the 12th Parliament is not only as current as possible in the audit process but is also more thorough, noting that its recommendations impact on the recommendations that the Controller of Budget makes to Parliament with regard to equitable sharing of revenue between the two tiers of Kenya's Government.

#### **(4) Legislative milestones on public audit**

The implications of the 2010 constitutional dispensation on effectiveness of audit of public funds by PAC have been buttressed by legislation. The enactment of the Public Audit Act, 2015, Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act and the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 elaborated on the legal framework for public audit and scope of sanctions for financial impropriety. Section 68 (1) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 provides, *inter alia*, that:

*“An Accounting Officer for a national Government entity, Parliamentary Service Commission (the Senate and National Assembly) and the Judiciary shall be accountable to the National Assembly for ensuring that the resources of the respective entity for which he or she is the Accounting Officer are used in a way that is lawful and authorized, and effective, efficient, economical and transparent.”*



This provision obligates all Accounting Officers to appear before the Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly to respond to audit queries in their respective Ministries/Departments/Agencies.

Further, section 74 (2) of the same PFM Act stipulates that:

*“If a Cabinet Secretary reasonably believes that an Accounting Officer is engaging in or has engaged in improper conduct within the meaning of sub-section (4), the Cabinet Secretary shall:*

*Take such measures as may be provided in regulations; or*

*Refer the matter to the relevant office or body in terms of the statutory and other conditions of appointment or employment applicable to that Accounting Officer.”*

This section empowers the appointing authority to discipline errant Accounting Officers, which could include revoking their appointment. This provision has sealed a long standing loophole that has previously seen Accounting Officers continuously commit or preside over fiscal indiscipline and malpractice in their Ministries with impunity without sanction.

PAC strongly holds the view that these provisions of the law were intended to be fully deployed to give effect to the high principles in Article 201 of the Constitution stated hereinabove, to ensure prudent and responsible use of public funds. The Committee, accordingly, applied these provisions to recommend diverse disciplinary actions, investigations and surcharging of various persons found to bear responsibility for breaches of the law and/or responsible for the loss or wastage of public funds.

Over and above statutory provisions relating to financial matters, the Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act, 2017 gives express powers to the PAC to compel attendance of witnesses by way of summons.

This deters rogue public officers from possible contempt of the Committee by disregarding invitations to appear to respond to audit matters.

## **(5) Internal Procedures and practices for enhancing efficacy of PAC**

### **Request for Special Audits**

Another innovative practice of the PAC of the National Assembly towards distinguishing itself as an effective oversight of public expenditure is the request for Special **Audit** from the Auditor-General, where the Committee has reasons to believe that public funds are not being utilized appropriately. Ordinarily, the role of PAC was akin to that of a mortician who conducted post-mortem on an already dead body. But in a departure from this traditional approach, PAC in Kenya can, at any time, require the Auditor-General to conduct a Special Audit of a certain Government-funded project or programme in the course of implementation and before the end of the Financial Year in question.

On the basis of the Report of the Auditor-General on a Special Audit, the Committee is able to exercise timely oversight of public expenditure and where impropriety is noticed, it is forestalled and necessary action recommended. This innovative practice has made the PAC to deter as well as forestall potential misappropriation of public funds that would have been noticed after aggravated to a worse state.

### **Review of integrity of the PAC– ‘watching the watchman’**

Given that the ultimate purpose of PAC activity is to secure the accountability of the Executive, it behooves the Committee to be above board in its undertakings. Put otherwise, the conduct of the PAC, be it in the individuality of its membership or collectively as a unit of the House, out to be beyond reproach like Caesar’s wife. In fact, the question that has been asked severally is ‘*who watches the watchman?*’ In order

to make the Committee an irreproachable overseer of public expenditure who cannot compromise the recommendations on audit work, Kenya's internal parliamentary practice is designed such that the conduct of PAC is subject to review by the House through the Committee of Powers and Privileges. In one instance in the 11<sup>th</sup> Parliament, the House adopted and implemented recommendations of the Committee of Powers and Privileges leading to removal of members who had been adversely mentioned for having conducted themselves in an untoward manner during oversight of certain public expenditure. Such internal checks and balances consolidate the integrity of the Committee as an effective organ of parliamentary oversight of public expenditure.

## **Conclusion**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century has been characterised with explosion of knowledge, increased obligation for openness of Government, entrenchment of the right to access to information and exponential rise in civic awareness of governance and public expenditure. Public Accounts Committees must therefore continuously examine themselves and so should Parliament, with a view to ensuring that they adequately respond to public expectations on accountability and transparency of Government in managing public expenditure.

PAC and Auditor General are important actors in promoting accountability. Both are part of the parliamentary infrastructure that helps to ensure that the Governments are held to account for their operating policies and actions, and their management and use of public resources.

The PAC of the National Assembly of Kenya remains on the move to model itself as a trusted and effective watchman of the people over public expenditure by the executive. The Committee keeps evolving as it taps from the lessons learnt and experiences from other jurisdictions. It operates on very similar formal principles and procedures and it has endeavoured to manage new audit content and adapt to the changing structure of the public sector.



Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing the Conference of Chairmen of Public Accounts Committees, in New Delhi on March 15, 1959

## **Public Accounts Committee— The Conscience Keeper of Democratic Governance in India**

*By T. R. Baalu  
Member, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India*

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It is indeed a moment of great pleasure and pride for me and other Hon'ble Members of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament of India as we celebrate the centenary of the PAC on 4th & 5th December 2021.

As a Member of Parliament for over three decades, initially in Rajya Sabha for full term from 1986 - 1992, and Member of the Lok Sabha for 6 times, from 1996 - 2014 and from 2019 till now, I have been one of the highly privileged Parliamentarians. Apart from being a Member of the House, I had the fortune of functioning from the Treasury Benches as Union Minister and also from the opposition benches as well as Chairperson and Member of several Committees of our prestigious Parliament during this three decade long service as a Member of Parliament. Nevertheless, I feel elated more to be a Member of the PAC today during the hundredth year of its existence. That the Indian Parliament's foremost Committee of Oversight, Public Accounts Committee which was established in 1921 has been functioning successfully for a century as the conscience keeper of the democratic governance of the country.

Democracy is nothing but an instrument to translate the will of the people into reality and hence it has been aptly defined to be 'of the people, for the people and by the people'. Though, there are several administrative agencies and mechanisms as in-built set ups within the bureaucracies of the State and Centre and over them the Comptroller

and Auditor General keeping a close watch and making incisive analysis of the receipts, expenditures, budgets and accounts and utilisation of people's money collected through a plethora of taxes, duties and tariffs, the crucial and real examination of spending of public money is done by the PAC. I don't think there could be a different and contrary view point. However, in a parliamentary democracy, though there may be many committees including the House Committees, PAC stands out supreme; as it works as the conscience keeper of democratic governance.

We have other Parliamentary Committees such as Estimates Committee, Committee on Public Undertakings, Committee on Subordinate Legislation, Consultative Committees functioning on behalf of the Parliament for several decades. No doubt their roles and responsibilities, though domain-specific, are certainly of paramount importance. For nearly three decades Department related Standing Committees are in vogue to scrutinize every year the demands for grants of various Ministries and Departments of the Government of India.

But, the supremacy of PAC continues to remain intact. This is the feel I have after working as a Member of almost every Committee during the last 30 years. Though, I had been a Minister of the Union for well over eleven years, there were occasions to closely interact with various committees of the Parliament, more so in the process of making laws.

Many Committees, particularly Joint Parliamentary Committees, which are set up to go into specific matters or issues of controversial natures have found their functioning tough and their sittings were filled with acrimonious debates and stormy proceedings. The stand-off between treasury side and opposition Members had been so acute and irreconcilable that the Committees were not able to reach unanimous conclusions and recommendations. I too have worked as a Member of such Committees, where I had to be a signatory of dissent note. I do not wish to name such Committees in this context; but, my experience has been that PAC, in general had not had such unsavoury proceedings. The present PAC also has been having smooth transaction of business though, of course at times, on some hot issues, strongly worded views are exchanged. This amity has been possible in PACs sessions. The members are fully conscious of the fact that the ultimate objective is to upholding the will of the

people in governance. Traditionally, the Chairman of PAC has been from the opposition side. Irrespective of this, entire committee remains focused on the mandated responsibility as the present one, in safeguarding public interest in the process of governance by deploying public funds, including the revenues and expenditure. In my view, the committee system of Parliament in India has matured well and that is the reason we are now celebrating the hundredth anniversary of Public Accounts Committee. In fact, we cannot say that these last hundred years only are responsible to strengthen our parliamentary processes. The seeds of democracy were sown in our country, particularly in Tamil Nadu; several centuries ago during the great Chozha empire. Uthiramerur (a place near Kancheepuram) inscriptions on the walls of the Vaikunda Perumal temple, found during the period of King Paranthaka Chozha (907 to 956AD), that is 1100 years ago speaks about the democratic way of governance.

Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India visited the temple and he was inspired by the system and took up strengthening of the Panchayat Raj system. The “Uthiramerur Inscriptions” written in Tamil language bears testimony to our democratic ethos. These inscriptions reveal that, elections were held based on voting (Kuda Olai). Qualifications and eligibility criteria were well laid down for the contesting candidates. Elections were conducted in a public forum in the village. The inscriptions mention about the existence of different committees for different functions. The committees were required to maintain proper accounts which were periodically audited. Present day parliamentary democracy in India is nothing but a magnified scale of the miniscule Uthiramerur model. Though we have now adopted the British system of parliamentary democracy as a historical legacy, the Public Accounts Committee was established in the year 1862 only; by a resolution of the British House of Commons with the name “The Committee of Public Accounts” for examination of the Accounts of the appropriation of sums granted by Parliament. Though our PAC is having a rich experience of 100 years, there may be scope for further improvement to attain perfection. “Tirukural” written by the saint poet Tiruvalluvar laid down the basic tenets of wholesome governance, in its 381st couplet under the caption “Irai Match-Benevolence of Governance”, which I quote, “Eyatralum Eattalum Kaathalum Kaatha Vaguthalum Valladhu Arasu”.

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The meaning of this Tirukural couplet in English is, “An able government is one that adopts right policies to raise resources, protects the money and distributes them to good public purposes”.

Though this was the piece of advice given by Tiruvalluvar, 2000 years ago to the governments, it applies to modern day governance particularly even in a parliamentary democracy. If these touch stone principles are followed by the Government and Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, while carrying on its functions; I am sure that our parliamentary democracy will attain perfection and will become the golden model democratic governance.



## लोक लेखा समिति — एक नज़र में

द्वारा

शक्ति सिंह गोहिल,

सदस्य, लोक लेखा समिति, भारतीय संसद

लोकतंत्र के इतिहास में संसदीय समितियों का बहुत बड़ा योगदान रहा है और एक लंबा इतिहास भी रहा है। 1919 में मांटैग्यू-चेम्सफोर्ड सुधार के तहत लेजिस्लेटिव असेम्बली में 1921 में सबसे पहले पांच संसदीय समितियां बनी थीं। यह समितियां इंडियन लेजिस्लेटिव रूल्स के प्रावधान के तहत बनी थीं। इन पांच समितियों में लोक लेखा समिति (पब्लिक अकाउंट कमेटी) भी थी। संविधान के लागू होने के पश्चात् 1921 में बनी इन समितियों में बहुत बदलाव आया। संविधान के लागू होने के पश्चात् समितियों की संख्या में न केवल बढ़ोतरी हुई बल्कि समितियों के कार्यक्षेत्र और शक्तियों में भी अत्यंत वृद्धि हुई। हमारे संसद के नियमों के प्रावधानों के तहत संसदीय समितियों में सदस्यों का चयन या तो सदन के अंदर चुनाव से अथवा सदन द्वारा नियुक्ति या माननीय अध्यक्ष के द्वारा नियुक्ति के माध्यम से होता है।

अगर हम यूनाईटेड किंगडम के हाउस ऑफ कामन्स की स्थिति को देखें तो वहां पर तीन प्रकार की संसदीय समितियां हैं। पहला—कमेटीस ऑफ दि होल हाउस; दूसरा—स्टैंडिंग कमेटीस; और तीसरा—सिलेक्ट कमेटीस। यूके की पार्लियामेंट में 1861 में पहली बार पब्लिक अकाउंट कमेटी अर्थात् लोक लेखा समिति का गठन हुआ था। यह लोक लेखा समिति स्टैंडिंग आर्डर 98 के प्रावधान के तहत गठित हुई थी। इस लोक लेखा समिति में ऑपोजिशन पार्टी के मेम्बर को चेयरमैन बनाया जाता है। ब्रिटेन की यह लोक लेखा समिति सारे लेखा-जोखा की न केवल जांच करती है बल्कि व्यय किस प्रकार हुआ है और वह सही मायने में सही तरीके से हुआ है या नहीं, इसका विश्लेषण भी करती है। लोक लेखा समिति एक्सेस एक्सपेंडिचर को जब तक स्वीकार नहीं करती है तब तक हाउस इस पर विचार नहीं कर सकता है। कुछ वर्षों से ब्रिटेन की लोक लेखा समिति की बैठक सार्वजनिक रूप से भी होती है। ब्रिटेन की पार्लियामेंट में लोक लेखा समिति की रिपोर्ट और सरकार द्वारा दिए गए उत्तरों पर चर्चा के लिए हर सत्र में कम-से-कम एक दिन आवंटित किया जाता है।

अगर हम अपने देश की संसदीय समिति को विभाजित करना चाहें, तो उसके दो प्रकार हैं—पहला, स्थायी समिति (स्टैंडिंग कमेटी) और दूसरा, तदर्थ समिति (एडहॉक कमेटी)। हमारे देश में लोक लेखा समिति अर्थात् पब्लिक अकाउंट्स कमेटी पहली बार 1921 में बनी थी और

हमें इस बात की प्रसन्नता है कि आज हम लोक लेखा समिति की 100वीं वर्षगांठ मनाने जा रहे हैं।

संसदीय समितियां हमारे देश में इन-कैमरा काम करती हैं अर्थात्, समिति की सभी कार्यवाहियों को मीडिया के सामने या सार्वजनिक रूप से कहीं भी तब तक उजागर नहीं करना होता है जब तक कि समितियां अपनी रिपोर्ट संसद में प्रस्तुत न कर दें। इसका एक लाभ यह होता है कि संसदीय समिति के अंदर जो भी कार्य होता है उसमें सदस्य दलगत राजनीति से ऊपर उठकर अपनी बात रखते हैं और समिति के सदस्यों के बीच में दलगत राजनीति से ऊपर उठकर एकता निर्मित हो पाती है। विशेषरूप से, लोक लेखा समिति के कंधों पर बहुत बड़ी जिम्मेदारी रहती है क्योंकि नियंत्रक और महालेखापरीक्षक जो लेखापरीक्षा करके पैराग्राफ अपने हवाले से देते हैं उसको बारीकी से देखना और सार्वजनिक कोष अर्थात् सरकार की ट्रेजरी से कहीं गलत खर्च तो नहीं हुआ है और कम से कम खर्च में अच्छे से अच्छा कार्य कैसे हो सकता था या होना चाहिए इसका विश्लेषण लोक लेखा समिति करती है। सभी मंत्रालय अच्छी तरह से जानते हैं कि उन्हें लोक लेखा समिति के सामने उत्तर देना होगा और इसलिए अपने कार्यों के प्रति सजग भी रहते हैं। लोक लेखा समिति की रिपोर्ट में दिखाई गई क्षतियों के संदर्भ में अधिकांश समितियों के सारे सदस्य एकजुट होकर कार्य करते हैं। इसी कारण से विभाग के ऊपर भी एक उचित दबाव बना रहता है। लोक लेखा समिति अपने प्रतिवेदनों को तैयार करती है और उन्हें संसद के समक्ष प्रस्तुत करती है। सामान्यतः ऐसा देखा गया है कि समिति का प्रतिवेदन आम सहमति से तैयार होता है, परन्तु यदि कोई सदस्य अपना विमत दर्ज कराना चाहता है तो प्रतिवेदन के साथ उस विमत को भी दर्ज किया जाता है।

लोक लेखा समिति के प्रतिवेदन को सदस्य अपने अलग-अलग विषयों की चर्चा के दौरान उद्धृत भी करते हैं और संसद द्वारा वित्तीय नियंत्रण सुनिश्चित करने में समिति के प्रतिवेदनों की भूमिका भी रहती है।

हमारे लोक लेखा समिति के 100वीं वर्षगांठ के अवसर पर मैं आशा करता हूँ कि जिस प्रकार से इस समिति का गौरवपूर्ण इतिहास रहा है, उसी प्रकार वर्तमान और भविष्य में भी दलगत राजनीति से ऊपर उठकर जनहित में सरकार के व्यर्थ खर्चों को नियंत्रित करने में आगामी दिनों में भी समिति की भूमिका सराहनीय बनी रहेगी।

# The Functioning of Public Accounts Committee of Parliament

*By Bhubaneswar Kalita  
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## Introduction

Under the Indian Constitution, no money can be drawn or spent by Central Government out of the Consolidated Funds of India, except under the authority of law passed by Parliament. Parliament alone has the power of the purse. Government proposals for expenditure out of the Consolidated Fund of India are presented to the Lok Sabha in the form of Demands for Grants at the commencement of each financial year and also if necessary, at later stage through Supplementary Demands for Grants during the course of the year. These are discussed and voted by the Lok Sabha, before the law authority, the Government; to draw and spend the money is passed by Parliament. The Parliamentary control over public expenditure is, however, not limited only to the voting of money required by Government for carrying on the administration of the country but also extends to ensuring that expenditure is incurred in a prudent manner on plans and programmes approved by Parliament and that the objectives underlying the plan and programmes are achieved. Even, though Lok Sabha discusses the Demands for Grants sufficiently for long period before voting, due to the magnitude and exploiting of the State activities, it is almost impossible for Parliament as on today to scrutinise the myriad of expenditure proposals and Government activities effectively and minutely.

In order to help it, to exercise effective control over public expenditure, Lok Sabha has set up three Financial Committees *viz.* Public

Accounts Committee, Estimates Committee and Committee on Public Undertakings, while the Public Accounts Committee and the Estimates Committee deal with the Ministries and Departments of the Government and Statutory bodies under their control, the Public Undertakings Committee directs its attention to the working of Public undertakings of the Central Government.

### **Genesis of the Committee**

The Committee on Public Accounts was first set up in 1921 in the wake of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. The Finance Member of the Executive Council used to be the Chairman of the Committee. The Secretariat assistance to the Committee was rendered by the then Finance Department (now the Ministry of Finance). This position continued right up to 1949. During the days of the Interim Government, the then Finance Minister acted as the Chairman of the Committee, and later on, after the attainment of Independence in August, 1947, the Finance Minister became the Chairman. This naturally restricted the free expression of views and criticism of the Executive. The committee on Public Accounts underwent a radical change with the coming into force of the Constitution of India on 26th January, 1950, when the Committee became a Parliamentary Committee functioning under the control of the Speaker with a non-official Chairman appointed by the Speaker from among the Members of Lok Sabha elected to the Committee. The Minister of Finance ceased to be a Member of the Committee *vide* rule 309(i) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

The Public Accounts Committee is now constituted every year under Rule 308 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The Public Accounts Committee consists of not more than 22 members comprising of 15 members elected by Lok Sabha every year from amongst its members according to the principal of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote and not more than 7 members of Rajya Sabha elected by that House in like manner. Prior to the year 1954-55, the Committee consisted of 15 members who were elected by Lok Sabha from amongst its Members. But with effect from the year 1954-55, 7 members from the Rajya Sabha are also being associated with the Committee. Till 1966-67, a senior member of the

ruling party used to be appointed by the Speaker as Chairman of the Committee. In 1967, however, for the first time, a member from the Opposition in Lok Sabha, was appointed as the Chairman of the Committee by the Speaker. This practice continues till date. The term of office of members of the Committee does not exceed one year at a time. A Minister is not elected a member of the Committee and if the 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 Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the members of the Committee from Lok Sabha.

### **Scope and Functions**

The functions of the Committee, as enshrined in rule 308(i) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, include examination of accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by Parliament for the expenditure of the Government of India, the annual finance accounts of the Government and such other accounts laid before the House as the Committee may think fit. In scrutinising the Appropriation Accounts of the Government of India and the Report of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India thereon, the Committee has to satisfy.

- a. that the moneys shown in the accounts as having been disbursed were legally available for, and applicable to, the service or purpose to which they have been applied or charged;
- b. that the expenditure conforms to the authority which governs it; and
- c. that every re-appropriation has been made in accordance with the provisions made in this behalf under rules framed by competent authority.

It shall also be the duty of the Committee –

- a. to examine the statement of accounts showing the income and expenditure of state corporations, trading and manufacturing schemes, concerns and projects together with the balance

sheets and statements of profit and loss accounts which the President may have required to be prepared or are prepared under the provisions of the statutory rules regulating the financing of particular corporation, trading or manufacturing scheme or concern or project and the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon;

- b. to examine the statement of accounts showing the income and expenditure of autonomous and semi autonomous bodies, the audit of which may be conducted by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India either under the directions of the President or by a statute of Parliament; and
- c. to consider the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General in cases where the President may have required him to conduct an audit of any receipts or to examine the accounts of stores and stocks.

If any money has been spent on any service during a financial year in excess of the amount granted by the House for that purpose the Committee shall examine with reference to the facts of each case the circumstances leading to such an excess and make such recommendation as it may deem fit.

### **Nature and Scope of Examination**

An important function of the Committee is to ascertain that money granted by Parliament has been spent by Government “within the scope of the demand”. The implications of this phrase are that –

- (i) money recorded as spent against the grant must not be more than the amount granted,
- (ii) the expenditure brought to account against a particular grant must be of such a nature as to warrant its record against the grant and against no other, and
- (iii) the grants should be spent on purposes which are set out in the detailed demand and they cannot be spent on “any new service not contemplated in the demand”.

The functions of the Committee extend “beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy”. The Committee thus examines cases involving losses, nugatory expenditure and financial irregularities. When any case of proved negligence resulting in loss or extravagance is brought to the notice of the Committee, it calls upon the Ministry/Department concerned to explain what action, disciplinary or otherwise, it had taken to prevent a recurrence. In such a case it can also record its opinion in the form of disapproval or pass strictures against the extravagance or lack of proper control by the Ministry of Department concerned. Another important function of the Committee is the discussion on points of financial discipline and principle.

The detailed examination of questions involving principle and system is a leading and recognized function of the Committee. The Committee is not concerned with questions of policy in the broad sense. As a rule, it expresses no opinion on points of general policy, but it is within its jurisdiction to point out whether there has been extravagance or waste in carrying out that policy.

### **Regularisation of Excesses over Grants**

If any money has been spent by the Government on a service in excess of the amount granted by the House for the purpose, the Committee examines with reference to the facts of each case, the circumstances leading to such an excess and make such recommendations as it may deem fit.

Such excess are thereafter required to be brought up before the House by Government for regularization in the manner envisaged in Article 115 of the Constitution. To facilitate speedy regularization of such excess expenditure by Parliament, the Committee presents a consolidated report relating to all Ministries/Departments in advance of other reports.

### **Savings**

The Committee looks upon savings arising from incorrect estimating of other defects of procedure no more leniently than it does upon excesses. It regards estimating on the safe side to be as faulty as estimating on the low side. In the words of the Committee “from one point of

view, 'safe' estimating might be regarded as even more objectionable, as it might easily lead to extravagance, waste or worse".

### **Significance and Importance of Committee's Work**

Lok Sabha, having voted large sums of the taxpayers' money does, in the interest of the taxpayers, expect in due course a detailed account of how the moneys have been spent. It must satisfy itself that the moneys so voted were directed to the intended purposes and were spent prudently and economically. The Comptroller and Auditor General examines the yearly accounts of the Government and after scrutiny certified the accounts, subject to such reservations as he chooses to make and is difficult, if not impossible, for Lok Sabha to examine in detail the accounts, which are complex and technical. Further it cannot spare the time required for such examination. It is for these reasons that Lok Sabha has constituted the Committee on Public Accounts and entrusted it with the detailed examination of those accounts.

Another important function of the Committee is the discussion on points of financial discipline and principle. The detailed examination of questions involving principle and system is a leading and recognized function of the Committee.

The Committee's work depends a great deal upon the results of audit and examination of the Accounts of the Union Government carried out by the Comptroller and Audit General (C&AG). The audit by the C&AG is comprehensive and manifold. To cite an example, it involves among others,

- (i) Accountancy Audit,
- (ii) Regularity Audit,
- (iii) Appropriation Audit,
- (iv) Propriety Audit or what is also known as Discretionary Audit, and
- (v) Efficiency-cum-Performance Audit.

In recent years, the technique of efficiency-cum-performance has been attempted in the audit of developmental schemes. The Audit



examines as how far the implementing agency is adequately discharging its financial responsibilities in regard to the various schemes undertaken by it and ascertains whether the schemes are being executed effectively and their operations conducted economically and whether they are producing the results expected of them. In fact, the Institution of Audit plays a crucial role in the functioning of the Committee on Public Accounts and Comptroller and Auditor General is often termed as “friend, philosopher and guide” of the Committee.

At the beginning of its term every year, the Committee makes a selection of Audit Paragraphs included in the various reports of C&AG for in-depth examination. In addition to the above, the Committee may also select one or more *suo-moto* subjects for in-depth examination during the year (in consonance with Rule 276 of the Rules & Procedure) apart from those included in C&AG Reports/Paras. After holding deliberations and taking note of the time available at the disposal of the Committee, the Committee selects the most important subjects/paragraphs, on which oral examination is to be conducted.

### **Action Taken on Recommendations**

A report has value provided it is properly followed up. In the case of original report, the Government is required to intimate to the Committee the action taken or proposed to be taken by it on the recommendations contained in the Report normally within six months of the presentation. The Action Taken replies of the Government are considered by the Committee and after due classification of the replies, an Action Taken Report is presented to the Parliament.

The Government is further required to intimate to the Committee the action taken or proposed to be taken by it on the recommendations contained in Chapter-I of the Action Taken report and also to furnish final replies in respect of the earlier recommendations contained in the Original Report in respect of which either no replies had previously been received or only interim replies had been received (*i.e.* Chapter V). The action taken thus reported by the Government is laid on the Table of the House in the form of a Statement without any further comments by the Committee.

This system not only ensures accountability of the Executive to Parliament but also enables Parliament and also the generally public to appraise Government's final replies to the Committee's recommendations. This completes the examination of a subject by the Committee.

### **Follow-up on Action Taken by Government on Audit paragraphs not selected by the Committee**

Till 1981, there was no practice of ascertaining the action taken by the Ministries/Departments on the audit paragraphs not selected by the Committee for detailed examination. However, with a view to ensure accountability of the Executive in respect of all the issues dealt with in various Audit Reports, the Public Accounts Committee decided in 1982 that the Audit Reports from the year 1980-81 onwards be referred to the Ministries/Departments concerned for furnishing notes duly vetted by Audit showing remedial/corrective action taken on all the paragraphs contained therein.

Taking note of the inordinate delays and persistent failures on the part of a large number of Ministries in reporting to the Committee the corrective action taken by them on audit paragraphs, the Committee recommended that the Action Taken Notes on all the paragraphs of the Report of Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) of India may be furnished to the Committee through the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) within a period of 4 months from the date of laying of Audit Reports on the Table of the House and that the Monitoring Cell, Department of Expenditure may develop and operationalise the Audit Para Monitoring System (APMS) Portal for real time monitoring of the same. At present, due to the persistent efforts of the Committee, the entire process of Audit Para settlement is online. As a result of the initiatives taken by the Public Accounts Committee, the respective Ministries/Departments have toned up their administrative machinery for timely submission of the Remedial Action Taken Notes and the Action Taken Replies on the recommendations made by the Committee, pendency figures have drastically come down, and the Committee is aiming to achieve zero pendency.

## Challenges to the Ecology of the PAC

*By Bhartruhari Mahtab  
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I consider it a unique privilege and a matter of singular honour to be a member of the successive Public Accounts Committees of Parliament, right from the year 1999 since my second term in the Lok Sabha. I owe it to the people of Cuttack, Odisha who have constantly reposed their abiding love and faith in me by electing me to the Lok Sabha for the sixth consecutive term. I had the privilege of working with some of the legendary Chairmen and many veteran Parliamentarians who added to the esteem of the Committee by virtue of their extensive and in-depth knowledge of public finances and national affairs.

On this momentous occasion of the centenary celebration of our PAC, it would be worthwhile to recall that the origin, growth and evolution of the PAC is closely intertwined and intermixed with the evolution of parliamentary democracy. Surprisingly, it was Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the premier of the Great Britain – the term Prime Minister was not in currency then – who directly felt the need for rigorous scrutiny of public expenditure. It was in the year 1862 that Gladstone moved the motion for appointment of the PAC ‘as a permanent piece of Commons’ financial machinery for exercising effective control over the appropriation of public moneys’. The adoption of the motion symbolized the eventual triumph of the democratic principle of parliamentary control over public purse after incessant and often acrimonious parliamentary debates. However, the PAC felt handicapped in exercising effective financial oversight as it was well-*nigh* difficult and time consuming to undertake detailed scrutiny of Government

expenditure without expert assistance. The British Parliament, therefore, passed the Exchequer and Audit Department Act, 1866, making it mandatory to audit Government accounts annually and their examination by the PAC. The enactment proved immensely helpful in mounting effective financial vigil over public expenditure. For instance, in 1886, the British War Office signed a contract for the purchase of medal ribbon for 14 shillings but later cancelled it and signed another contract with a different firm for 20 shillings. When the C&AG demanded explanation, the War Office refused to cooperate, and argued that the Governing Act gave the C&AG no power to query the administration. The PAC, however, asserted the right of the C&AG to query wasteful expenditure. The arming of the PAC with the well documented, factually correct audit reports, became since then 'a scourge of the Bureaucracy'. The PAC and the C&AG, though work closely, but with their independent mandate, complementary role and independent judgment with the common objective of securing accountability and financial discipline.

The Indian PAC was set up in 1921 when under the Government of India Act, passed by the British Parliament, India had, for the first time a bicameral legislature, the Legislative Assembly and the Council of States. Sir Fryderick Whyte, the President of the Legislative Assembly set up the first PAC in the year 1921 and W.M. Hailey was its first *ex-officio* Chairman, being the Finance Member in the Executive Council headed by the Governor General. The PAC became a Parliamentary Committee with India becoming a Republic and since then the Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from its 15 Members of the Lok Sabha. From 1954-55, 7 Members of Rajya Sabha are also made members of the Committee, making a total strength of 22 MPs. In 1967, M.R. Masani, a member of the opposition group, namely Swatantra Party, was appointed as the Chairman, establishing the convention of the Chair being given to the opposition.

Looking back in retrospect, the PAC has built a formidable reputation as financial sentinel on the *qui vive*. The Constitution Review Commission headed by Justice Venkatachaliah in their report, underlining the importance of the PAC in our parliamentary democratic system observed

that 'the PAC is the conscience keeper of the nation in financial matters'. The significance of the role and recommendations of the Committee was reiterated by the Attorney General of India while deposing before the PAC when the Committee was examining the Subject 'Contravention of Constitutional provisions by Ministry of Finance: Expenditure incurred on Interest on Refunds without parliamentary approval'. The Ld. A.G. made it emphatically clear that 'Article 114 is paramount and it has to be complied with and nothing should be done which in any way dilutes the authority and supremacy of Parliament (the PAC). He also noted that he would 'not suggest amendment to the Constitution' just to surmount administrative difficulties of the Revenue Department, Ministry of Finance, in estimating interest on refunds. Despite, clear reluctance of the Ministry of Finance, to take remedial action on their recommendation contained in the 66<sup>th</sup> Report, the PAC after recording the oral testimony of the Attorney General, unanimously recommended that the Ministry of Finance was duty bound to observe the Constitutional provision regardless of their administrative constraints.

This brings me to a more vital aspect of the functioning of the PAC, that is the need to maintain complete nonpartisan approach in the functioning of an all party Committee like the PAC, acclaimed for arriving at consensus and unity in their recommendations. In fact, the recommendations of the PAC are deemed to be supreme in financial matters and viewed as 'the strongest supporter of Treasury Control'. I recollect during the 15th Lok Sabha, when the Committee was examining the report of the C&AG on allocation of 2G and 3G spectrum by the Department of Telecom, and there were attempts to polarize the PAC, Pranab Mukherjee, the then Finance Minister, in his speech at the Annual Meeting of the Asian Development Bank (at Hanoi May 4, 2011) had taking legitimate pride, observed, 'the Indian Governance System is fortified with strong checks and balances such as the PAC and the C&AG'. The PAC and the C&AG can exercise effective financial oversight if they remain robust and discharge their functions without any let and hindrance. There are, as I see from my experience and the developments of certain events during the past two decades and up, which need to be addressed so that the PAC continues to hold the pride of place by constantly securing the financial accountability of the Executive and the Legislature.

It is an old established convention that no specific approval of Parliament is sought to the recommendations of the Committee, as the extent of control of the House may suffer a set-back if they became matters of debate. Therefore, the Parliament has deputed its function to the Committee it trusts and allows it to order remedial action of its own accord. Its only when the Report mention a subject of particular current interest, of a scandalous nature or with political repercussion, that the House finds them interesting enough to give time for discussion and special debates. Yet I would say, any imputation made against the Committee is regarded as a breach of privilege.

It is a matter of solace and satisfaction that, so far, we have observed the convention of the PAC chair going to the principal opposition. The edifying principle behind the convention is 'I spend, you scrutinize; that is, while the Government spends the money voted by Parliament, let someone outside the Government lead the scrutiny. The practice inspires greater public confidence, has developed into a hallowed parliamentary convention and has added to the weight and prestige of the Committee. I recollect, during the 13th Lok Sabha, the Government declined to share the CVC report on purchase of certain Defence procurements during operation Vijay by stating that 'it would be prejudicial to the interest of the state'. The Government, had of course, offered to share the Report of the CVC with the Chairman (N.D. Tiwari), but he refused to see the Report on the ground that, 'there was no point in seeing the Report of the CVC if he was unable to share with the honourable Members of the Committee'. With the resignation of N.D. Tiwari on becoming the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, N. Janardan Reddy chaired for a month or so. Then Sardar Buta Singh was appointed as Chairman. The Committee after due deliberations, unanimously made a single observation thus, '.....In the face of refusal by MoD in supplying the CVC Report, the Committee regret their inability to give their findings on the defence procurement transactions reported in the C&AG's Report on "Review of Procurement for 'OP Vijay' (Army)". The 54th Report of the PAC of the 13th Lok Sabha narrates the entire sequence of events leading to the observation of the Committee not to give any report. It's a tribute to the non-partisan spirit of the Committee that they returned a unanimous verdict. On the contrary, the PAC of the 15th Lok Sabha,

despite examining almost all witnesses tortuously with the sole intent to extract correct facts, got polarized at the fag end, that is, on the day when the report was to be adopted. The Committee got sharply divided and the Chairman (Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi) presented the draft report to the Speaker, Lok Sabha (Meira Kumar) who referred the draft to the new PAC for further consideration, it being 'the unfinished work of the outgoing Committee'. The new PAC did not take up the matter forward and the draft report languished. However, the content of the draft Report that could not be adopted received far wider and extensive coverage and probably did much greater damage. So, polarization of the PAC or any Committee of Parliament poses grave danger, not only to the Committee System but erodes the very edifice of our parliamentary democratic system. If any subject of wider national importance and fiercely debated in the media is brought before the Committee which is within its specific mandate, should be examined by the Committee threadbare and recommendations made to plug the loopholes and to effect systemic improvements to prevent such or similar recurrences. The Government gets full opportunity to place the correct facts and its view point before the Committee which helps remove public misgivings and quells speculation. The tendency to see a matter of wider national importance from the party-prism, not to allow the Committee to select a contemporary subject of greater national importance and to invoke parliamentary privilege to stall scrutiny hits the very foundation of the Committee system which is based on the willing suspension of party politics.

While it is the privilege of the Executive to propose demands for money and augment the sources of revenue, the supreme control over revenues and public expenditure and appropriations from the public exchequer vests in Parliament. It is for Parliament to see that all moneys granted by it are spent by the Executive for the purposes for which they are granted. As it is impossible for Parliament to scrutinize the expenditure in detail and as all decisions on the floor of the Parliament depend on majority votes, our Constitution has created the post of the Comptroller and Auditor General and made him an officer independent of the Executive. He has been statutorily assigned the duties and powers to audit and examine the accounts from year to year and report.

One of the main functions of the Public Accounts Committee is to ascertain that the money granted by the Parliament has been spent by the Government as such the scope of the demand, which means that the grant should be spent only on purposes which are set out in the detailed demand and not on any new service. The PAC is not limited to the investigation of points raised by Appropriation Accounts as reported by C&AG. On the contrary, it has the power to scrutinize and report upon almost any matter having to do with the management of public finance. Its functions extend to an examination of the Executive action of the Treasury as regards its compliance with law.

The functions of the PAC are well defined. The Committee examines the Reports of the C&AG and makes recommendations for systemic corrections and improvements. This includes both the examination of the expenditure as well as the revenue receipts of the Government. We ought to remember that the PAC was set up as a standing financial machinery to exercise financial control over public expenditure, and by leveraging its expert examination, the Committee goes beyond 'the mere formality and legality of expenditure to its' wisdom, faithfulness and economy'. The recommendations of the PAC, being unanimous and well considered, are implemented by the Government by and large in due course. The Ministry of Finance especially attaches great importance to the recommendations of the PAC and incorporates them in legislative proposals, rules or departmental manual with a view to bringing effective financial discipline and treasury control. The Public Accounts Committee is not concerned with questions of policy in the broader sense. In matters of settled policy, the PAC does not attempt any enquiry but in carrying out that policy whether or not there is extravagance or waste is within its field.

The C&AG, a constitutional body, is an important adjunct of the PAC. The audit reports of the C&AG, barring the commercial audit reports which are considered by the Committee on Public Undertakings, stand referred to the PAC. Due to time constraints, only a few and more important audit reports are selected by the PAC for examination and report. It is the duty of the C&AG to see that the money's granted by the House are spent efficiently and effectively and for the purposes



meant. But it has been observed that the C&AG is attached, now and then, for his reports pointing grave financial and procedural irregularities. As early as December 1952, when there was some criticism of C&AG's report, Prime Minister Nehru cautioned the Members, 'he (the C&AG) is not responsible to the Government and it is open for him to criticize the Government in reports'. Another, and more stark example is of March, 1960 when the Defence Minister V.K. Krishna Menon, described a certain report of C&AG as 'malicious over statement'. A motion of breach of privilege was brought against the Defence Minister by Acharya Kriplani and N.G. Goray. Speaker Ayyangar gave a ruling that 'nothing shall be said against the C&AG...however strong the language that might have been used by him'. The Defence Minister thereupon expressed unqualified regrets and withdrew his remarks. During the 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, there was a virulent attack on the C&AG in the wake of spectrum allocation report, so much so, a Joint Committee of Parliament was formed to examine the spectrum related issues and policy prescriptions in all their ramifications. The C&AG was put in the witness box, which was unprecedented. We must bear in mind the observations of Dr. Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly, 'the C&AG is probably the most important officer in the Constitution and his duties, I submit, are far more important than the duties even of the judiciary'. The C&AG must discharge his constitutional mandate without any external pressure or influence. The audit reports must be complete, credible and submitted without delay. The unusual delay or severely skeletal audit reports may raise question or credibility, and impact adversely the oversight of the PAC. To avoid any public misgivings about the integrity of the C&AG and to insulate it from any hydraulic pressure of the executive, it is essential that the appointment of the C&AG be made by a Committee comprising of the PM, the Chief Justice of India and the Chairman, PAC.

A question is asked, as it was when the PAC of the 15th Lok Sabha was examining irregularities in spectrum allocation, whether the Committee can challenge the policy of the Government. Ordinarily, policy examination *per se* is not within the explicit ambit of the PAC. However, when a policy is not consistent with the law or where the official act, or omission, is in conflict with the declared policy, or, the Programme voted by Parliament is not giving the desired results, the PAC is well

within its mandate to raise questions about such deviations, contraventions and irregularities leading to loss of revenue. It is well established in all jurisdictions that the functions of the PAC go 'beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy'. The audit of C&AG is not audit of 'tick and turn' but it focuses on performance audit or value for money audit, and, therefore, the PAC can certainly pinpoint policy failures or contraventions and suggest systemic improvements, as the successive PACs have been doing and Government have been taking corrective measures to safeguard the public exchequer.

Certain issues that need to be deliberated today are the challenges that the PAC faces now. First is the question of time-lag between occurrence of financial irregularities and the actual examination by the PAC. The emphasis is PAC Reports are inevitably on past performance so much so that many of the problems dealt within reports may already have been resolved and this time-lag between the event which has given rise to concern and the PAC's ability to address it in a report is a problem and has led to questioning of the relevance of some of PAC's work.

Second, due to ever increasing volume of Government transactions and the resultant large number of audit paragraphs, it appears difficult for the PAC to select all cases from C&AG Reports and complete their detailed examination in the limited time. Consequently, several important cases escape detailed scrutiny. Though, there is a standing order of the Government to comply to all C&AG reports within 4 months of being placed in the Parliament, even if they are not selected by PAC for detailed scrutiny. Seldom it is being unattended to. It has come to light that because of this dereliction of duty, mistakes are getting repeated. Therefore, we framed a Sub-Committee since 2009-2010 onwards to go upto Non-Compliance by the Ministries in their non-submission of Action Taken Notes on Non-Selected Audit Paragraphs, which has hastened the compliance proceedings during the last decade or so. But this needs to be pursued vigorously by every PAC.

Thirdly, the effectiveness of Parliamentary control over Government finance through Public Accounts Committee depends upon the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee. Public Accounts Committee of Indian Parliament have evolved an elaborate

procedure to ensure expeditious and effective implementation of the recommendations of the Committee. Ministries concerned are required to inform the Committee of the action taken by them within a period of 6 months, from the date of presentation of the Report. A copy of the Report is simultaneously endorsed to the Ministry of Finance (Monitoring Cell) which has been entrusted with the responsibility for monitoring submission of action taken notes within the prescribed time limit. The ATN furnished by the Ministry or Departments are required to be vetted by the Audit. Since, the recommendations are unanimous, they are invariably accepted by the Government. If the Government does not accept any particular recommendation, they have to make their submission to the Committee. The Committee examines it fully and feels the implementation is not possible, then Government provides reasons for the same. In case where the Committee remain unconvinced, they reiterate their views in the Action Taken Report. The area of serious divergence between the Committee and the Government could even be taken up in the House.

Invariably, 75 percent of the recommendations of the PAC are accepted and some of the recommendations are also accepted subsequently in its Action Taken Report. Many a time, Government have taken corrective action during evidence and even before the Committee present their Report to the House. It is in the extreme cases, where ATN are not satisfactory, they need further explanation. Here, the task of fixing responsibility for implementing the recommendations of PAC is the issue. As per prevalent procedure followed by PAC, the Reports are forwarded to the Secretary of the respective Ministries/Departments for implementation. There is a need to assign the task of fixing responsibility.

Besides, there are other challenges. The unfolding impact of globalization, the attempts of developed countries to build fire walls around their economies to stall import of competitive products and the complexities of emerging developmental Programmes, especially projects in Public-Private partnership mode, disinvestment etc. pose new challenges. Further, the newer modes of international transactions, trade agreements and business deals and the TNCs tend to encourage tax evasion taking

advantage of legal or procedural loopholes. These are issues which need new and innovative strategies so that these novel modes of governmental transactions having whopping revenue implications and often opaque do not escape the searching scrutiny of the PAC.

In the centenary year of the PAC, one can say with legitimate pride that many far reaching changes were effected following the recommendations of the PAC, including the constitutional provision for regularizing the excess expenditure, setting up of internal audit and separation of audit from accounts. The Committee on its own has evolved a procedure to examine the action taken replies of the Government on reports and audit paras not selected by the Committee for detailed examination, bringing down the pendency substantially. The Sub-Committees of the PAC have been doing commendable work by easing the time constraints of the Committee. It is said that the citadel never falls, except from within. In the centenary year, we need to reaffirm our faith in the bipartisan nature of the Committee so as to work as a high tribunal of Parliament and to live up to the image of 'the conscience keeper of the nation in financial matters'. The executive on its part must evolve a more transparent and credible mechanism for the appointment of the C&AG so vital for maintaining the integrity of the framework of financial oversight. There can be no manner of doubt that if the oversight potential increases, the level of democracy enhances. Besides, it helps to reduce poverty, remove systemic shortcomings and defects, promotes transparency, accountability and good governance, which are at the core of the functioning of the PAC.

## **PAC : The Oldest of All House Panels**

*By Jagdambika Pal*

*Member, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament Of India*

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With the advent of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, the Parliament began transacting a great deal of its business through committees, therefore, to deal with specific items of business requiring expert or detailed consideration and, that's how, the Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC): the oldest of all House panels, was constituted back in the British Raj. PAC was established with an aim to hold the Executive to account for its use of public money, thereby, to keep a vigil on the spending and performance of the Government, to bring to light inefficiencies, wasteful expenditure, and indiscretion in the implementation of policies and programmes approved by Parliament, and to make recommendations to streamline the administration for efficient, speedy and economical implementation of policy.

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (popularly known as the CAG of India), the apex authority responsible for external and internal audits of the expenses of the National and State Governments, is responsible to uphold the provisions of the Indian Constitution and laws enacted by the Parliament in the field of financial administration, and we know that the accountability of the Executive (*i.e.*, the Council of Ministers) to the Parliament in the sphere of financial administration is secured through CAG reports. It is imperative to note that the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is one of the parliamentary committees that examine the annual audit reports of CAG which the President lays before the Parliament of India, for a detailed examination of the accounts; therefore,

making the Committee exceptionally imperative. The main functions of the Committee are to examine the Appropriation Accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by Parliament for the expenditure of the Government of India, the annual Finance Accounts of the Government of India and such other accounts laid before the House as the Committee may think fit. In scrutinising the Appropriation Accounts of the Government of India and the report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon, the Committee has to satisfy itself that the money shown in the accounts as having been disbursed were legally available for, and applicable to, the service or purpose to which they have been applied or charged; that the expenditure conforms to the authority which governs it; and that every re-appropriation has been made following the provisions made in this behalf under the rules framed by the competent authority.

Back in Raj, the Committee on Public Accounts of the Central Legislative Assembly could hardly be termed as a Parliamentary Committee as it did not function under the control of the House or the Speaker. The Committee was presided over by the Finance Member and its secretarial functions were discharged by the Department of Finance *i.e.* post-independence, till 1950 the Chairperson of the Committee was the Finance Minister. Indeed, the initial committees were not free from governmental control and interference and the Committees had no powers and privileges. In fact, they could not even frame rules for their internal working and were not the masters of their own procedure. However, in 1950, when the country became a republic and with the fall of the colonial chip, the Committee became a Parliamentary Committee functioning under the control of the Speaker of Lok Sabha with a non-official chairperson, and from 1950 to 1967, the chairperson was selected from the ruling party. The Congress had the post until 1967 when Minoo Masani of Swatantra Party became Chairman. Since then, the PAC has always been headed by a member of the Opposition. Among prominent Chairmen were N G Ranga, P V Narasimha Rao, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, N D Tiwari and Buta Singh, besides Joshi.

Along with consensus, there is another contradictory face of the PAC's functioning which has been aspected over the past few decades *i.e.* the face of controversies. The Committee to the forefront of the public's attention has bought some of the probes like 2G Spectrum case (2008), Commonwealth Games case (2010), Adarsh Housing case (2011), Coal Block Allocation case (2012), VVIP Helicopter Acquisition case (2013), and Demonetisation of November 8, 2016. Indeed, the Committee has been playing a pivotal role to uphold the provisions of the Indian Constitution and laws enacted by the Parliament in the field of financial administration. Today, the functions of the Committee have extended 'beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy. The Committee examines cases involving losses, nugatory expenditure and financial irregularities. When any case of proved negligence resulting in loss or extravagance is brought to the notice of the Committee, the Ministry concerned is called upon to explain as to what action, disciplinary or otherwise, has been taken to prevent a recurrence. The Committee also records its opinion either disapproving the action of the Government or passing strictures against the extravagance or lack of proper control by the Ministry or Department concerned. The Public Accounts Committee not only examines from a legal and formal point of view to discover technical irregularities, however, also from the point of view of the economy, prudence, wisdom, and propriety.

I am a member of the Public Accounts Committee, and I can look back on my years in the Committee with great satisfaction. I am full of hope for the future of public audit because of the trust we enjoy not only of the Parliament and the Executive but also of the press and the public at large. The confidence of citizens in the Public Accounts Committee has been my bulwark against any challenges that we have had to face to the independence of this Committee. The strong defence of the principle of independence of the Committee by the Indian Parliament and their support to the provision of adequate resources for audit have been

crucial to the production of Committee reports which are widely acknowledged to be fact-based, non-partisan and reliable. The credit for this is also to be shared with the leaders of our democracy both in Government and in the Opposition and the officers and staff of this department.



# Centenary of Public Accounts Committee, Lok Sabha

*By Vishnu Dayal Ram  
Member, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India*

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Administrative accountability is *sine qua non* in a parliamentary democracy and quite a challenge to achieve in the World's Largest Democracy. However, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), which is celebrating its illustrious Centennial Year in 2021, is the check that allows the Legislature to hold the Executive accountable.

Over the years, the working of the Committee has been strengthened by regular reforms in the constitution and functioning of the Committee. Since India formally became a Republic in 1950, the Public Accounts Committee was given the status of a Parliamentary Committee. The current practice has distinguished members from both Houses of the Parliament, along with a Chairperson appointed by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The Committee embodies the spirit of impartiality and works in tandem with the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) of India.

The Committee is the watchdog for Public Funds that is spent by the Government. The Committee's foremost duty towards the good citizenry of our country, in my belief, is to ascertain whether the Government's Spending is within the scope of demand. For a hundred years now, the Committee has stood ground and done this very duty with utmost sincerity. This is evidenced by the fact that the Committee has presented 1668 reports in the time period of January, 1950 to April 2021.

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As a member of this prestigious Committee I would like to state that the Public Accounts Committee in India functions tirelessly round the year examining Financial Reports presented by the C&AG and also examining witnesses to maintain the highest standards of financial accountability. One of the highlights of the Committee's functioning is that the Committee is divided into sub-committees, each having the same power as the undivided Committee. It is also noteworthy to highlight the practice where the Committee expects the Executive to reply formally through Action-taken Notes reporting on the implementation of any recommendation that the Committee provides in its reports. It is my belief that this aspect of the functioning of the PAC that hold the Government answerable to the Representatives of the People.

With my experience as a Member of the Committee, I would like to give a humble suggestion for the PAC to reach the epitome of accountability and transparency. As a member, it is my observation that the Committee does not have a set timeline when it comes to taking up hearings of reports. As the premier set up for accountability of public funds, it becomes the duty of the Committee and its members to deliver the very best possible. In order to do so, adhering to a strict timeline will provide timely accountability from both the Committee and the Government. Effective communication and co-ordination between the Comptroller & Auditor General, the Public Accounts Committee and the Government can go a long way in ensuring the endeavours of the Committee are successful.

# The Successful Journey of PAC

*By V. Vijayasai Reddy  
Member, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India*

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The ideals of scrutiny, oversight and accountability have been inextricably woven into the fabric of our governance system through the mechanism of parliamentary committees. In many ways, the centenary of our Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is a remarkable testament to how successfully these ideals have stood the test of time.

Since the concept of PAC owes its origin to the British House of Commons, it finds existence in most Commonwealth countries. Historically, the role of the PAC has been so crucial that it has been described as the “queen of committees” exerting a “cleansing effect in all government departments”. However, when the PAC was first set up in India during the British Raj, it was a largely toothless body with limited powers of fiscal examination. It was only in the post-independence era that our PAC underwent a radical transformation and assumed a pivotal role in facilitating transparency in government finances.

Most significantly, the traditional practice of appointing a member of the ruling party as the chairman of the PAC was abolished in 1967 in a bid to encourage free expression of views and criticism of the executive. Since then, a more non-partisan approach has emerged whereby a member from the opposition is appointed as the chairman of the PAC. This helps in equilibrating the balance of power between the ruling and opposition party members of the PAC.

In terms of the nature and scope of functioning, there are two crucial factors that empower our PAC to effectively deliver on the purpose for which it was set up. First, it has the power to undertake

examination of subjects not covered under the CAG reports. This power to choose subjects without any government interference provides greater flexibility to the PAC and allows it to focus on pressing matters from a neutral perspective. Notably, our PAC exercised its *suo moto* powers to probe into allegations of corruption relating to the 2010 Commonwealth Games.

Second, our PAC has the power to establish sub-committees that deal with a specific range of topics. Considering the broad mandate and heavy workload of the PAC, the formation of sub-committees ensures a productive division of labour whereby the sub-committees can take up more specialised and procedural subject matter and the PAC is free to concentrate on its broader financial oversight obligations.

Our PAC has also embraced the virtues of technology in an innovative manner. It has played an instrumental role in introducing the Audit Para Monitoring System (APMS) Portal, an online real-time system for the effective monitoring of submission of Action Taken Notes on the CAG audit paragraphs and Action Taken Replies on the PAC recommendations. Established by the Ministry of Finance on the recommendation of the PAC, the APMS portal has made the process of fiscal transparency more dynamic and efficient.

However, despite the wide-ranging strengths of our PAC, there is considerable room for improvement. For instance, many of the PAC members have little or no experience in the field of public auditing and financial administration. This may have an adverse impact on their ability to effectively contribute to the work undertaken by the PAC. To overcome this, there is a compelling need to provide relevant training to the members. The PACs of Nordic countries such as Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden provide specialised training including orientation and mentoring to its new members. A similar training model could be adopted for our PAC.

Another notable hindrance in the functioning of the PAC is its inability to discuss audit reports in a prompt manner. There are significant time lags between the release of the audit reports and its subsequent examination by the PAC. Resultantly, many of the recommendations by

the PAC are rendered irrelevant, redundant or time-barred. In this regard, our PAC can take inspiration from the PAC of Victoria (Australia), which publishes an annual report detailing its performance targets for the upcoming year as well as statistics on its past performance. This self-appraisal helps the PAC to detect gaps and slippages and take necessary remedial action.

Our PAC could also benefit greatly by adopting the UK PAC's practice of undertaking examination of parallel developments in accountability regimes of other countries. This would help our PAC to stay updated with the latest global developments in the field of public accountability and even adopt any of the features that may work favourably in the Indian context.

The centennial celebration of our PAC is a momentous occasion for not only recognising its countless accomplishments but also taking stock of the many ways in which it can be further transformed in the coming century to facilitate greater openness in Government Finances. Although our PAC has come a long way in bringing about reforms in fiscal transparency, there still remains considerable scope for advancement. With a more dynamic and forward-looking approach, our PAC can ensure utmost "wisdom, faithfulness and economy" in public spending and forge an even more memorable legacy in the next 100 years.

## Public Accounts Committee: The Eyes and Ears of the Parliament

*By Pratap Chandra Sarangi,  
Member, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India*

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It gives me immense pleasure to know that a Souvenir is being brought out to mark the Centenary year of the Public Accounts Committee. I feel hugely privileged to be a member of the Committee on this historic moment.

In a Parliamentary democracy, parliamentary control, and oversight over the executive stems from the basic principle that the Parliament embodies the “*will of the people*”. Parliament’s role in scrutinising the work of the Government is a critical part of the democratic process. Public Accounts Committee (PAC) scrutinises the financial expenditure of the Government and taxpayer’s money, ensuring transparency and accountability within Government, and making recommendations to ensure taxpayer’s receive best value for money on Government spending. Many view PACs as the crucial mechanism to ensuring transparency, accountability, and honesty in the operations of the Government.

Democracy is an evolving process, so are its constituents. In India, PAC was constituted in the year 1921 in the wake of Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. During the initial days of British colonial Government in India, the finance member of the executive council was the Chairperson of PAC. Post-independence (till 1950), Union Finance Minister used to be the Chairperson of PAC. In 1950, the country became Republic and PAC became a Parliamentary Committee functioning under the control of the Speaker of Lok Sabha with a non-official Chairperson. From 1950 to 1967, the Chairperson was selected from the ruling party. However, since 1967 PAC has been headed by an MP from the opposition benches, usually the Leader of Opposition. These manifest highest traditions of Indian Parliament wherein a collaborative approach is adopted in ensuring

probity and integrity in exchequer management. PAC has members from both Houses of Parliament. The functioning of PAC has further evolved, and 5 sub-committees **Sub-Committee-I: (Civil); Sub-Committee-II: (Defence); Sub-Committee-III: (Railway, Communications, Jal Shakti & External Affairs); Sub-Committee-IV: (Finance); and Sub-Committee-V: (Implementation of recommendation of PAC)** oversee various assigned responsibilities in a more focussed manner.

PAC is also referred to as *“the eyes and ears of the Parliament”*. PAC serves as an effective check on the Government especially with respect to its expenditure bill and its primary function is to examine the audit report of Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). C&AG assist the committee during the course of investigation. The main function of the Committee is to ascertain whether the money granted by Parliament has been spent by Government within the scope of the demand. PAC ensures administrative accountability & transparency and works as a protector of democratic norms.

PAC is a distinguished parliamentary organ, which, since its very inception, has kept itself scrupulously above party-politics. Its members do get elected by the method of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote, which enables almost all the parties in Parliament to get them represented on it. Still, when the CAG's reports are placed before the PAC for their consideration, they discuss all the points purely on merits. Quite a lot of this credit is due to the healthy institution of the CAG of India and his Department, whose freedom of judgment has been guaranteed by our Constitution. The CAG has fearlessly done quite a creditable job, although his reports are essentially critical and sometimes construed as inconvenient and unpalatable for the Government. The enormity of efforts put in by PAC is manifest in the fact that, every year, PAC submits almost 10 reports after critically analysing the report of C&AG and the functioning of various organs of the Government.

I sincerely hope that the PAC would continue to maintain its highest traditions of impartiality, probity, and integrity; and to act as an attorney of Parliament on the one side, and the trustees of the people of India on the other. My hearty congratulations and best wishes for successful conclusion of the centenary celebrations.

## **Public Accounts Committee—A Partner in the Development Journey of the Country**

*By Rahul Ramesh Shewale  
Member, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India*

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During the Constituent Assembly debates, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in a speech defending the Drafting Committee's choice for a parliamentary system over a presidential system of Governance had pointed towards the former's capacity for a responsible model of Government in contrast to the latter's ability towards ensuring greater stability. The founding fathers could visualize that the Parliamentary Model would only work to accommodate the varied and diverse groups within our population. That is the reason why, unlike the American system where Government functions under the name of the President; in India the executive branch functions in the name of the Council of Ministers, who remain collectively responsible to the Parliament.

The primary goal of Public Accounts Committee has been to uphold this principle of parliamentary democracy of holding the Government accountable not just to the legislature but to the people at large. It is a well-accepted fact that the Government's initiatives hold good as long as they are able to implement them in the right earnest. The PAC ensures that the Government holds on to this promise. By taking a close look at the Government's policy initiatives through audits and account reviews, the Committee represents the interests of the citizens, thereby ensuring that the tax payer money isn't misused. Furthermore, in addition to interacting with officials from different ministries, efforts are also undertaken to get expert opinions from various stakeholders. By doing this, the Committee ensures that the Government schemes are executed



properly and taxpayer's money is not misused and the executive remains answerable for any lapse on their part.

It is hundred years since the establishment of this Committee which has now become an Institution. In our parliamentary democracy, committees such as the Public Accounts Committee assume great importance in the functioning of the Parliament. The check that Parliament exercises over the functioning of the Administration or the Executive is a critical aspect of governance, since in a parliamentary democracy, the basic principle is that the Parliament reflects the will of the people. It is thus all the more necessary that Parliament is able to oversee the manner in which the Administration executes the policies laid down by it.

The Committee on Public Accounts was first established in 1921 as part of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. The Finance Member of the Executive Council used to be its Chairman. This continued for several decades, upto 1949, with the Finance Minister becoming its Chairman after Independence. This Committee on Public Accounts underwent substantial changes with India's Constitution coming into force on 26 January 1950. This Committee became a Parliamentary Committee functioning under the control of the Speaker with the Speaker appointing one of its elected members as its Chairman. Now, as we know, the PAC is constituted every year with 22 elected members, 15 elected from the Lok Sabha and 7 from the Rajya Sabha.

I consider it a privilege to be a Member of the Public Accounts Committee since 17th Lok Sabha in 2019, and feel proud to be a member to participate in its Centenary Year. As a member of the PAC, I have the privilege to learn the accounting system of the Government and the check on its expenditure in ascertaining whether the funds allocated to various ministries and departments are being utilized for the purposes for which it was meant.

I also have the opportunity to interact with the representatives/officers of various ministries and departments during the course of oral evidence in connection with examination of various subjects.

The Committee on Public Accounts scrutinizes the Appropriation accounts of the Government of India and the reports of the C&AG of

India thereon. An important function of the Committee is to ascertain that money granted by the Parliament has been spent by the Government within the scope of the demand.

Therefore, as we see, the PAC is a mechanism within our governance architecture which looks into the way public money has been or is being spent by the Administration or the Executive in implementing the policies laid down by the legislature. This is an important role in a democracy where the taxpayers' money is spent by the Government with the objective of fulfilling the policy objectives. Not only does the PAC look to see that the money is spent on specific activities to meet these objectives, but also that the money so spent is done prudently and economically. The Committee thus examines cases involving losses, wasteful expenditure, or financial irregularities. **Therefore one may say that the PAC performs a role of custodian of the common man's interest by ensuring that his money is well spent. This is a very important role in any democracy and we are fortunate to have a robust mechanism in the form of the PAC to perform this role. It would be fit to say that in this sense, the PAC has been serving the nation and its people well.**

The Committee's work depends greatly on the audit work and examination of accounts of the Government by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). Since such audit and examination of accounts and their reports is a very detailed, comprehensive, and voluminous, Parliament is not in a position to spare time for detailed examination of these issues. The PAC performs this very important function on behalf of the Parliament.

One of the most important functions of the Committee is constant follow-up of the **Implementation of the Recommendations of the PAC by the concerned ministries with particular emphasis on adhering to timelines and to put in place proper mechanism for ensuring strict compliance.**

Thus, the follow-up actions by the Government on the Committee's recommendations are of great importance. The same has to be performed with due diligence and in a timely manner. The actions are to be taken

by the Government and report within a period of six months. Thereafter the Committee prepare and present the Action Taken Reports to Parliament. The Committee also verify the implementation of recommendations in follow-up audits. In this context, it is worth noting that in recent times, with the active follow-up by the PAC on implementation of its recommendations, the effectiveness of the Government implementation has increased manifold, thereby making a steady progress towards achieving Good Governance.

As we observe the Centenary year of the Public Accounts Committee and commemorating the role played by the Committee during these 100 years, we can envisage a greater role for it in the coming years. Going beyond its role of examining the CAG reports of past expenditure and activities and thereafter making its observations and recommendations, the **PAC is likely to become a partner in the development journey of the country.**

There is an emerging need to realign the approaches of the PAC in order to make it more relevant in shaping the governance mechanism of the future. It has generated extensive debate and the issues need to be addressed so as to strengthen the PAC and consequently ensure that the Government machinery be put in order for expeditious implementation of Welfare projects for the people. While the PAC could continue its role of a watch dog or custodian of public interests, it could also be a benevolent guide for the Government on how various policies and programmes can be implemented expeditiously and in a time bound manner for the benefit of the nation. In short, PAC is likely to enable our institutions to become more vibrant, responsive and accountable.

## **Public Accounts Committee— An Institution for Progressive Reforms**

*By Rajiv Ranjan Singh Alias Lalan Singh  
Member, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India*

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Parliamentary control of public expenditure is one of the cardinal principles of all Parliamentary democratic system. The PAC occupies a pivotal role in the Committee system in Indian Parliament not by virtue of its antiquity of origin but for its purpose, scope and functions and the impact it has in ensuring Parliamentary control over public expenditure. The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament being the oldest Parliamentary Committee has the distinction of having vast reservoir of rich experiences in closely and constructively watching the end results and achievements of various programmes and schemes of the successive Governments over the long years of its functioning. Therefore, it will not be an exaggeration to say that the PAC has turned out to be an institution by itself not only because it ensures accountability of the Executive to the Legislature but also due to the fact that it suggests in the process, a lot of reformative and progressive measures on plethora of administrative and financial issues. While performing its mandated job, the PAC *inter alia* scrutinizes the audit observations as recorded in the Audit Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) in a fair and objective manner by giving reasonable and adequate opportunities to the concerned Government Departments and Ministries.

The legislature exercises control over executive through various instruments. With regard to Financial control, the supreme legislative body of the country *i.e.* Parliament exercises its powers through a well defined mechanism. Article 151 of the Constitution of India requires the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) to submit report on

the accounts of the Union to the President who will cause these reports to be laid before the Parliament. The C&AG Reports, Appropriation Accounts, and Finance Accounts stand referred to the Public Accounts Committee for thorough examination, of course, subject to availability of time with the Committee. In addition to examination of these institutional Reports, the Public Accounts Committee have inherent powers to take up for detailed examination any subjects having larger impact on the financial management of the country. Thus, the PAC being inherent part of the supreme Legislature functions as a representative body of the Parliament while scrutinizing the Audit Reports and Accounts of the Government of India.

The general principle guiding the functioning of the Public Accounts Committee are laid down in the Rule 308 of the 'Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha'. It provides that the Public Accounts Committee shall examine the accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by the Lok Sabha for the expenditure of the Government of India, the annual finance accounts of the Central Government and such other accounts which are laid before the Parliament and which the Committee think appropriate for deep scrutiny. In scrutinizing the Appropriation Accounts of the Central Government and the Reports of C&AG, the PAC satisfies itself that the money shown in the Accounts as having been disbursed were legally available for, and applicable to, the service or purpose to which they have been applied or charged, that the expenditure conforms to the authority which governs it and that every re-appropriation has been made in accordance with the provisions made in this behalf under rules framed by competent authority.

The Committee is also mandated to examine the statement of accounts showing the income and expenditure of State corporations, trading and manufacturing schemes, concerns and projects together with the balance sheets and statements of profit and loss accounts which the President may have required to be prepared or are prepared under provisions of the statutory rules regulating the financing of a particular corporation, trading or manufacturing scheme or concern or project and the report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon. Further, the Committee also examine the statement of accounts showing the

income and expenditure of autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies, the audit of which may be conducted by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India either under the directions of the President or by a stature of Parliament. In cases where the President may have required the Comptroller and Auditor-General to conduct an audit of any receipts or to examine the accounts of stores and stocks, the Committee considers such reports of C&AG also. Another important function of the Committee is to examine the cases where money has been spent or any service during a financial year in excess of the amount granted by the House for that purpose and while examining such matters, the Committee goes into the circumstances leading to such an excess expenditure.

The significant role of PAC has been noticed and highlighted at various fora from time to time. The National Commission to review the working of the Constitution under the Chairmanship of Mr. Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah made the following recommendation about the PAC :

*“The findings and recommendations of the Public Accounts Committees (PACs) should be accorded greater weight. A convention should be developed with the cooperation of all major parties represented in the legislature to treat the PACs as the conscience – keepers of the nation in financial matters.”*

The relevance of the essential role of the PAC in ensuring integrity of financial structures, at least, in so far, as the public sector is concerned, is well appreciated. The Finance Ministry does take the recommendations of the PAC seriously and issues necessary directions, rules or instructions to various departments to take necessary corrective or remedial measures. This is done in recognition of the fact the PAC brings the irrefragable force of its deliberative judgement to the audit findings after thorough appraisal of the evidence obtained. The Committee's deliberations extend beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy. When any case of proved negligence resulting in loss or extravagance is brought to the notice of the Committee, it calls upon the Ministry/Department concerned to explain what action, disciplinary or otherwise, it had taken to prevent a recurrence. In such a case, the PAC does record its opinion against the extravagance or lack of proper control by the Ministry or Department concerned. Similarly, instances

of under-realisation/under-assessment of taxes, non-recovery, delayed refunds etc. leading to revenue loss are also brought out. Although the Committee is not technically involved in matters of general policy, it is well within the jurisdiction to point out whether there has been extravagance or waste or arbitrariness in carrying out that policy or whether that particular policy has been flouted leading to loss of revenue.

Thus the PAC is able to play a pivotal role in checking financial irregularities as a vigilant overseer of public purse. In fact, the very consciousness that there exists a body which will scrupulously scrutinize public expenditure and receipts, undoubtedly acts as a deterrent against any tendency towards slackness, negligence or arbitrariness on the part of the Executive. The bi-partisan nature of their Reports makes them objective and lends them the moral weight. The Indian governance system is thus well fortified with strong checks and balances such as the PAC ably assisted by the C&AG.

However, the observations and recommendations made by the PAC over the years have not remained a mere post-mortem of executive actions or decisions, but these have contained constructive suggestions to streamline the systems and processes, provide a way-forward and strengthen the governance/institutional framework in general. Thus PAC is not a fault-finding body but a vibrant and constructive instrument of the Legislature to set things right for the future with public interest in mind, so that mistakes/irregularities do not recur. This positive and constructive approach has enabled greater acceptance of their recommendations by the government, which has found them useful and actionable, thereby making their relationship largely non-adversarial. The government has been thus able to make use of PAC reports for comprehensive, systemic reforms.

The PAC has also taken up and reported upon subjects of public importance by widening the scope of audit findings as contained in the audit para. Performance review of various central schemes, their efficacy and the functioning of the concerned organizations has often been effectively reported upon by the PAC. Such reviews have led to significant changes in both schematic structure and processes.

In recent times (17th Lok Sabha), the Committee have commented upon the inefficient monitoring of the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) and emphasized on the need to strengthen participatory irrigation management through Water Users Associations. Similarly, the Committee have also reported on better implementation of Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006. While examining the preparedness for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Committee have suggested that NITI Aayog should have an interactive web page to reach out to the States and the general public. They also desired that the NITI Aayog should frame detailed guidelines for the private sector to enable them to channel their resources and activities towards achievement of SDGs. Further, NGOs and other organizations involved in social work may be apprised of SDGs through awareness programmes and encouraged to participate in the process.

There have been a large number of constructive and significant recommendations made by the PAC in the past wherein as a consequence thereof the Government has brought about major structural changes in law, procedures and processes. An important case in point would be the streamlining and simplification of income tax returns, assessments and refunds, which led to the establishment of the Centralized Processing Centre in Bengaluru. We have since come a long way in prompt settlement of income tax refunds, bringing much relief to ordinary taxpayers. Similarly, in the matter of defence procurement also, the PAC's scrutiny and recommendations have resulted in streamlined procedures, cutting down red-tape and bringing about greater transparency and ease of procurement.

Looking from the historical perspective, it is very much evident that PAC has gone beyond the narrow confines of a particular transaction or a mistake or an irregularity as pointed out by Audit and broadened its vision and scope to encompass larger systemic issues relating to "Good Governance", without of course, overlooking the shortcomings highlighted by Audit. Thus, the PAC has evolved over the years not only as an arm of the Legislature to ensure Executive accountability but



also as a forward-looking institution, laying the path for administrative reforms in the country. It is therefore reasonable to expect that the PAC will continue to function in the same vein and spirit in times to come and keep on making fruitful and constructive suggestions to the Government for streamlining and strengthening our institutions and simplifying the administrative processes for the benefit of the general public while ensuring accountability of the Executive to Parliament.

# Functioning of PAC: Challenges and the Way Forward

*By Satya Pal Singh  
Member, Public Accounts Committee,  
Parliament of India*

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## Introduction

Parliament's control over the purse is one of the key features of a democratic polity. As democracy has evolved in Great Britain and other countries including India, this 'control over the national finance' has significantly enabled the Legislatures to ensure Executives' accountability to the core. In this process, the role of the Committee System, which has been acting as a Mini Parliament in a parliamentary democracy like ours, cannot be ignored. It has saved us considerable time for the transaction of Business on the floor of the House while substantially enabling the Committees in enhancing the efficacy of Legislature by carrying out comprehensive investigations on matters of imminent public concern and those affecting national interest besides, supporting the process of consensus building.

Given the rapid evolution of democracies, global inter-connectedness and proliferating arena of government activities, among others, the duty of Parliament in ascertaining executive or administrative accountability has become challenging. Therefore, establishing accountability of the executive to the legislature through Committees has been the hallmark of our political system.

*The effectiveness of this Committee System would depend mainly upon three things; first, the bringing together within the committee of a sufficient number of members of all parties who would be prepared to take a real interest in the subject matters to be dealt with...second, a degree of continuity of membership and attendance would be essential as this would enable the members to gain that intimate and wide knowledge of their subjects which would give them power to control...third, there must be built up an atmosphere of common endeavour in the committees based upon a desire to develop the best administration possible.....*

*—Stafford Cripps*

### **Evolution of Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in India**

In India, Public Accounts Committee was first constituted at the Centre (and the Provinces) under the provision of the Government of India Act of 1919 as a result of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms following the adoption of a motion for the election of the Committee moved by Finance Member, W.M. Hailey in the Legislative Assembly on 22 February 1921. At that time, the Chairman of the PAC was the Finance Member of the Governor General's Council. The maximum strength of the PAC was fixed at twelve and not less than two-thirds of its members were to be elected by the non-official members of the Assembly.

Long before we gained Independence, the Committee had become a key instrument in legislative control of the expenditure and exercised increasing influence on the actions of the Government despite its limitations. After the Indian Constitution came into effect on 26 January 1950, the Committee acquired its rightful place as a full-fledged Parliamentary Committee under the control of the Speaker with one of its members elected as its Chairman and the Minister of Finance ceased

to be a Member of the Committee *vide* Rule 309(i) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

### **Composition of the Committee**

The Committee is constituted under Rule 308 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. Since 1954-55, the PAC consists of 22 members, 15 members from the Lok Sabha who are elected by the House every year from amongst its members according to the principle of proportional representation employing a single transferable vote and 7 members of the Rajya Sabha.

The term of office of members of the Committee does not exceed one year at a time. A Minister is not elected a member of the Committee, and if a 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 Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the members of the Committee from Lok Sabha.

In 1967, a healthy convention was agreed upon to appoint a member of the Opposition party as Chairman of the Committee, which is still being followed. Shri M.R. Masani was the first Opposition member to adorn this office. Paying tribute to the new arrangement, the Speaker Dr. Sanjiva Reddy observed: "Shri Masani has more than vindicated his faith with his intellectual calibre, broad sweep, sense of dedication and restraint lending a new stature to the Committee, earning for it the respect and approbation of all those who appeared before it, and was able to carry his colleagues in the Committee who were given a full sense of participation in Committee's work".

### **Functions of the Committee**

The functions of the Committee, as enshrined in Rule 308(1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, include examination of accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by Parliament for the expenditure of the Government of India, the annual financial accounts of the Government and other accounts laid before the House as the Committee may think fit. In scrutinizing the Appropriation Accounts of the Government of India and the Report of

the Comptroller & Auditor General of India thereon, the Committee has to satisfy:

(a) that the money shown in the accounts as having been disbursed were legally accounted for, and applicable to, the service or purpose to which they have been applied or charged;

(b) that the expenditure conforms to the authority which governs it; and

(c) that every re-appropriation has been made following the provisions made on this behalf under rules framed by a competent authority.

*The Public Accounts Committee is sometimes misunderstood as a mere post-mortem Committee. It is only partially so; and it would be wrong to suppose that the object of the Committee is merely to look to the compliance or otherwise with the various rules as regards the financial sanctions, budget provisions, etc. The work of Public Accounts Committee is not merely a mechanical work of checking credit and debit entries with the vouchers, but to go below the surface and see whether the money is spent as the Legislature intended, whether it was spent with due economies and last, but not the least whether a high standard of public morality is maintained in all financial matters.*

—G.V. Mavalankar

### **PAC in present times**

There have been some significant changes in the functioning of the Public Accounts Committee during the last few decades. One of the most remarkable realizations of the Committee is to review the overall performance of key Government institutions in respect of certain key sectors of the economy as well as various Government flagship schemes. Particularly after key economic reforms in 1991, the vision and mission behind Government expenditure policies regarding welfare and growth of the economy have undergone a massive change.

In the context of planning with huge resources being committed to specific developmental tasks, it is important to see whether the various schemes or projects undertaken by Government are producing the desired

results. In this respect, the role of PAC has become more crucial in asserting the accountability of the Executive to the Legislature.

In a wider perspective, the vital problem of regulating the use of resources judiciously and facilitating the country's financial system into a more effective mechanism for inclusive growth and sustainable development has acquired a new dimension. It re-emphasizes that in scrutinizing the work of the institutions and officials involved, financial committees should correlate actual achievements with the "inputs" rather than doing *post mortem* and merely highlighting the irregularities.

With the changing times, the PAC in recent years has examined some of the key sectors of the economy in an overall context of sustainable development such as critically appraising the performance of the National Rural Health Mission, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Ganga Rejuvenation, Defence-related expenditures and Drinking Water Supply Programme etc. Additionally, PAC has been instrumental in probing and exposing numerous scams. Since the Committee became a Parliamentary Committee under the control of the Speaker from January 1950, it has presented **1668 Reports till 30th April 2021** (see Annexure 1).

### **Action Taken on Recommendations**

In the case of the original report by the PAC, the Government is required to intimate the Committee of the action taken or proposed to be taken by it on the recommendations contained in the Report normally within six months of its presentation.

The Action Taken replies of the Government are considered by the Committee and after due classification of the replies, an Action Taken Report is presented to the Parliament. The Government is further required to intimate to the Committee the action taken or proposed to be taken by it on the recommendations contained in the Action Taken Report and also to furnish final replies in respect of the earlier recommendations contained in the Original Report in respect of which either no replies had previously been received or only interim replies had been received.

The action taken thus reported by the Government is laid on the Table of the House in the form of a Statement without any further

comments by the Committee. This system not only ensures accountability of the Executive to Parliament but also enables Parliament and also the general public to appraise Government's final replies to the Committee's recommendations. This completes the examination of a subject by the Committee.

### **Follow-up on Action Taken by Government on Audit Paragraphs not selected by the Committee**

It is to be noted that till 1981, there was no practice of ascertaining the action taken by the Ministries/Departments on the audit paragraphs not selected by the Committee for detailed examination. To ensure accountability of the Executive in respect of issues dealt with in Audit Reports, the Public Accounts Committee decided in 1982 that the Audit Reports from the year 1980-81 onwards be referred to the Ministries/Departments concerned for furnishing notes duly vetted by Audit showing remedial/corrective action taken on all the paragraphs contained therein.

*At present, due to the relentless efforts of the Committee, the entire process of Audit Para settlement is online. As a result of the initiatives taken by the PAC, the respective Ministries/Departments have improved their administrative machinery for timely submission of the Remedial Action Taken Notes and the Action Taken Replies on the recommendations made by the Committee. Due to these efforts, pendency figures have drastically come down, and the Committee is aiming to achieve zero pendency.*

The Committee has taken note of the inordinate delays and persistent failures on the part of a large number of Ministries in reporting to the Committee the corrective action taken by them on audit paragraphs. To deal with the situation, the Committee recommended that the Action Taken Notes on all the paragraphs of the Report of Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) of India may be furnished to the Committee through the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) within 4 months from the date of laying of Audit Reports on the Table of the

House and that the Monitoring Cell, Department of Expenditure may develop and operationalise the Audit Para Monitoring System (APMS) Portal for real-time monitoring of the same.

### **Impact of PAC**

Over the years, PAC has made its mark in the domain of establishing executive accountability towards the legislative. If we analyze the data about the 7th-12th Lok Sabha, it is found that on average more than 60 per cent of the recommendations of the PAC were accepted by the Government in the first instance itself. In the case of the remaining, about 9 to 10 per cent of recommendations were dropped at the Action Taken Report (ATR) stage in consultation with the PAC, while about 10 per cent were reiterated by the Committee. In about 20 per cent of recommendations, the extension of time was sought by the Government.

Even some of the pending recommendations were also later accepted by the Government. Thus, it can be inferred that on average, more than three-fourths of the recommendations of the PAC were accepted by the Government. This depicts the credibility and importance of PAC in the financial sphere of the administration. Ever since its inception, the PAC has made a large number of recommendations. Following are some areas that have been looked into by the PAC, which have been impacted/ improved from the viewpoint of Administration:—

- Regularisation of Excess Grants
- Introduction of Administrative Audit
- Departmentalization of Accounts
- Procedure for Regularisation of Excess Expenditure
- Irregular Exemptions and Relief and Wealth Escaping Assessment
- Variations between Budget Estimates and Actual Estimates
- Exemption of Union Excise Duties
- Fraudulent procurement of Modified Value Added Tax (MODVAT)
- Assessment of Religious and Charitable Trusts



## Realigning PAC's Approach

E. Ayyapu Reddy (1985-87) chaired a high powered Sub-Committee of the Chairman of Central PAC. The Committee had Chairmen of eight State PACs and CAG as members. The Committee was concerned at the lack of/delayed response of Government departments and officers to audit findings. It is believed that such delayed response has been the cause behind the standing dereliction and non-fulfilment of accountability measures. The Committee also stressed that such delays are 'just as serious as not taking up an immediate investigation after lodging of First Information Report in a crime'. The Committee pointedly observed:—

“It is very depressing to find that despite audit reports revealing the loss of public funds or misuse and misapplication of public funds, there is no investigating agency charged with the duty to probe into these aspects and identify the culprits responsible for them. Recommendations of Public Accounts Committee for an investigation to enforce accountability for undisputed misuse of public funds are not yielding any tangible result for the simple reason that long lapse of time between transaction and the recommendations normally result in the disappearance of incriminating evidence.”

*In a way the Public Accounts Committee is the Parliament in miniature. Representatives of different political parties function here as a team. There is no place here for majority and minority. All its Reports are unanimous. This is a healthy convention which must be preserved.*

—Atal Bihari Vajpayee

To make the functioning of PAC more effective in the present times, multi-pronged initiatives are desirable. First, the PAC and the CAG should work in consultation with one another. Such continuous collaboration will enhance the understanding between the two bodies and will create an ambience where these bodies may act in unison to be

more impactful. For example, in countries like Great Britain and the U.S.A., a marked number of subjects investigated by the CAG are taken upon the advice of the PAC. Second, it is desirable for the PAC to promptly take up all the reports of the CAG (as can be seen in the case of Great Britain) or the maximum possible. However, to meet this end, the reports of the CAG should be more critically focused, and precise.

Third, it is very important to ensure that findings of the CAG are given due cognizance. It is equally desirable for the same to be corroborated with prompt actions on the part of the Government departments. Such promptness will not only remove matters of lesser importance from being incorporated into the audit reports but will also add to the overall effectiveness of the audit machinery. Fourth, if the need arises, a certain mechanism may be developed to enforce the Government departments to take actions on the CAG findings in a time-bound manner. Such a mechanism may enable the PAC to pay attention only to such matters demanding immediate attention of the Legislature. For example, audit officers in countries such as Germany, France, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and Thailand enjoy legal powers to take remedial actions against Government representatives, if they are found involved in any of the acts that caused loss or misappropriation of the State money or property through laxity, carelessness, negligence, deceit, fraud or inappropriate use. Fifth, the PACs from the Parliaments across the democratic world should remain in constant touch; share each others' experiences to continue the process of learning, and co-operating together in meeting the new challenge of the changing world.

### **Challenges before PAC**

Presently, PAC suffers from various restrictions and limitations in its functioning. It goes without saying that if parliamentary control over expenditure is to be real; the functioning of PAC has to be made more efficient and effective promptly. Highlighting the issue, R.R. Morarka, former Chairman of the Committee observed: *"There is no real control over Government spending. The implementation of the Committee's*

*recommendation is tardy. All this is due to the inadequacy of time, both of Parliament and its Committees. The remedy, therefore, lies in strengthening of the Committee System and some effective step in this direction is the need of the hour.”*

There is another issue regarding reports of PAC. It has been found that enough attention is not given by officials of the Ministries to several PAC reports. PAC Secretariat keeps on reminding them to follow up on the recommendations. Further, many recommendations are not implemented without giving any reason. In this regard, it may be suggested that there should be a separate column in the Annual Performance Appraisal Report of Chief Accounting Authority to be reported upon by the Minister to indicate how many recommendations of PAC were not accepted by the Government, on his recommendations, citing reasons thereof.

Another issue that has come to the fore is that the Secretary of the Ministry under whose jurisdiction the subject is being taken up for examination by the Committee falls, appears for evidence before the Committee. The concerned officers who handled the matter do not appear before the Committee. Shri M.R. Masani, former Chairman of the Committee, observed that most of the time they have to deal with matters of history, which did not have contemporaneous importance and too often the persons examined were not themselves the person – who had personally handled the case being investigated. He suggested for evidence, the actual officers who were responsible for dealing with the case in question. For instance, in the USA, the Congressional Committees has the authority to ask public men to give evidence before it and can summon them if they do not cooperate. These are some issues that can be streamlined to make the functioning of PAC more effective.

## **Way Forward**

Parliament is the supreme institution to enforce accountability of the Executive especially in case of control over national finances and

expenditures. The Public Accounts Committee is one of the instruments to re-enforce its authority. If Parliament has to act as a real bulwark for democracy and promote inclusive and sustainable development giving voice to the vulnerable sections of the society there is a need for the Public Accounts Committee to function effectively and efficiently. To further the cause of the same the following points merit attention:

*Since its inception, Public Accounts Committee has been able to introduce a culture of financial discipline in the Government institutions. Its special relationship with CAG has been able to enforce a sense of accountability of officials at lowest level. It always gives a message to the officials that there exists a parliamentary body to scrutinize their actions for any tendency towards any negligence or arbitrariness.*

- The institution of CAG may be suitably empowered along with the focus on the concept of social audit so that there may be enhanced interaction between the general public and officials to augment transparency.
- The Committee may be given a constitutional status with clearly defined mandates and responsibilities and its life made co-terminus with the life of Parliament.
- PAC, after getting the CAG Para-reports, should undertake one or two real field visits, interact with officials and members of public to verify the CAG Report;
- PAC, before finalizing their reports, may provide an opportunity to the public to give their opinions on the recommendations. For instance, the individuals and civil society organizations can be provided with an opportunity to tender their views before the Committee.

- A communication channel may be established to increase the interactions between PAC representatives from the Centre and concerned States especially if the CAG report has implications in those States as well.
- A statutory provision needs to be made prescribing dates for presentation of Appropriation Accounts to Parliament and excess expenditure over Voted Grants should be regularised by it before the end of the next year to which the Accounts relate.

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## Annexure I

### REPORTS PRESENTED BY THE COMMITTEE SINCE JANUARY 1950

The details of the Reports presented Lok Sabha-wise are as follows:

Lok Sabha	Tenure	Reports Presented
1st Lok Sabha	1952-57	025
2nd Lok Sabha	1957-62	043
3rd Lok Sabha	1962-67	072
4th Lok Sabha	1967-70	125
5th Lok Sabha	1971-77	239
6th Lok Sabha	1977-79	149
7th Lok Sabha	1980-84	231
8th Lok Sabha	1984-89	187
9th Lok Sabha	1989-91	022
10th Lok Sabha	1991-96	119
11th Lok Sabha	1996-97	024
12th Lok Sabha	1998-99	011
13th Lok Sabha	1999-04	063
14th Lok Sabha	2004-09	084
15th Lok Sabha	2009-14	100
16th Lok Sabha	2014-19	137
17th Lok Sabha	2019-Continuing	37

(including 2 Reports presented to Hon'ble Speaker)

## **Citizen's Scorecards For Better Accountability**

*By Jayant Sinha  
Member, Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India*

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Our Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) will be celebrating its centenary in December this year. The PAC is an important partner to the Central Government. It reviews the financial and performance audits conducted by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) and then presents its reports to Parliament. In its next century, the PAC can play an even more crucial role by helping develop citizen-centric performance scorecards for various ministries. This will ensure better delivery of public services to citizens and focus Government's efforts on those initiatives that are truly valuable to citizens. Citizen scorecards developed by our national PAC, can be standardized by the CAG, and can also be replicated by the various PACs in our state assemblies.

The PAC pre-dates our democratically elected Parliament and was setup in 1921 under the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms to audit the executive branch. It is thus the oldest Parliamentary Committee in India. The PAC is established through the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha; the State PACs are established through their respective Vidhan Sabhas. The PAC is constituted every year with 15 members voted in by the Lok Sabha and 7 members from the Rajya Sabha. Since 1967 the PAC has been headed by an Opposition member from the Lok Sabha. The PAC has been headed by many illustrious leaders such as: Shri Narasimha Rao, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and Shri Murli Manohar Joshi.

The CAG is appointed directly by the President and is independent of the Central Government. Moreover, the CAG is a constitutional entity just like the Election Commission and the Finance Commission. It has been established through Articles 148 to 151 in the Constitution of India. Accordingly, the CAG has the constitutional duty to examine and assess the activities of Central Government ministries and agencies. The CAG tables its various reports in Parliament and its reports are taken up for detailed review by the PAC.

The CAG undertakes extensive analysis of Government schemes, projects, and programs while preparing its reports. The PAC selects some of these reports for deeper examination. First, Government departments and agencies are asked to provide formal responses regarding these CAG reports. Then the concerned Government entities come to the PAC for formal hearings.

During these hearings, as PAC members, we have found that Government entities tend to emphasize their actions and expenditures, while providing little credible information on citizen-centric outcomes. Thus, there is voluminous reporting on what Government is doing, but very little actual evidence on how citizens are directly benefiting from these activities. Also, the limited information on outcomes that does get reported is rarely based on independent, credible research.

I believe that the PAC working with the CAG has an excellent opportunity to improve citizen service delivery through a performance scorecard reporting system. The CAG's auditing standards highlight the importance of performance audits for promoting transparency and evaluating outcomes. The CAG's standards define the performance audit as an independent, objective and reliable examination of whether the Government is operating in accordance with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Ultimately, the performance audit promotes accountability by evaluating whether tax payers or citizens have received value for money.



Citizen scorecards built around citizen-centric outcomes that touch citizen's daily lives are an excellent way to strengthen the CAG's performance audits. All Government departments and agencies are responsible for providing certain citizen-facing services to the public. These services can be tracked quantitatively through well-defined performance metrics. For instance, the Ministry of Finance tracks inflation, prices of essential commodities, GDP growth, exchange rates, tax collections, capital flows, and a host of other important economic indicators. These are released on a monthly basis to the public and are tracked closely by the media. Similarly, the Civil Aviation Ministry provides information on passengers flown, flight punctuality, passenger grievances, seat utilization, pilot licenses issued, and so on. These are also reported on a monthly basis. Other Ministries track other output indicators regularly as well. For instance, the Jal Shakti Ministry is tracking how many homes are getting piped water and water quality in our major rivers. The Environment Ministry monitors air quality across India.

The CAG could sign MoUs with various ministries and agencies to establish well-defined citizen scorecards. Once these citizen-facing output metrics are in place, it will be possible to conduct high-quality performance audits for each Government entity within the CAG's purview. These citizen scorecards could be put in the public domain on a monthly basis. Scorecard improvements could also be tracked, and rapid improvements could be rewarded – just like in Niti Aayog's Aspirational District program. These citizen scorecards can then be replicated in the state CAGs. Every state will then have well-defined performance metrics, and this will enable good inter-state comparisons. The Niti Aayog is already tracking the various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across ministries and states. The citizen scorecards could be reconciled with the SDGs as well.

Citizen scorecards can enable the CAG, and therefore legislators in the various PACs, to ensure executive accountability. Each year, we as citizens, allocate trillions of rupees to Government officials and

departments for improving our lives and our communities. Regular, consistent tracking of outcomes relevant to citizen's daily lives is absolutely necessary to make sure that these rupees are being spent well. Our bureaucracy, across all levels, has become adept at presenting facts and figures that do not directly relate to citizen welfare. The CAG can cut through this clutter and become a vital development partner to the executive.



Hon'ble Speaker, Dr. Balram Jakhur addressing the 7th Conference of Chairmen of Public Accounts Committees of Parliament and State Legislatures at Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi on Sept., 9, 1986



Hon'ble Minister of Finance, Shri V.P. Singh, addressing the 7th Conference of the Chairmen of Public Accounts Committees of Parliament and State Legislatures at Parliament House Annexe, on September 9, 1986. Speaker Lok Sabha, Dr. Balram Jakhar and the Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi are also seen in the photograph

**MESSAGE**  
*from*  
**M. Hamid Ansari**  
*Chairman, Rajya Sabha (2007- 2017)*

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Anniversaries are occasions for celebration, and for introspection. In a public institution the latter assumes importance for good of reasons.

The Committees of our Parliament are Standing and Ad-hoc. The former in functional terms can be to enquire, advise, for housekeeping, and to scrutinize and control.

The Public Accounts Committee of our Parliament predates the Constitution. It was put in place in 1921 when the first consultative mechanisms were instituted under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. The Constitution made it a Standing Committee, one of the three Standing Committees on scrutiny of expenditure. It is intended to be the locus of accountability and oversight in the functioning of democracy and has at times raised inconvenient questions for the executive.

There has been adverse comment in recent years of the institutional malfunctioning of parliament particularly in the shrinkage in the number of days of its functioning, constant disruption of proceedings, and the unseemly haste in consideration and passage of legislation. This is generally not reflected in the working of the PAC that has continued its good work in scrutinizing expenditure by the executive.

I felicitate the Public Accounts Committee on its 100th anniversary.

**M. HAMID ANSARI**

# The Eswatini Public Accounts Committee

*By Kingdom of Eswatini*

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## **Background**

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament of Eswatini is established in terms of Section 209 (Sub-sections 1 and 3) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland Act of 2005. Its powers are stipulated in Section 129 (Sub-sections 2 and 5) of the Constitution as well as the Parliamentary Privileges Act of 1967 and the House of Assembly Standing Orders of 2006. Regionally, the PAC is a member of the Southern African Development Community Organisation of Public Accounts Committees (SADCOPAC) while continentally it is a member of the African Organisation for Public Accounts Committees (AFROPAC) and internationally it is affiliated to the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees (CAPAC).

The Hon. Committee consists of 12 Members and Committee Clerk as listed below:

1. Hon. Musa Kunene – Gege Constituency (Chairperson)
2. Hon. Sibusiso Nxumalo – Madlangempisi Constituency (Deputy Chairperson)
3. Hon. Musa Zwane – Mbabane West Constituency
4. Hon. Mfanawemakhosi Dlamini – Appointee
5. Hon. Lorraine Nxumalo – Lubombo Region MP
6. Hon. Allan Stewart – Lobamba Constituency
7. Hon. Roy Fanourakis – Mtfongwaneni Constituency

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8. Hon. Big Boy Mamba	– Ngudzeni Constituency
9. Hon. Busisiwe Mavimbela	– Manzini Region MP
10. Hon. Oneboy Zikalala	– Mangongco Constituency
11. Hon. Manzi Zwane	– Madlangempisi Constituency
12. Hon. Mduduzi Magagula	– Dvokodvweni Constituency
13. Mr. Arthur Mordaunt	– [Committee Clerk]

The Hon. Committee, in executing its mandate, conducts public hearings using the following powers/rights:

- The right to investigate or review all past, current and committed expenditures of Government and organizations receiving funds from the Government.
- The right to request, on its own initiative, the Auditor-General to perform audits.
- The right to carry out site visits on projects where Government funds were used.
- The right to access all financial information and other documents, as it deems necessary, for its investigation except for those that are privileged or secret in terms of the law.
- The right to call upon and enforce the attendance of witnesses to provide information in relation to observations raised by the Auditor-General.
- The right to issue a commission or request to examine witnesses abroad.

### **How Session are conducted**

At the end of each financial year, Ministries appear before Parliament to motivate for the appropriation of funds to their various portfolios and justify the need for the funds for the upcoming financial year. At the end of the financial year, the Auditor-General investigates if all the funds were used in line with existing laws and regulations for managing public finances. He then tables his reports, through the Minister of

Finance, in the House of Assembly, where they are handed over to the PAC to conduct public hearings and take to task those found to have misappropriated state resources.

A schedule with dates and times is circulated to all Controlling Officers of Ministries for appearing before the PAC. The Committee's session usually starts in April every year.

### **Attendance**

To achieve efficiency and effectiveness, the work of the PAC needs witnesses. It was for the reason that legislation was enacted to force the attendance of the witnesses. The Parliamentary Privileges Act provides that the Hon. Committee can summon anyone to be a witness and give evidence or produce certain documents relevant to the investigation. Failure to comply attracts a charge of contempt of Parliament, which carries a maximum two years in jail penalty or a monetary fine. The Constitution of Swaziland Act, on the other hand, stipulates that, when in session, the PAC will have powers of the High Court.

Other organs of state like the Police (Fraud and Commercial Crimes Unit) and the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) are also part of the deliberations to look at issues of criminality and corruption for possible investigations.

### **Site Visits**

The Committee also conducts inspections on certain Government projects which were funded by taxpayers to ascertain if proper procurement procedures were followed and whether value for money in terms of price and quality was achieved.

### **Report**

Once the hearings and site visits have been concluded, the Hon. Committee compiles a report with recommendations on how to address the anomalies noted. The Report is tabled in the House of Assembly and debated. Once adopted, the Recommendations become House Resolutions, which means they are no longer advisory but are now mandatory. Failure to implement the House Resolutions attract a contempt of Parliament charge.



## Achievements

1. Subsequent to the passing of the PAC report and implementation of PAC Recommendations, Government has recovered millions of Emalangeni which had been lost due to irregular expenditure, misappropriation of funds and theft. These recoveries include, among other things, money overpaid to suppliers, salary overpayments, salaries not staggered when civil servants are on study leave, money embezzled by civil servants as well as double payments to suppliers and service providers.
2. Following the adoption of PAC Recommendations, a number of legal and policy reforms in the management of public funds have been introduced in the Government. For instance, the Ministry of Education has issued Circulars stopping a number of practices in schools which were disadvantaging parents like the purchase of uniforms from selected suppliers, the charging of top-up fees, election of school committees to monitor the use of school funds by Headteacher, etc. The Ministry of Finance also tabled the Public Finance Management Bill, which was passed in 2018.

### Message

*“We join you in celebrating 100 years of growth and development achieved through the efforts of dedicated men and women who demanded accountability from those entrusted with the use of public funds. Today India is enjoying the fruits of your hardwork and that of your predecessors. Greater challenges lie ahead but with unity and common purpose, you will conquer.*

*Our PAC has also endeavoured over the years to hold those in public office accountable and ensure that existing policies are strengthened and, if need be, new ones are put in place to guarantee the delivery of public services.”*

**–HON. PHILA W. BUTHELEZI**

*Former Chairman, Public Accounts Committee,  
Kingdom of Eswatini*

**Message**

*“The Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of Eswatini wishes you well as you reflect on achievements and challenges experienced over a century of holding public officers to account. We believe that the decisions made by our Governments presently will affect future generations and it is, therefore, incumbent upon bodies such as ours (PACs) to ensure that those decisions are taken in a manner that will guarantee a sustainable and prosperous future for our countrymen. This can be achieved through minimising loss through waste and corruption as well as strengthening our systems.”*

**–HON. MUSA KUNENE**

*Chairman, Public Accounts Committee,  
Kingdom of Eswatini*

# Public Accounts Committee of Malawi Parliament

*By Parliament of Malawi*

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The Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of Malawi conveys its warmest congratulations to the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of India on the special occasion as it commemorates the 100th year of its existence. The Centennial Year of the PAC of India is a marvel to all other PACs as it shows the importance that PACs play in instilling a sense of prudence in the management of public resources. The PAC of Malawi is particularly thankful that it has been selected to contribute to the “Souvenir” on this commemoration.

## **Mandate of the Malawi Public Accounts Committee**

The Public Accounts Committee of Malawi derives its mandate from sections 18 and 19 of the Public Audit Act and Standing Order 161. The Committee has the following functions among others:—

- (a) Promoting the accountability of Ministers and Members of the National Assembly, where public expenditure, public money and public resources are concerned;
- (b) Holding accountable Ministries, agencies and other entities controlled by Government for the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which they use public money and public resources;
- (c) Promoting the accountability of statutory bodies and those other persons charged with the management of public money and public resources;

- (d) Examining the audited public accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by the Assembly to meet the public expenditure; and
- (e) Examining such public accounts laid before Parliament as may be referred to it by the Assembly.

Under Section 19 (d) of the Public Audit Act, the Committee is mandated to report to the National Assembly, with such comments as it thinks proper, any items or matters in any financial statements and reports or any circumstances connected with them, to which the Committee is of the opinion that the attention of the National Assembly should be directed, while under Section 19 (f) of the Public Audit Act the Committee is mandate to pursue any concerns that the Committee believes are justifiable.

### **Powers of the Public Accounts Committee of Malawi**

Persuant to Standing Order 151, the Public Accounts Committee, like any other Committees of the House, has the following powers:—

- (a) To summon or subpoena any person to attend and give evidence before a Committee at a stated time and place;
- (b) To require any person to disclose and produce to the Committee any papers and records in that person's control, possession and custody relevant to the Committee's proceedings;
- (c) To create sub-committees of its Members for specific tasks;
- (d) To delegate to its sub-committees all its powers except the power to report to the Assembly.

If any person summoned to attend before a Committee or to produce papers and records does not comply with the summons, the Committee may report this fact to the Assembly which may invoke the provisions of the National Assembly (powers and privileges) Act.

## Views of the Current Chairperson of the Committee

The Public Accounts Committee plays a very pivotal role in ensuring that public expenditure is being done in accordance with the statutes that govern the same. In Malawi, we rely on the Public Audit Act, the Public Finance Management Act, the Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act as well as many other legal instruments like the Treasury Instructions and the laws governing the operations of the Local Councils.

With these legal instruments, as well as the mandate and powers that the Committee has, as indicated above, we have been performing oversight over the operations of the Central Government and the Local Councils. The Public Accounts Committee acts as a watchdog over all matters that concern public expenditures. We take all public officers to account for how they utilise public financial resources and assets and we, accordingly, report our findings and recommendations to the Assembly. Our major concern is the implementation of recommendations which we make. There is general laxity and slowness in taking aboard our suggestions and recommendations, which, at times, can be frustrating.

That being said, as a Public Accounts Committee of Malawi, we would very much appreciate it if we had a very close collaborative relationship with our sister Committee in Parliament so that we can share experiences and strategies on how to be an effective and efficient Committee in providing oversight over public expenditure.

*The Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of Malawi wishes its sister Committee of India the very best as they commemorate 100 years of existence. The role of Public Accounts Committees cannot be over-emphasized. It is the belief of the Malawi PAC that the Public Accounts Committee of India shall continue to perform this important role for many more years ahead so as to provide checks and balances over how the public expenditures in India are being done and thus help safeguarding the public coffers.*



Conference of Public Accounts Committees in SAARC Parliaments held at Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi from 30-31 August, 1997. Shri P.A. Sangma, Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha with the delegates of the Conference.

# Public Accounts Committee of Parliament of Malaysia

*By Parliament of Malaysia*

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The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Malaysia is a Standing Committee comprising members of Malaysia's House of Representatives—Dewan Rakyat, which has now been broadened in mandate since its establishment in 1959. Its mandates are derived from the Standing Order 77 of the Dewan Rakyat. The PAC functions as a financial oversight body in general, reviewing executive bodies' financial management and performance. It embarked on a series of initiatives meant to improve its efficiency and accountability.

The essential function of PAC is to examine: (i) the accounts of the Federation and the appropriation of the sums granted by Parliament to meet the public expenditure; (ii) such accounts of public authorities and other bodies administering public funds as may be laid before the House of Representatives; (iii) reports of the Auditor-General laid before the House of Representatives in accordance with the Article 107 of the Federal Constitution; and (iv) such other matters as the Committee may think fit, or which may be referred to the Committee by the House of Representatives.

The PAC's current structure has experienced significant transformations in recent times. It includes the appointment of a member from the opposition party as Chairman, which commenced in 2018. The appointment of PAC Chairman from opposition MPs is still being practised as with the appointment of the Hon. Wong Kah Woh (DAP - Ipoh Timur) since August 2020. Meanwhile PAC is supported by its secretariat team

which is headed by a Chief Secretary. At present, the Chief Secretary is assisted by an auditor, two administrative officers and four administrative personnel.

The Committee consists of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman who are appointed by the House, along with six to twelve members who are proposed by the Committee of Selection immediately after the commencement of each Parliament. No member may be appointed or nominated to or act as Chairman or member of the Public Accounts Committee while he/she is a Minister. Every Committee member, including the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, is appointed to the PAC for a period of five years, or until the Dewan Rakyat is dissolved, or upon member's resignation, to reflect the parties within the House in the Committee.

In addition, the PAC has several *ex-officio* members who serve as permanent representatives from several government agencies namely Auditor-General's Office, Ministry of Finance, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, Attorney-General's Chambers, Economic Planning Unit, Accountant-General's Department of Malaysia, and the Public Service Department. The main objective of including *ex-officio* members in meetings is to verify that the information provided by stakeholders are reliable and accurate.

The PAC conducts meetings and events to ensure optimal accountability and effectiveness during meetings, in reporting and recommendations, including evaluating response from the government agencies. Prior to the meetings, the PAC will review audit reports from the Auditor-General to identify potential issues and solutions, culminating in a comprehensive PAC report to ensure that all government departments and agencies take the audit findings seriously.

There are four main meetings namely: (i) proceeding; (ii) housekeeping; (iii) verification; and (iv) response reporting meeting. A pre-council meeting will also be held for PAC members to have a solid understanding from the Auditor General about the subjects that are to be examined. The PAC has the authority to demand witnesses to be present in the meetings as well as related documents which contain



significant evidence, contract, and project planning. PAC has taken a step further in line with today's digital era by digitising the meeting documents which will be uploaded to each member's device as the meetings often involve many documents.

The final PAC report may highlight positive aspects found in an issue, such as the institution's satisfactory performance, rather than just criticising and pointing out shortcomings. Regarding the PAC's investigations, two reports namely the final PAC report, and the Response Report will be presented to the Dewan Rakyat after receiving feedback from the Ministry of Finance.

Members of the PAC can be viewed as major determinants of the PAC's effectiveness. Although there are differences in political ideologies among PAC members, the members remain impartial when dealing with PAC's concerns. Moreover, having *ex-officio* members in the PAC enhances the PAC's effectiveness and subsequently produces the credibility of its reports.

PAC will consider the possibility of conducting public hearings in the future to demonstrate to the public that PAC is an independent body. At this juncture, their performance will be monitored by the public, hence the members will be more encouraged to present themselves as being capable of carrying out their duties efficiently. The new initiatives and strategies targeted at enhancing the effectiveness of the PAC in Malaysia should be addressed, as well as implementing necessary adjustments for the future betterment of this country.

Views of the past and current PAC Chairman.

## **Honourable Wong Kah Who**

### **The Current Chairman of PAC of Malaysia**

The role and responsibility of PAC are very dynamic because of the demands from the public which wants a more transparent and credible spending on the Government expenditure. The existence of PAC is to make sure every cent and dollar of Government money, which is the people's money is spent wisely and accordingly with all the procedure and laws which has been enshrined.

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**Mr. Nur Jazlan Mohamed**

**The Former Chairman of the PAC of Malaysia (2013-2016)**

The PAC of the Parliament of Malaysia has evolved to be a respectable Standing Committee of the House of Representatives (Dewan Rakyat) and it shows the demand of the people who wants the Legislature to play a more active role to monitor all the Government spending. The structure of PAC is the reference model for the setting-up of all the new Special Select Committee of the House of Representatives, which shows that PAC is viewed as effective in providing checks and balances to the Government.

# **Functioning and Practices of the Public Accounts Committee of Majlis as an Effective means of Parliamentary Oversight of Public Expenditure**

*By Parliament of Maldives*

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Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the People's Majlis of the Republic of Maldives plays a critical role in ensuring integrity, accountability, transparency and improving efficiency in the management of public funds of Maldives.

The primary focus of the PAC is to examine the reports of the Auditor-General and consider the results of such audits. Furthermore, PAC analyses the wisdom of the underlying policy that informs the public spending, while investigating the spending comply with the intended purpose. PAC plays an important role in the approval of the general budgetary policy and the financial or economic feasibility of the Government budget of the Maldives.

The mandate of the Public Accounts Committee in respect of matters related to Public Finance is as follows:

1. Ascertaining whether the expenditures of the institutions of the Government are lawful and following the budget approved by the Majlis.
2. Ascertaining whether the expenditures are being made for the purposes approved by the Majlis.
3. Scrutinizing the financial accounts and statements of the institutions of the Government.

4. Scrutinizing the financial accounts and statements of Government shareholding companies and business places.
5. Scrutinizing the financial accounts and statements of the independent institutions of the Government.
6. Scrutinizing the Auditor-General's reports, identifying the measures which need to be taken and as such notifying the relevant institution of the Government of such measures.
7. Scrutinizing any expenditure over the authorized amount to ascertain the cause for such expenditure.
8. Doing the necessary on the part of the Majlis to facilitate the Government in obtaining loan facilities or providing State guarantees.
9. Overseeing the Central bank of the country, Maldives Monetary Authority and the Auditor-General's Office.
10. Determining the salaries which are required to be determined by the Majlis.
11. Oversight of all financial aspects of all the institutes, independent commissions, independent commission members and all financial activities related to the Government stated in the regulation governing the proceeding of the Majlis.
12. The Committee shall also prepare and send reports on the matters stated from (1) to (10) of this Section to the Majlis.
13. Unusually large items shall be identified whilst scrutinizing the budgets of the companies or business places and (if applicable) the purpose of such items that have been earmarked shall also be identified.
14. The audited accounts of the companies and business places shall be scrutinized and; whether they adhere to the standards of sound auditing practice shall be ascertained and; those companies and business places that do not conform to these standards shall be flagged.

15. The loan facilities taken by the companies and business places or loan facilities taken under State guarantees by such companies and business places shall be scrutinized and; whether the loans are being used for the designated purpose shall be verified.

### **PAC composition in the Maldives**

Total number of PAC members	:	14
Number of Government members	:	9
Number of Opposition members	:	5
Male	:	14
Female	:	0

The biggest challenge faced by the PAC Maldives is the substantial workload, and piled backlog of audit reports. PAC Maldives has over 963 reports pending. However, upon the reception of all audit reports, PAC ensures to monitors the status of how the respective organizations adhere and take necessary actions according to the instructions of the Auditor-General. Furthermore, PAC still needs to establish a proper follow-up mechanism to allow Parliament to assess the Government's compliance with all recommendations contained in PAC reports.

# **Parliamentary Oversight of Public Expenditure by the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of Papua New Guinea**

*By Parliament of Papua New Guinea*

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The Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts is established by Section 215 of the Constitution of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea. The Committee consists of 14 elected Members of Parliament, who are appointed at the commencement of the first Session of Parliament after General Elections every 5 years. It is a bi-partisan Committee.

The functions and powers of the Committee are laid down in Section 216 of the Constitution and Sections 72 to 101 of the Public Finances (Management) Act 1995. The Committee is empowered by other legislations such as the Permanent Parliamentary Committees Act 1994, Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act 1964, Audit Act 1989 and the Standing Orders of Parliament. It is the extension of the main Parliament.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) operates as following:

- Auditor-General tables audit reports in Parliament on Government expenditure every year.
- The reports then get referred to PAC by Parliament.
- PAC examines the reports.
- PAC calls for public inquiry into selected Government Departments based on the Audit Report. Inquiry is open to public & media.

- PAC summons persons & documents for Committee examination.
- After completion of inquiry, a report is prepared for presentation to Parliament by Committee Chairperson. The Report contains Committee Findings & Recommendations.
- When tabled in Parliament, it is debated by the whole Parliament & PAC Members fully participate.
- Committee Reports after tabling are distributed to various stakeholders to implement the recommendations.
- PAC holds follow up inquiries based on its own report to see how far its recommendations have been implemented by concerned Government Departments and State Agencies.

The above is, in a nutshell, the main activities of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of Papua New Guinea.

## **Goodwill Message to the Public Accounts Committee and Leadership of the Parliament of India**

*by Public Accounts Committee and Leadership of Sierra Leone Parliament*

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I convey greetings and felicitations, on behalf of the Leadership and Administration of the Sierra Leone Parliament, to the Parliament of India, and the Chairman and Members of the PAC of India. It is indeed a pleasure to be part of the commemoration of the Centennial Year of Public Accounts Committee of India, which I believe would continue to foster strong bilateral relationship between the two countries.

India and Sierra Leone have strong bilateral relationship spanning several years to present days. Citizens and institutions of both the countries continue to benefit from this endless diplomatic affiliation affectionately. The Parliament of Sierra Leone has gained and shared lots of experiences from and with India; and this is because of the benign relationship between both the countries. The PAC of Sierra Leone affiliates itself with the PAC of India through the existing bilateral romance both countries have constantly laced.

The Public Accounts Committee of the Sierra Leone is one of the Standing Committees, established under Section 93[1] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone and Section 70[6] of the Standing Orders of the Sierra Leone Parliament with the statutory mandate to examine all reports of the Auditor-General [established under Section 119[1] that are presented to Parliament [under Section 119[2-3] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone], and submits its findings and recommendations to the



House for consideration. The PAC also assesses and evaluates levels of compliance with the established laws of Sierra Leone, including adherence and compliance with set performance standards and regulations governing public expenditures.

In consequence, therefore, the PAC uses the Auditor-General's reports to probe into the activities of Accounting Officers and other persons entrusted with the receipt and utilisation of public funds. These functions ensure public financial accountability in government spending and for the past decade, the PAC has recorded some interesting successes amidst numerous challenges.

It is of great importance to reflect on the remarkable tasks, successes and challenges of the PAC on this day. For instance, in 2013, the Committee took a remarkable decision when it ordered the detention of the Chief Administrator of Bo City Council for perjury and for failing to provide some delivery notes relating to certain procurement transactions.

In 2014, the Auditor-General presented a damning report on the Management of the Ebola Funds and the Committee, after intense public hearings, issued dreadful recommendations under Section 93[6] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, which resulted in the suspension of the Permanent Secretary, Procurement Officer and other officials of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation without pay for certain months. Some officials in other departments and agencies entrusted with such funds were ordered to refund to the consolidated fund colossal amounts, misappropriated in the course of containing the epidemic.

Correspondingly, the Auditor-General submitted yet another incriminatory report in 2020 on the Management of COVID-19 Funds. This time, the leadership of the Committee, after rigorous cross examination of the witnesses, referred a number of audit queries to the Anti-Corruption Commission [being the most specialised antigraft Agency with adequate resources and prosecutorial powers to probe into issues relating to fraud and other irregularities] for investigation and onward prosecution. This deviation from normal practice yielded dividend as millions of Dollars were recovered through the ACC.

During public hearings on the 2017, 2018 and 2019 Audit Reports, statutory deductions over One hundred Thousand United States Dollars had been recovered from Votes Controllers and paid to the National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT], and the National Revenue Authority [NRA]. In the course of examining the 2017, 2018 and 2019 AG's Annual Reports, the Committee had, on several occasions, ordered the detention of Accounting Officers for inconsistencies in reporting financial transactions and for failing to submit accountable documents upon request.

It is worth stating here that the Committee has over the years faced numerous challenges such as presumptive interference from different quarters by superior authorities, backlog of audit reports not looked into, inadequate financial and material resources, and multiplicity of premature investigations by other agencies like the Anti-Corruption Commission, sectoral committees, Criminal Investigations Department [CID] and the Police, thereby undermining the work of the PAC.

In spite of these challenges and some criticisms against the Committee for not being effective in its role in ensuring efficient public financial management, the Committee's radical and uncompromising position [through refund, naming and shaming public officials] on compliance with statutory deductions and other set standards has ensured some recoveries as already mentioned and brought about some form of awareness raising campaign in Sierra Leone's public financial management. Thus, the Committee's activities for the past years have greatly helped to signal the restoration of public confidence in Audit Service Sierra Leone as an institution that is capable of dealing with the excesses of the Executive to the extent that whistle-blowers are turning over to PAC instead of the Executive and the exposure that corruption is not limited to political officeholders, but inclusive of many categories of public servants and service providers who appeared before the Committee.

Finally, the PAC of Sierra Leone wishes the PAC of India exuberant commemoration and a new dawn in the mandate, vision, mission and

hope for service delivery. Like India, the PAC of Sierra Leone plays a pivotal role in the fight against corruption and its persistent roaring at the doors of state offices resulting in minimised corruption and irregularities. We are in solidarity with expected outcomes of the triumphant commemoration of the Centennial Year of Public Accounts Committee of Parliament of India.

We believe in the bilateral ties and together forever.

# Working of Public Accounts Committee of Singapore

*By The Parliament of Singapore*

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In 1955, the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Singapore (now known as the Parliament of Singapore) was formed. The Committee is now among the seven Standing Select Committees of Parliament and is constituted at the beginning of each term. The current Committee was formed at the start of the 14th Parliament in 2020.

Despite the difference in age, there are many similarities between the work of the Public Accounts Committee in the Parliaments of Singapore and India. In both legislatures, the Committee plays a key role in parliamentary financial oversight and scrutiny of public expenditure. It holds the Government to account for the use of funds granted by Parliament, prevents corruption and promotes good governance, electoral trust and investor confidence.

In Singapore, the Speaker of Parliament appoints the Chairman of the Committee and its Members are nominated by the Committee of Selection. The nomination of Members is done in a manner that ensures that the balance between the Government benches and the Opposition benches is reflected in the Committee.

It is the duty of the Committee to examine the accounts of the Government showing the appropriation of the sums granted by Parliament to meet the public expenditure and other accounts laid before Parliament as the Committee may think fit together with the Auditor-General's reports. In carrying out its duty, the Committee examines the findings and observations contained in the Auditor-General's reports for improper expenditure, serious irregularity, extravagance or wastage of public funds

and resources. The Committee also scrutinises the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending by examining the value for money of government projects, programmes, and service delivery. The observations and recommendations of the Committee comprises its report to Parliament.

In the area of sound financial practices, the Committee has taken the Ministries to task in addressing delays in their processing of payments to suppliers, refunding of workers' compensation and deposits for issuing licenses and permits that ought to have been refunded to members of the public, and identifying processes to make government procurement more transparent. In its first report of the 14th Parliament, the Committee expressed the need to maintain proper controls, governance and accountability over the use of public funds even as the Government acted swiftly in response to the evolving COVID-19 situation. Over the years, the number of statutory boards has increased and the Committee's work has similarly evolved to include and enhance the accountability of such statutory bodies.

On this significant and momentous occasion of the Centennial Year of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of India, the current and former Chairpersons of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of Singapore extend their best wishes and congratulations to the Chairperson, Honourable Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, and fellow Parliamentary Colleagues:

### Message

*On behalf of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the 14th Parliament of Singapore, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the Parliament of India and the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of India, the Honourable Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, on the centennial of the PAC. The PAC of the Parliament of India and the Parliament of Singapore both serve a key common goal of ensuring public accountability and effective parliamentary financial scrutiny. I firmly believe that our close ties and friendship, based on shared goals and values, will only strengthen in the years to come.*

**Ms. FOO MEE HAR,**

*Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee of the 14th Parliament of Singapore (2020 – present)*

**Message**

*The centennial of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of India is a remarkable anniversary and achievement. I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations on the centennial of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of India.*

**Ms. JESSICA TAN,**  
*Deputy Speaker and former Chairperson of the  
Public Accounts Committee of the 13th  
Parliament of Singapore (2016–2020)*

# The Committee on Public Accounts of the Parliament of Sri Lanka

*By Chairperson of PAC & Secretary-General of Parliament of Sri Lanka*

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The Parliament of Sri Lanka is pleased to congratulate the Public Accounts Committee of India at the celebration of the centennial, which is undoubtedly a significant achievement by the largest parliamentary democracy of the world.

Similar to the Public Accounts Committee of India, the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of Sri Lanka is one of the oldest Parliamentary Committees, playing a key role in holding the Government to account on the funds allocated to the Government. As such, it is pertinent to delve into the functions of the Committee on Public Accounts (CPA)/ Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament of Sri Lanka which is one of the two Committees to perform the role of the watchdog in the field of public finance.

At this juncture it is pertinent to consider the constitutional framework relating to the role of Parliament in relation to public finance.

The Article 148 of the Constitution, provides that:

*“Parliament shall have full control over public finance. No tax, rate or any other levy shall be imposed by any local authority or any other public authority except by or under the authority of a law passed by Parliament or of any existing law.”*

As such any legislation relating to tax, rate or any other levy should be passed by Parliament.

Articles 149 and 150 which refer to the Consolidated Fund and Article 151 which refers to the Contingencies Fund also indicate the exclusive control of Parliament over public finance.

Article 152 of the Constitution articulates that any Bill or Motion affecting public revenue and finance shall be introduced in Parliament by a Minister and such Bill or Motion has to be approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.

In light of these Constitutional provisions, the role of Parliament in the preparation of the annual Budget has been restricted. The Budget is an exclusive written projection prepared by the Executive. The Laws do not provide for the Parliament to introduce or actively involve in the preparation of Budget as well as to suggest amendments without being approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.

In Sri Lankan context, when the Appropriation Bill which is referred to as the Budget is passed by the Parliament, the Executive is responsible for the execution of the Budget. The Parliament plays a crucial and active role during the passage of the Appropriation Bill. The effectiveness of the execution of the Budget process is overseen by the Auditor-General and the CPA.

The CPA is the oldest Financial Oversight Committee of the Parliament of Sri Lanka that practices Westminster model of Parliamentary System. As an Oversight Committee, the CPA plays a pivotal role in assisting the Parliament to ensure the accountability to the public finance as representatives of the People of the country.

The Public Accounts Committee of Sri Lanka has a long history of 98 years. It was set up in response to a motion placed before the Legislative Council by Hon. E. R. Thambimuttu on 5th October 1921. A Standing Committee on Public Accounts was accordingly appointed on 5 September, 1923. Its 1st meeting was held on 17 October, 1923.

The Parliamentary System in Sri Lanka fully established in 1948 along with the independence from the colonial rule began to exercise full control over the public finance with the assistance of the CPA and the



Auditor-General. A full-fledged Committee on Public Accounts was set up under the Standing Order No. 125 of Parliament.

**The Role of the Auditor-General** has been well defined through the Constitutional Provisions and provisions of a separate Act of Parliament. Article 153 of the Constitution provides for the appointment and Article 154 stipulates the duties and functions of the Auditor-General, respectively.

The Auditor-General makes his reports on the accounts of the Government Institutions within 10 months of the close of each financial year, and as and when he deems it necessary. The Reports of the Auditor-General presented in the Parliament form the basis of the work by CPA. However, there exists no restriction that hinders the Committee from examining matters involving public finance which has not been reported upon by the Auditor-General.

**The duty of the CPA** is to examine the accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by Parliament to meet the public expenditure and such other accounts laid before Parliament as the Committee may think fit, with the assistance of the Auditor-General. The CPA shall from time-to-time report to Parliament on the accounts examined, the finances, financial procedures, performance and management generally of any Department, Local Authority, and on any matter arising therefrom. The objectives such as the fiscal discipline, efficient allocation and effective use are achieved through this process.

The Committee has adopted different methodologies in par with modern technology and present day requirements, in discharging its functions. These new developments pertaining to the functions of the Committee has been able to enhance the accountability, transparency, effectiveness and participation which are essential components of the public financial oversight as well as to reduce the gap between all the State institutions including the Local Government Authorities, and Parliament.

### **(I) CPA Management Information System**

The remits of CPA include public accounts relevant to all public institutions categorized under Government Ministries, Government

Departments, District Secretariats, Provincial Councils, Provincial Ministries and Departments, institutions established under Provincial Statutes and Local Authorities which are provided with appropriation of sums granted by Parliament.

As per the mandate, more than 840 institutions are to be examined by the CPA. The CPA of the Eighth Parliament has identified that, the examination of certain institutions by the Committee after a lapse of considerable time after the conducting of the audit, the practical inability for the Committee to summon all the institutions annually or even within the five-year term of Parliament, poor follow-up action and delays in receiving responses from the relevant institutions as main challenges that have to be addressed. The Committee through its reports has also emphasized the necessity of a programme for timely evaluation to cover all the institutions under the purview of the CPA.

Accordingly, annual island wide online evaluation programme covering all the institutions that comes under the purview of the CPA, was put in place for the first time in the history commencing from the financial year 2015. The prime objective thereof is to evaluate the financial discipline, adherence to financial rules and regulations and the performance guidelines of the institutions annually, in addition to the traditional method of conducting Committee meetings. This is not an alternative mechanism to the conventional oversight mechanism but a supplement to the main function. The examination through this programme is not a post mortem examination and it indicates success and reasons for failures and captures lessons. This system is based on the concept of "Evaluation", a process that critically assesses a program or a project without merely policing or finding faults.

**(2) Achievements of the Committee under the four pillars of Good Governance in respect of public finance that is, Rule of law, Transparency, Accountability and Participation.**

- Facility has been provided to the general public to send their representations with regard to the State institutions to the Committee.

- The Standing Order No. 14 [3] provides that the proceedings of the Committees be available for broadcasting. Media coverage of activities of Oversight Committees disseminates the committee scrutiny and findings to the general public. All the other Government Institutions also get an opportunity to make note of the recommendations and use them to eliminate their own weaknesses and to improve their practices.
- Even if the Executive is not bound to carry out the recommendations made by these Committees, as a practice the Ministers give due considerations to these recommendations. The Standing Order No. 119 [4] and 128 [7] provide that when a report is tabled in Parliament, the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance and the Minister in charge of the institutions shall submit their observations and steps taken with regard to the matters specified in that report within a period of eight weeks.
- The House debates the reports submitted by the CPA in discharging their mandate.

### **[3] Capacity Development**

It is essential that the Parliament and the Executive branch have institutional, organizational information and resource capacity to effectively carry out its legitimate business. The CPA organized Capacity Development Programs for the Members and the officials with the objective of improving their knowledge and enhancing skills and efficiency. The assistance extended by donor agencies is significant to build capacities of Members of Parliament as well as officials of the relevant entities through programmes arranged locally and internationally. However, this should be a well-coordinated action with all the stakeholders.

### **[4] Recognition**

The CPA recognizes the achievements of the State Institutions annually that had acquired the highest performance levels for the online evaluation programme with the participation of the Head of the State.

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**[5] Effective decision-making process**

The Parliament Research Division provides necessary information for the Members of Parliament to effectively involve in the Public Finance Management process. In addition to that an MoU has been signed with the University Grants Commission to obtain information from the Universities and to seek the assistance of the academia.

**[6] Involvement of experts in the work of Committees**

The persons with specialized knowledge were appointed either to provide information or to elucidate matters of complexity within the Committee's terms of reference.

The proper functioning of the CPA assists in the successful implementation of the financial activities of the Government. Moreover, it helps to eliminate wastage, malpractices, mismanagement, frauds and corruption in State Institutions and also helps to realize the expectations of the general public for a more efficient and effective delivery of service from the government.

## **Public Accounts Committee: Looking Ahead**

*By Vijayendra Nath Kaul  
Former Comptroller and Auditor-General of India*

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The centenary of the Public Accounts Committee of the Lok Sabha (PAC) is an occasion to review its past, celebrate its present and prepare for the future. The PAC plays a pivotal role in our parliamentary form of Government because it exercises oversight on the Executive on behalf of Parliament and underpins financial accountability in our system.

The PAC was established in India in 1921 in the wake of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. However, it acquired its present status of a Parliamentary Committee after the coming into effect of the Constitution of India in 1950 and the election of the first Lok Sabha in 1952. Originally it comprised members of the Lok Sabha only, but members of the Rajya Sabha were added in 1954-55 to make this Committee representative of the whole of Parliament. The basic purpose of scrutiny by the PAC is to hold the Government of India and its associated public bodies accountable for the use of resources provided by Parliament. The underlying rationale is to motivate improvements in the financial control system and to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public goods and services by the public sector. The PAC discharges its responsibility through retrospective scrutiny of accounts of the Central Government including those of State Corporations, autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies as mandated. The Committee scrutinizes income and expenditure decisions of the Government and stipulated public sector entities largely, but not exclusively, on the basis of an examination of audit reports of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG). The State Legislatures

and Union Territories with legislatures have a parallel system making their Governments answerable to their respective legislatures.

Many former Chairmen and members of PAC have been leaders of national stature from across the political spectrum. The Parliamentary oversight of the Executive, exercised through the PAC, is almost as crucial to horizontal accountability in our democracy as the electoral system is to vertical accountability and the media to diagonal accountability. Most importantly, despite the changes in the political and social environment in the country, PAC's reports have retained a reputation for impartiality, firmness and grasp over detail.

The century long history of the PAC comprises two distinct phases: the pre-constitutional phase from 1921 to 1950, and, the post-constitutional phase from 1950 to the present. The Montague- Chelmsford Reforms, which introduced the concept of such a Committee, were touted at the time as an effort to achieve a more responsive and less wasteful Government. In reality their unstated political objective was to assuage moderate Indian politicians and isolate radical elements in the Indian freedom struggle after the Great War. While the Gladstonian "Westminster model", which was prevalent in Britain since 1861, was adopted in India, the correspondence with the British system was only in form not in content. The PAC at that time was dominated by unelected members and the Finance Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council was the Chairman of the PAC. Even though the presence of elected representatives became more significant after the Government of India Act of 1935, there was no real transfer of power to them. The overall balance remained tilted in favour of the Executive. This dominance the executive continued even after Independence and up to the establishment of the Parliament under our Constitution. During this interregnum the Finance Minister of India replaced the Executive Councillor of the Governor-General's Executive Council as the Chairman of the PAC. Nevertheless, in my view, the institutional significance of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms was enormous because they allowed increased association of Indians in institutions of governance and, most importantly, they expressly linked financial accountability to public audit. This set the stage for the later democratic evolution of the PAC. The

coming into effect of the Constitution of India in 1950 inaugurated the second phase in the life of this Committee. Under the new federal architecture, the Government of India was accountable to the Parliament while the State Governments and Union Territories with Legislatures were primarily accountable to their respective Legislatures. However, a notable feature of the new Constitutional scheme was the establishment of a unitary system of public audit in a federal polity.

The scope of PAC scrutiny has evolved over-time in the post-Constitution phase. Besides satisfying itself that the money granted by the legislature to the Government had been spent by it “within the scope of the demand”, the PAC was also required to look “beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy”. While the PAC’s traditional focus on transactions involving losses, nugatory expenditure and financial irregularities remained, nothing came in the way of the PAC or the CAG from examining the efficiency and effectiveness in the performance of projects and programmes of the Government both on the revenue and the expenditure side. Although the PAC always had the freedom to initiate independent inquiries, it has preferred to rely overwhelmingly on the examination of CAG’s Audit Reports. In this context it is pertinent to point out that relationship between the PAC and the CAG is one of the unique features of our Constitution. The Constitution in Part-V of Chapter-V secures CAG’s regulatory and functional independence in order to enable him to fulfil his constitutional obligations scrupulously. The CAG functions as “the friend, philosopher and guide” to the PAC and assists it in every manner. There is a symbiotic relationship between the PAC and the CAG because they are functionally related and inter-dependent. The effectiveness of the PAC is determined largely by the thoroughness and independence with which the CAG’s audit examination is carried out, while the value of CAG’s findings is enhanced by the support that is received from the PAC. Over time this independent and unbiased *post-facto* scrutiny of income and expenditure of Government has emerged as the heart of the constructive work of the PAC.

The PAC has turned out to be a surprisingly agile and adaptive institution because its mandates from the Lok Sabha, while being specific,

are not rigid or cast in stone. There is a significant amount of discretion with the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. This has made it possible to keep the PAC contemporaneously relevant over the last seventy years. For instance in 1967 a significant convention was established to select a member of the Lok Sabha from the Opposition as Chair of the PAC thus establishing a distance between the Chair and the Government in power. Also, the Sub-Committee system under Rule 263 of the Lok Sabha Rules has been used quite flexibly to increase attention on areas of priority interest. Further, in response to public expectations, the PAC and the CAG have been able to modulate their focus from transaction level issues to project and programme level issues and widen attention from financial irregularities to economy, efficiency and effectiveness concerns in Government projects and programmes.

The PAC, to its credit, from early days itself, has sought to deal with major issues. It recommended the establishment of Internal-Audit in Government in one of its early reports. In a landmark report in 1993-94, the PAC incisively exposed the failure of India's Export Promotion Zones without straying into contentious policy areas like protectionism. The PAC's support to CAG audits on Defence procurement cases especially after 2000 drew attention of the Government to the need for major reforms in Defence procurement practices. Some Reports between 2008 and 2016 that have had a deep and lasting impact are the 2G Spectrum Case (2008), the Commonwealth Games Case (2010), the Adarsh Housing Case (2011), the Coal Block Allocation Case (2012), the VVIP Helicopter Acquisition Case (2013) and the Demonetisation Case (2016). After a hundred years of service to the people of India and despite some carping about the post-mortem and advisory nature of its scrutiny, the PAC enjoys high credibility and the trust of the public at large. However, like the Parliament itself, the PAC is a manmade institution and, therefore, it is neither perfect nor even complete, but its strength lies in its capacity to correct and improve.

Looking ahead, we must recognise that the future will be marked by more volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity than the past



and it will be more prone to sudden and sometimes disruptive changes. The onslaught of Covid is a vivid reminder of this. The main challenge for accountability institutions like the PAC, and indeed for Parliament, will be the management of change especially in matters of parliamentary oversight and financial accountability. The PAC by itself can do little as it is a part of a larger parliamentary committee system of the Lok Sabha. It will be the Lok Sabha that will have to decide how to respond strategically to the multiple challenges to financial accountability in the post-Covid era. In my opinion, the most important challenges for our parliamentary institutions, particularly the PAC, will be, firstly, the preservation of its fundamental values, secondly, the speedy harnessing of the latest information and communication technologies (ICT) in parliamentary processes, and, thirdly, an openness to organisational and institutional reform.

Of these three, the most significant challenge for the PAC would be the preservation of core values necessary for enhancing the effectiveness of its scrutiny. Experience has shown that independence, policy neutrality and consensual decision making, based on inter-party cooperation, have been fundamental to the success of the PAC. Preserving PAC's own independence and protecting the independence of the CAG, is vital. Maintaining independence is challenging for the PAC because it clashes with political affiliations of its members. It is a moot point whether longer tenures for the Chair and some members will strengthen independence but it is worth examining. The other fundamental value of great significance for the future is policy neutrality. Ordinarily PACs have chosen to refrain from commenting on Government policy issues. However, it has become increasingly difficult for the CAG and the PAC to draw a bright line between policy and non-policy areas or distinguish programme policies from administrative policies, particularly while reviewing performance of projects and programmes. In the past the PAC's approach has been conservative and its main focus has been on the way resources have been deployed by the Government in pursuance of a stated policy and not on challenging the policy itself.

Going forward a careful exercise of judgment would be necessary in distinguishing between policy and administrative guidance. The final overarching value which will be relevant for effective functioning of the PAC in the future is the importance of achieving consensus in our exceedingly competitive and sometimes boisterous political milieu. Consensual decisions are important for PAC because they foster public trust. However, consensus requires inter-party cooperation. I suspect the challenge of achieving a consensus will be the most complex of challenges for the leadership of the PAC going forward.

The next most significant, but certainly the most pressing challenge facing the parliamentary system as a whole is the adoption and absorption of technology, specifically, the use of ICT in Parliament to combat future shocks like Covid. The issue is not new. Its problems as also its enormous prospects have been visible for decades. The Secretariats of the two Houses have been actively handling these issues as a part of modernisation and automation initiatives. Since early 1980s there has been a gradual but continuous technological upgradation mainly by harnessing Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in parliamentary processes. Parliamentarians have participated in Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) programmes in the past and welcomed the joint initiative of IPU and the UN, namely, the Global Centre of ICT in Parliament, and the promotion of the concept of Digital Parliament or e-Parliament. This is consistent with the Government's Digital India initiative. However, in the post- Covid India what is needed is urgent and across the board digital transformation in parliamentary work practices and in improved follow up arrangements, particularly in the Monitoring Cell in the Department of Expenditure through use of ICT. Prospects also exist for greater use of data analytics in parliamentary work and, more importantly, in the work of its financial committees like the PAC. Specific possibilities exist in the areas of work planning, scheduling and selection of issues or subjects for consideration by PAC from a plethora of audit issues covered by CAG's annual audit reports. In all these critical areas and more the importance of speedy harnessing of ICT cannot be over emphasised. A survey by the IPU

reported in World e-Parliament Report, 2020 has made two recommendations that are noteworthy: (a) approaching ICT induction more holistically through an explicit institution-wide digital strategy; (b) developing flexible work arrangements and permitting remote working practices backed by formal permanent regulations. In fact, what is ideally needed is a digital transformation plan for crisis management which covers all these issues. The greatest challenge, however, will be the speed of induction of ICT and providing resources for this purpose.

Besides technology, complex organisational and institutional challenges are likely to be faced by the PAC in the future. Organisational issues are numerous and range from operational to institutional. It would be futile to casually delve into these issues in the context of this centenary. However, three issues deserve mention as they relate to the effectiveness of PAC scrutiny. Firstly, that accountability should be viewed in the larger backdrop of anticipated changes in Government's financial management system. This matter has been dealt with by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission in its 14th Report (April 2009). A cursory review of the report is suggested. Secondly, there appears to be a case for greater coordination amongst the three Financial Committees of the Lok Sabha in order to exploit possible synergies. Currently, the Lok Sabha report on financial committees examines their output in separate silos. An integrated review is necessary in the backdrop of the accelerated disinvestment programme on the one hand and its implications for CoPU, and, on the other, the increasing demand for performance audits which focus on efficiency and effectiveness issues and in which consultation with Estimates Committee may add value. As for the Committee system, it was reviewed in detail in 2003 by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat. The review concluded that the system was functioning well. I think the matter should rest at that. However, there is an unexamined case for reviewing the role of sub-Committees of PAC to consider if their effectiveness could be enhanced by strengthening their capacity for examination and investigation so that the PAC could concentrate more on strategic oversight on the use of public funds.

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To sum up, these centenary celebrations present a unique opportunity to prepare for the future and strengthen capacity to manage risk of disruptions on account of health, environment and other factors. The Covid pandemic has exposed some fragilities in the existing system but also it has revealed the system's resilience and strength. The three main pillars for making the system ready for the future appear to be Values, Technology and Organisational action. The most urgent issue in the backdrop of the Covid onslaught is digital transformation of parliamentary processes. Finding resources for this should be the top priority. More than anything else, this centennial is a unique opportunity to look ahead and prepare for a brighter future.

# **The Role of PAC in Enriching Good Governance**

*By Girish Chandra Murmu  
Comptroller and Auditor-General of India*

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Democratic governance and accountability are the fundamental principles of the Indian Parliamentary System. The accountability of the executive to the legislature stems from the basic principle that the legislature embodies the will of the people and it must, therefore, be able to supervise the manner in which public policy as laid down by the legislature are implemented. In India, the system of public financial accountability revolves around two key agencies, namely legislative oversight committees of the Parliament and the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India [CAG].

The Montague-Chelmsford Reforms were introduced by the colonial government to introduce self-governing institutions gradually in British India. The reforms formed the basis of the Government of India Act, 1919. The Public Accounts Committees were constituted for the first time in 1921, both at the Centre and in the Provinces, under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. From its very inception, the Public Accounts Committee [PAC] became a major force of legislative control over expenditure. It exercised enormous influence in bringing pressure to bear upon Government to enforce economy in the expenditure of public moneys.

The PAC sounded the bell in its very first report when it examined the accounts of the year 1921-22 and observed “The Departments of the Government of India will realise that they are now, for the first

time, being brought face to face with the necessity of justifying their expenditure in detail to a responsible body of representatives of the Indian taxpayer. By realising this they will be led, naturally, as expenditure is incurred during the course of the year, to keep in mind and devise machinery for the task of justifying their expenditure before the assembly".

Post-Independence, in democratic India, the Parliament has an oversight function in ensuring the accountability of the Government to the people of India through a mechanism of Financial Committees, significant amongst which are the PAC and the Committee on Public Undertakings (CoPU). Shri G.V. Mavalankar, the First Speaker after independence, in his inaugural address at the first meeting of the PAC on 10th April 1950, observed, "The consciousness that there is someone who will scrutinize what has been done is a great check on the slackness, negligence or absolutism of the Executive. The examination (of accounts and witnesses), if it is properly carried out, leads to general efficiency of the administration. The examination by the Committee may also be useful as a guide for both future estimates and future policies".

CAG performs the oversight functions in his own rights as a constitutional authority. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, in his speech to the Constituent Assembly, had remarked that "I am of opinion that this dignitary is probably the most important officer in the Constitution of India. He is one man who is going to see that the expenses voted by Parliament are not exceeded, or varied from what has been laid down by the Parliament in what is called the Appropriation Act". Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, in his speech on 21 July 1954 observed that "the Comptroller and Auditor-General has the power to call to account any officer, however highly placed, so far as the State moneys are concerned".

Under Article 151(1) of the Constitution, CAG of India has been assigned the duty and responsibility of presenting the audit reports to the Parliament, after which, it is the Parliament and its Committees, who make the Executive act on them.

The objective and purpose of free and independent audit will be served adequately when the PAC and the CoPU take the process of ensuring that corrective measures are initiated and the accountability of executive is established. In this context, the role of PAC has been of utmost importance as PAC, with the help of CAG, directly keeps a watch on the functioning of the Government through checks on moneys spent by various arms of the Government. CAG complements and supports PAC and CoPU in discharge of their duties. CAG functions as 'the friend philosopher and guide' and 'the moving hand' behind the actions of PAC. CAG assists the PAC in selection of important audit paragraphs for in-depth examination. CAG also extends assistance to PAC by preparing the Memorandum of Important Points (MIP) pertaining to the subjects selected, vetting the replies of the concerned Ministries/ Departments on the MIPs, recommendations of PAC as well as factual verification of the contents of the draft reports of the PAC.

As an effective watchdog on the Government spending and essentially working on the Reports of the CAG, the PAC has been credited with the detection of many financial irregularities, procedural lapses, executive delays and even cases of lack of coordination between different Government Departments. PAC has also earned a reputation for impartiality, firmness and grasp for details. The PAC not only examines the aspects relating to conforming of expenditure to the authority that governed it but also the efficiency of implementation of projects and schemes and whether their objectives were attained or not.

The role of PAC is unique since it does not end with bringing out the PAC Reports. PAC follows upon its reports with the Action Taken Report on the Recommendations made by the Committee in an earlier Report thereby making the Reports of PAC more impactful. The insight of members of PAC on a vast spectrum of subjects is commendable which results in bringing out impactful PAC Reports.

It is praiseworthy that due to ever increasing number of Reports of the CAG, the PAC has constituted subject specific sub-Committees to discuss the Reports of CAG on different subjects. As a result, greater

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number of Reports of CAG are now discussed by the PAC. I hope that more such sub-Committees would be constituted in future so that increased number of Reports of CAG are discussed which would make executive more accountable and the PAC can play a more effective role in ensuring responsible governance.

Despite the PAC having representation from the cross section of political parties, the functioning of PAC is beyond political goals of individual parties and the reports of PAC reflect the view of the members as a team of the Parliamentary Committee established to ensure answerability of the executive to the people of India.

The reports of PAC are also a source of great empowerment for the citizens since these provide valuable information and feedback to the various stakeholders including the policy makers. Citizens can use these reports to question their representatives and hold the public servants to account.

I congratulate all the members of PAC and the Secretariat of PAC on the occasion of celebration of 100th year of existence of the Committee and hope that the Reports of PAC will continue to guide the executive towards better and improved governance thereby benefitting not only the Government but also the citizens of this great country.





A view of the audience, attending the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Public Accounts Committee, held on December 3, 1971.

# Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of Botswana—A Botswana Story

*By Barbra Dithapo  
Clerk of the National Assembly, Botswana*

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## **Background**

Botswana is a landlocked country in the center of Southern Africa bordered by Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The semi desert country is about 570.000 km. square yard and as at independence, in 1966 it was one of the world's poorest countries. After independence Botswana rapidly grew to become one of the world's success stories.

Significant mineral (diamond) wealth, beef industry, impressive tourism attraction, good governance, prudent economic management and a relatively small population of slightly more than two million transitioned Botswana to an upper middle-income country with a transformation agenda of becoming a high-income country by 2036.

Botswana's successes since independence was largely attributed to the robust Parliamentary oversight which was spearheaded by the Public Accounts Committee.

As part of the Commonwealth, Botswana subscribes to the doctrine of Separation of Powers in that the Constitution of the Republic of Botswana clearly outlines the distinct roles and responsibilities of the three arms of Government. Though the roles are different, they are complimentary and all contribute to the development of the country.

The Development Agenda of Botswana is guided by a six year National Development Plan which dates back to the time of independence in 1966, with an implementation framework that runs on a six year development plan and a one yearly budget circle which facilitates the

Committee of Supply which in turn allocates funds to different sectors of the economy for implementation of programmes and policies.

With the corner stone of development anchored on democracy, transparency, accountability and public participation, Parliament through the PAC and other finance and scrutiny committees oversee the use of these allocated funds. The PAC is the core institution of public financial accountability.

### **Composition of The Parliament and The PAC**

Parliament of Botswana composes of 57 elected Members of Parliament and six Specially Elected Members, elected every five years. The President and the Speaker are additional Members of Parliament. PAC comprises of Members selected from across the political divide. The ten Members of the Committee reflect the balance of political parties in Parliament and is chaired by an opposition Member of Parliament. The Committee membership is appointed for the life of Parliament five years. The National Assembly Powers and Privileges Act CAP 02:05 of the Laws of Botswana and the Standing Orders grant the Committee the same powers and immunities as the National Assembly.

### **Functions of PAC**

Botswana's PAC is charged with the responsibility of examining Government financial books and activities including following up on the audit reports (both financial and value for money) produced by the Auditor-General and tabled before Parliament. The Committee conducts its business by examining Accounting Officers from different Government Ministries who appear before the Committee for examination and to account for their respective Ministry's expenditure. The Committee also has powers to send for papers, documents and records and to summon witnesses to appear before the Committee and give evidence.

After examinations the Committee produces a report together with recommendations to the National Assembly for consideration and approval or otherwise. Once the report is tabled it becomes a public document. The recommendations are forwarded to the Executive for possible actions.

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## **Evolution and Operations of the PAC**

Committee Members of the PAC are expected to work diligently as a team in their oversight assignment, display non-partisan attributes and promoting transparency through independent scrutiny and putting aside their political differences.

It is worthy to note that all examinations of the PAC are held in public and are live streamed. Annual books are examined without failure in order to keep up with Government expenditure.

Another example of the good work of the PAC is that it has in the past recommended the setting up of a Parliament Special Select Committee to investigate the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) monopoly. The investigations were subsequently carried out and recommendations by the Committee tabled in Parliament. Another good example worth citing is when the Committee queried the financing of a building development thereby causing seizure of the developments. These measures were in line with ensuring good financial practices and curbing corruption and possible misuse of Government funds.

In an autonomous dispensation accounting/scrutiny committees are important to keep checks and balances on the Government expenditure and for successful implementation of projects and programmes and to minimize and eradicate fraud and corruption in Governments.

In accordance with Commonwealth standards, the Chairpersonship of the Committee is selected by the Committee of Selection.

## **Views and thoughts by current and former Chairpersons of PAC and Members of PAC**

1. "Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is based on the principle that democracy not only presupposes that rulers are chosen by the ruled, but also that rulers must at all times act in the interest of the ruled and for that to happen there has to be transparency and accountability. PAC in Botswana and elsewhere in democracies ensures politics is indeed about who gets what, when, how and why by scrutinizing how public money appropriated by Parliament was used. PAC as a Standing

Committee in Botswana is credible, has integrity and enjoys public confidence as well as support from Government because of how it transparently and regularly conducts its business"—**Hon. Dithapelo Keorapetse – current PAC Chairperson.**

2. "Public Accounts Committee oversees Government financial performances and ensures compliance on application of funds in terms of the Appropriation Act, following the audit of Government books by the Auditor-General and further follows any outstanding matter in terms of previous PAC Memorandum of Action." – **Mr. Isaac Mabiletsa – Former Chairperson.**
3. "Public Accounts Committee is an important oversight tool of the National Assembly which examines Government financial books with a view of checking on Government expenditure and also ensuring proper Finance Management."— **Hon. Pono P.P. Moatlhodi – Member of the PAC and Current Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly.**
4. "Public Accounts Committee once stopped a transaction of procurement of office space noting that procurement procedure was not followed."— **Mr. Nehemiah Modubule – Former Chairperson (2009-2014).**

# **Functioning and Practices of the Parliamentary Committee on Development Plans and Public Expenditure Control of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, as an effective means of Parliamentary oversight of Public Expenditure**

*By Tasoulla Ieronymidou  
Secretary-General, Cyprus House of Representatives*

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The Standing Committee on Development Plans and Public Expenditure Control since its establishment in 1977, is mainly responsible for the monitoring of the various development plans as they are implemented in practice, as well as the control of the state expenditure for the implementation of these plans.

In particular, the Committee considers/examines legislative measures aimed at defining the procurement procedure, the proper execution and management of public works and the prevention of misuse of public funds. At the same time, the Committee exercises parliamentary control over matters falling within its sphere of competence, relating to all Governmental Ministries, through the examination of the annual report of the Auditor-General of the Republic as well as, the special reports of the Audit Office for legal entities under public law, in addition to examining issues registered by Members of Parliament. It should be mentioned at this point, that according to the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, established in 1960, there exists a distinct separation of powers between the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary branches. When the Annual Report of the Auditor-General is submitted to the House for consideration, the first step is to forward it to the Committee of

Development Plans and Public Expenditure Control. The Committee discusses it thoroughly and prepares a report of its own, which is thereafter forwarded to the Plenary of the House for consideration. The main goal of the Committee is to establish this procedure as a practice in the framework of parliamentary oversight. Moreover, the Office of the Auditor-General has on several occasions been asked by the Committee to examine specific issues, which the Committee wants to scrutinize and has responded promptly to such requests, which is indicative of the fruitful cooperation between the Committee and the Office of the Auditor-General.

The Committee on Development Plans and Public Expenditure Control cannot however, enforce the implementation of the conclusions and suggestions that stem from the Auditor-General's Reports. In this respect the only tool that MPs have in their disposal, is the submission of matters for debate to the Plenary of the House or the submission of written questions towards the competent Ministries or, other Governmental authorities.

According to the Rules of Procedure of the House of Representatives, the Standing Committee on Development Plans and Public Expenditure Control, exercises parliamentary control on matters within its competence, considers on its own motion and any other matters within its competence in addition to the matters referred to it by the House. Also, the Committee scrutinizes any matters concerning fraud and, in some cases, if substantiated, these matters are forwarded to the Law Office of the Republic of Cyprus for the final appropriate measures. The Committee also has the right to summon any interested organ, authority, organisation, society, association, trade union, person or corporate body to provide information and evidence or, to express and elaborate views and opinions on any matter under debate.

The responsibilities and powers attributed to the Committee Chair, in addition to those afforded to other Members, is to convoke the meetings of the Committee and direct its proceedings accordingly. Furthermore, in case of a tie in the voting procedure regarding the decisions of the Committee, the Chairperson has the deciding, casting vote.

The Committee also has an important role to play in auditing the European funds and international loans received, as it is within the Committee's mandate to exercise parliamentary control and also to ask for the submission of any related evidence and documentation for the above matters.

Moreover, the Parliamentary Committee on Development Plans and Public Expenditure Control examines a number of issues relating, amongst others, to healthcare matters, evaluation costs, development plans, rent and/or purchase of buildings for use by the public sector, Government's contributions, expenditures transfers to public and local authorities, expenditure budget execution etc. Taking into consideration the procedure followed with regard to national budgets, according to Article 81 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, the Committee examines each year the Financial Report of the Accountant-General of the Republic which is submitted to the House of Representatives for approval.

Currently, the Committee constitutes of 11 Members, representing 6 out of the 7 political parties holding seats in the House, following the latest parliamentary elections of May 2021. The Committee is composed by a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson and 9 cross-party Members. The Committee is also supported by three Parliamentary Committee Officers, acting as Secretaries (Clerks). The number of Members represented from each party on the Committee, is decided according to the overall number of seats their Party holds in the House.



# **Functions and Practices of the Finance and Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly of the Gambia**

*By MR. Momodou A. Sise  
Clerk of the National Assembly, Republic of Gambia*

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Section 109(1) of Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia, 1997, mandated the National Assembly to establish a Finance and Public Accounts Standing Committee and other such Select or Standing Committees as it considers necessary for the exercise of its functions.

Furthermore, Section 109(3) grants each of the Committees of the National Assembly all of the powers, rights and privileges as are vested in the High Court at a trial in respect of:

- (a) enforcing the attendance of witnesses and examining them on oath, affirmation or otherwise;
- (b) compelling the production of documents, and
- (c) the issue of a commission or request to examine witnesses abroad.

Clause 109 of the Revised Standing Orders of the National Assembly of The Gambia [2019 Edition] provided for the establishment of the Finance and Public Accounts Committee (FPAC):

- (1) The Finance and Public Accounts Committee shall consist of a Chairperson and such other Members, appointed by the Committee of Selection, as provided for in Standing Order 96 [Membership of Committees].
- (2) It shall be the duty of the Finance and Public Account Committee to examine the accounts showing the appropriation

of the sums granted by the Assembly to meet the public expenditure and such other accounts laid before the Assembly as the Assembly may refer to the Committee together with, the Auditor's report thereon.

- (3) To appoint an appropriately qualified auditor or firm of auditors to audit the accounts of, the National Audit Office.
- (4) The Auditor-General and, or, the Director General of the Public Procurement Authority or their representatives shall be in attendance at meetings of the Finance and Public Accounts Committee.
- (5) Nothing in this Standing Order shall prevent the Finance and Public Accounts Committee from meeting otherwise than as provided for in paragraph.
- (6) Minutes of meetings of the Finance and Public Accounts Committee held since the last Session of the Assembly shall be laid on the Table by the Chairperson. The Finance and Public Accounts Committee (FPAC) receives and considers the reports of the Auditor-General on the Financial Statements of the Government of the Republic of The Gambia. FPAC also considers the annual Activity Reports and audited Financial Statements of key government institutions such as:
  - (a) Gambia Public Procurement Authority (GPPA)
  - (b) Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG)
  - (c) Gambia Revenue Authority (GRA)
  - (d) Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU)
  - (e) National Audit Office (NAO)

The purpose of the scrutiny by the Finance and Public Accounts Committee (FPAC) is to ensure accountability, transparency and probity in public agencies so as to guarantee efficient service delivery. FPAC receives and considers testimonies and evidence from witnesses including Board Chairpersons, Management and External Auditors of affected institutions. Moreover, officials of the Gambia Public Procurement

Authority (GPPA) provide a report on the compliance status of each of the institutions *vis-à-vis* public procurement regulations.

Appearance before the Finance and Public Account Committee (FPAC) is a process by which the National Assembly as the apex oversight institution of the country holds the Management of public agencies and institutions accountable for their actions and decisions in the management of public resources. During such sessions, good management or best practice is recognized and rewarded while bad management is appropriately sanctioned in the report to the plenary.

When the Finance and Public Account Committee (FPAC) adopts the reports and financial statements of a public institution or agency, it means that institution has met the minimum performance levels of admissibility of the reports and accounts for consideration. FPAC's report on the state of affairs of the accounts and performance of the institutions under its purview is submitted to the plenary for final consideration and adoption.

After submitting its report to the plenary for consideration and adoption, FPAC institutes follow-up missions to the affected institutions to ensure the implementation of its recommendations. In a statement, the former Chairperson of FPAC states:

*“The mission of FPAC is not to witch-hunt any particular individual or institution, but rather to ensure transparency, probity and openness in all our public institutions, to hold the heads of these institutions accountable for their actions and to ensure that our Public Corporations and Agencies deliver essential services to the general public in an effective and efficient manner.”*

# The Public Accounts Committee of the Mauritius National Assembly

By Bibi Safeena Lotun  
Clerk of the National Assembly  
Mauritius

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## Establishment of the Public Accounts Committee in Mauritius during Pre-Independence

On 22 March 1955, at the sitting of the then Legislative Council, the then Acting *Procureur* and Advocate-General, equivalent of the Attorney-General, moved for the adoption of the Report of the Standing Orders Committee which, *inter alia*, proposed to amend the Standing Orders of the Council for the establishment of a Public Accounts Committee and stated the following in support thereof, I quote –

*“...This is not only in accordance with the best parliamentary practice but follows the course widely adopted elsewhere on the emergence of legislature having elected majorities. ...”*

He further added that the introduction of the Public Accounts Committee would “...act as the watchdog over the finance of the country...”.

## The Public Accounts Committee Post-Independence

On 12 March 1968, Mauritius became a sovereign democratic State and was on 12 March 1992 proclaimed a Republic within the Commonwealth of Nations and the Legislative Assembly was restyled the National Assembly.

In 1995 and 1997 major amendments were brought to the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly to further enhance the scrutinizing functions of the Public Accounts Committee.

## **Mandate of the Public Accounts Committee**

The PAC is mandated to examine the audited accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by the Assembly to meet public expenditure and such other accounts laid before the Assembly as the Assembly may refer to the Committee together with the Director of Audit's report thereon.

## **Composition of the Public Accounts Committee**

Presently, the PAC comprises a maximum of nine members nominated from members among both sides of the House, by the Committee of Selection at the beginning of each Session of the Assembly and of a Chairperson appointed by the Speaker, who, by convention and practice, is usually a senior Member of the Opposition.

## **Officers assisting the Public Accounts Committee**

The Clerk of the National Assembly and/or officers of the Clerk cadre services the Committee as Clerk to the Committee, provides secretarial assistance and advises the Committee on the way it conducts its business based on Standing Orders and past practices and keep detailed records of the proceedings.

The National Audit Office, headed by the Director of Audit, is the supreme audit institution and the appointment, extent of authority, independence of the Director of Audit and the submission of audit reports are constitutionally protected. The Director of Audit audits the accounts and performance of all Ministries/Departments for which budget has been voted and appropriated in the Assembly. He provides independent assistance to the National Assembly on the proper accounting and use of public resources through his report which is tabled before the National Assembly.

The PAC Committee is briefed by the Director of Audit on his findings while a particular Ministry/Department is being examined and is also, during its hearings, assisted, by a representative of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development and of the Accountant-General, respectively.

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## **Powers of the Public Accounts Committee**

The PAC has to satisfy itself that the monies shown in the accounts as having been disbursed were legally available for, and applicable to, the services or purpose to which they have been applied or charged. The Committee also has to ensure that the expenditure conformed to the authority which governed it; that every re-appropriation has been made in accordance with the provisions made in this behalf under appropriate rules; and that cases involving negative expenditure and financial irregularities wherever they have occurred in the financial year under study, having regard to the financial report and the estimates as approved by the House, are subjected to scrutiny.

The PAC meets regularly to keep up to-date with work progress in the public sector; summons Accounting Officers of selected Ministries to provide evidence and produce documents based on the findings of the Director of Audit in his report in connection with their respective Ministries/Departments, subject, however, to the prohibition imposed by the Standing Orders, for example, witnesses are exempted from answering certain class of questions which relate to Cabinet proceedings/documents; communication between Ministers and between officers and Ministers; materials, the publication of which may be injurious to national interest; opinion of judicial officers, legal advice to Ministers and departments; communication between officers and third parties relating to formulation of policy; and material which, by statute, is required to be kept secret. The Committee, when deemed necessary, also conducts site visits.

The meetings of the Committee are held in camera and any disclosure of the proceedings or draft report, before same is tabled, constitute a contempt under the National Assembly (Privileges, Immunities and Powers) Act.

Through the examination of the National Audit Office reports, the PAC has the opportunity to examine questions of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, depending on the types of information provided in the reports, the focus being on instances of wastage, inefficiency, misappropriation, delays and abuse in the management of contracts/

projects, if any, with audit notes about problems. The findings of the Committee are compiled in reports, together with recommendations put in by the Chairperson and handed over to the Speaker of the National Assembly for the tabling thereof.

## **Challenges**

PAC Reports normally attract huge media coverage and comments from the population, through social media, on the way public funds are managed by Ministries/Departments. Although being considered as a *posteriori* reports, the reports of the PAC play a fundamental role as watch dogs over the sum appropriated by Government and the finance of the country.

Nevertheless, the PAC, does not have the power to act in real time and to recommend sanction and as such, former Chairpersons and Members have been critical in their reports about same and urging for a review thereof.

## **Conclusion**

On a concluding note, the Public Accounts Committee can be, as stated by a former Chairperson thereof in his report, described as being *“the eyes and ears of the Legislature”*, and further acknowledging that although it has *“no operational or directional power, it is a powerful reporting entity to the Legislature ... and has the ultimate responsibility to bring bodies to task if they fail in making judicial use of public funds”*. Moreover, the Public Accounts Committee, through its reports which become public when tabled, serve as important incentives for the public service and Ministers to manage public funds/resources in line with public expectations.

# Functioning and Practices of Public Accounts Committees of Parliament of Uganda as an Effective Mechanism of Parliamentary Oversight of Public Expenditure

*By Adolf Mwesige Kasaija  
Clerk to Parliament of Uganda*

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## Introduction

Article 77 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides for the establishment of the Parliament of Uganda with a five year term from the date of its first sitting after the general election. Parliament of Uganda is composed of directly elected representatives and representatives of special interest groups. The eleventh Parliament of Uganda was inaugurated in May 2021 and is composed of 556 members out of which 188 (34%) are female representatives. Regarding representation by constituency, 353 (63%) Members of Parliament (MPs) are directly elected, 146 (26%) are District Women representatives, 10 (2%) Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) representatives, 27 (5%) are *Ex-Officio* members while the other interest groups namely youth, workers, persons with disabilities, and the elderly each has 5 (1%) representatives.

This paper highlights the mandate of Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament of Uganda, the legal framework, functioning and practices of PAC, and the challenges encountered in the performance of their functions.

## Establishment and Mandate of Public Accounts Committee

Article 164 (3) of the Constitution provides that *“Parliament shall monitor all expenditure of public funds”*. Parliament must, therefore, hold the Executive accountable for its use of public resources and motivate



improvements in internal financial controls and efficiency in service delivery. Public Accounts Committees are thus used as a mechanism of enhancing Parliamentary oversight of Public expenditures.

Article 90 of the Constitution lays the foundation for the appointment of Parliamentary Committees necessary for efficient discharge of Parliament's mandate. In this regard, Parliament of Uganda established three Public Accountability Committees namely: Public Accounts Committee (PAC) – Central Government, PAC – Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (COSASE), and PAC – Local Governments, to scrutinize reports of the Auditor General (AG), annually. PAC-Central was the first to be established in 1995. PAC-Central is mandated to examine the audited accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by Parliament to meet the public expenditure of the Central Government and the Judiciary<sup>1</sup>. PAC-COSASE is mandated to examine the reports and audited accounts of Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises<sup>2</sup>. PAC-Local Governments, was established in 2001 to reduce the workload of PAC-Central. PAC-Local Government is mandated to consider and examine the recommendations of the AG and the reports of the local governments Public Accounts Committees<sup>3</sup>, submitted to Parliament by the Minister responsible for local governments.

The three PACs are standing committees of Parliament, with a two and half years term of office. PAC Chairpersons and Vice Chairpersons are designated by the official opposition party. PAC membership is based on the proportional party membership (numerical party strength) in the House.

### **Legal framework for Accountability**

In Uganda, accountability is anchored on an elaborate legal framework consisting of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995); the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 2015; the National

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<sup>1</sup> Rule 174 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda.

<sup>2</sup> Rule 181 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda.

<sup>3</sup> Rule 182 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda.

Audit Act, 2008; the Budget Act, 2001; the Local Governments Act, 1997; the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets (PPDA) Act, 2003; and the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

As earlier noted, Parliament is mandated under Article 164(3) of the Constitution to monitor all expenditure of public funds. Article 163 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of the Office of the Auditor-General. The National Audit Act, 2008 gives effect to Article 163 of the Constitution by providing operational and financial independence of the Office. Article 163(5) of the Constitution further provides that Parliament shall within six months after submission of the Auditor-General's report debate and consider the report and take appropriate action.

The Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 2015 reinforces the implementation of Parliamentary accountability recommendations. Section 53 of the PFMA, requires submission of a Treasury Memorandum to Parliament within six months from the date of Parliament's consideration of the AG's report. Section 13(15)(e) of the PFMA, requires the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) at the time of presenting the national budget to indicate measures taken to implement Parliament's recommendations in respect to the AG's report. In addition, Section 13(f) of the PFMA, requires the Auditor General to audit the Treasury Memorandum.

### **Functioning and Practices of Public Accounts Committees**

Public Accounts Committees (PACs) are central in ensuring budget oversight and control in the public finance management cycle through consideration of audit reports submitted to Parliament by the AG and following up on the implementation of the Parliamentary recommendations on accountability by Government. During the scrutiny of audit reports, the committees conduct hearings and receive submissions from Accounting-Officers and witnesses referred to in the AG's reports and undertake field tours to selected project areas mentioned in the reports.

In discharging their functions, the PACs have special powers. Article 90 (3) and subsequently Rule 208 of the Rules of Procedure of

Parliament, provide that Committees shall have powers of the High Court, to (i) enforce the attendance of witnesses and examining them on oath, affirmation or otherwise; (ii) compel production of documents; and (iii) issue a commission or request to examine witnesses abroad.

The findings and recommendations in the committee reports are reached at through consensus and where consensus is not attained, the committee chairperson should put the matter to a vote. When the Committee's decision cannot be achieved either by consensus or vote, the members dissenting from the majority view may provide a "*minority report*" which is appended to the report of the committee<sup>4</sup>. Reports finalised by the respective accountability committee are submitted to the Clerk to Parliament and the Speaker so that the report is put on the Parliamentary Agenda (Order Paper). Under Rule 174 (6) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, the Chairperson of the Committee shall table the report of the committee before the House for purposes of debate, within six months of referral of the AG's report to the Committee.

When the Committee report is adopted by the House, recommendations are then extracted and sent to Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) which is liaison with other government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The MoFPED pursues action on the MDAs and prepares the Treasury Memorandum, detailing the actions that Government has taken or is going to take, in response to Parliamentary recommendations on accountability. The Treasury Memorandum is an effective mechanism towards completion of the accountability cycle and ensuring Parliamentary oversight. It is through the Treasury Memorandum that Parliament can follow up to see whether the Government took action as promised.

The Speaker then submits the Treasury Memorandum to the Auditor-General for Audit<sup>5</sup> in accordance with the National Audit Act,

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<sup>4</sup> Rule 205 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament provides that "A member or members dissenting from the opinion of a majority of a committee may state in writing the reasons for his or her or their dissent and the statements of reasons shall be appended to the report of the committee".

<sup>5</sup> Rule 221 of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda.

2008 and Section 13 (f) of the PFMA, 2015. Finally, PAC follows up and tracks to see whether the issues raised were in fact addressed and acted upon as claimed.

Regarding classified expenditures, Parliament has adopted a clear procedure of reviewing the audited reports through the creation of a Classified Expenditures Sub-committee. On receiving the audited reports from the AG, the Speaker constitutes a Classified Expenditures Sub-committee comprising of the Chairperson of PAC and two Members of Parliament from among the members of PAC to examine the audited reports on the classified expenditures.

Having the three PACs, extends scrutiny beyond the Central Government operations to include Statutory Authorities, Commissions, State Owned Enterprises, and Local Governments. PAC-Local Governments has also been instrumental in building the capacity of district leaders.

The Auditor-General provides support staff (known as Parliamentary Liaison Officers) who permanently sit on accountability committees to support them by providing guidance on the significance of the opinions in the AGs reports, briefings and clarifications on audit reports.

### **Challenges encountered**

Despite the significant accomplishments of Public Accounts Committees, they encounter several challenges in the performance of their functions, namely:

- (i) The volume of work is enormous with Audit Reports on MDAs, Missions Abroad, Projects, Subventions, Value for Money Reports and Forensic Audits. This results in failure by the Committees to consider the AG reports within the specified timelines.
- (ii) Backlog related to unconsidered and fragmented audit reports. This makes parliamentary recommendations less effective since by the time reports are adopted, some of the recommendations may have been over taken by events.
- (iii) The Committees depend on the AG to track implementation

of Parliamentary recommendations with no system to track unimplemented recommendations. This makes follow up on unimplemented recommendations by the committees challenging.

## Conclusion

Public Accounts Committees (PACs) play a unique but essential role within Parliament. They provide an effective mechanism for parliamentary oversight of public expenditures. They review and hold the Executive accountable for the expenditures and management of public funds during budget implementation. Unlike the other committees, PACs are not involved in the legislative process and do not consider legislative bills. They focus on administration of Government and not on criticising government policy direction. Therefore, there is need to enhance capacity of PACs through training and provision of adequate funds and to strengthen the system of following up Parliamentary recommendations on accountability.

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# **The Public Accounts Committee and Executive Accountability**

*By P.D.T. Achary*

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Legislative scrutiny of public spending by the Government is a well-established practice followed in all democracies. The underlying principle is that the legislature which sanctions the money has the right to see how that money is spent by the Government. Thus the expenditure is first audited by the constitutional body of auditors who reports to the Head of the State. Thereafter, the report is placed before Parliament for its detailed scrutiny.

The job of detailed scrutiny of the way, in which the money voted by the legislature was spent by the Government, is done by the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislature. The functional importance of this Committee has lent great prestige to it which is considered the most important of all Committees of a legislature.

Historically, the Public Accounts Committee is one of the oldest legislative Committees in India. It came into existence in 1921. The establishment of this Committee in that year is significant because after the Montague-Chelmsford reforms of the legislature in 1919, significant changes were introduced by the colonial government in the working of the legislature. Although the first Legislative Council was set up as early as in 1853, the Committee system was introduced only after 1919. However, the Public Accounts Committee of 1921 was essentially different from its successor Committees which were established after independence. The Committee of 1921 had the Finance Minister (Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council) as its Chairman which naturally limited the

Committee's autonomy significantly. Nevertheless, the important point to note is that even during the colonial period, when the government was not responsible to the legislature, the need to have some measure of legislative scrutiny of the Government's income and expenditure was strongly felt which led to the formation of the Public Accounts Committee in 1921.

With the Constitution coming into force in 1950, the Public Accounts Committee underwent significant changes. Its composition, remit, power all changed and the Committee became the most powerful instrument of Parliament for critically scrutinizing the Government's spending with almost unlimited powers. Once it was detached from the Government it regained its autonomy. Detailed Rules were formulated and directions were issued for dealing with the examination of accounts of the Government.

In order to have a perspective on the role of the Public Accounts Committee, we need to take a look at the constitutional scheme of financial control by Parliament. Article 265 says that no tax can be levied or collected except by the authority of law. Parliament makes that law which is called Finance Act. Article 266 (3) says that no money shall be appropriated out of the consolidated fund except in accordance with law and the law made by Parliament for this purpose is called the Appropriation Act. Article 113 (2) says that the House of the People have the right to assent to or refuse to assent or reduce any estimates the Government may place before the House for its approval. While the House approves the estimates, it retains the right to examine whether the money has been spent in accordance with the mandate of the House. This function is performed by the Public Accounts Committee.

As the name implies, the Public Accounts Committee critically examines essentially the annual accounts of the Government of India which consists of the Appropriation Accounts and the Finance Accounts. The Appropriation Accounts relate to the expenditure incurred against the appropriations made by Parliament for the various departments of the Government in the previous financial year. Here, the Committee's examination is more of a technical nature such as whether the money disbursed was legally available or whether the reappropriation was done

in accordance with the rules etc. The Finance Accounts relate to the receipts and expenditure of the Government which include the liabilities of the Government. In this case, the scope of examination is quite vast as the entire income and expenditure of the government for the previous year comes under scrutiny. In this process, the Public Accounts Committee looks closely into, among other things, the tax revenue, the various aspects of its collection etc. and advises the Government on the lapses and deficiencies of the system. The Committee also examines the income and expenditure of the statutory Corporations, autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies which have been audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. It also critically examines various schemes of the Government which involve large financial commitments.

Considering the importance of the Public Accounts Committee, conventionally Senior Members of Parliament used to be sent to this Committee by various Political Parties. This was a healthy, convention which helped it function as an effective watchdog of the financial management by the Government. Another important convention was to appoint a senior member from the opposition as the Chairman of the Committee. Except on a very few occasions when a member from the “friendly opposition” was appointed the Chairman, the above convention was scrupulously followed till today. “Friendly opposition”, though a contradiction in terms, is a real phenomenon in the Indian Parliament. There are Parties which are not officially a part of the ruling coalition and therefore sit in the opposition benches, but support the Government on all important issues. So, it becomes rather tempting for the Government to offer the Chairmanship to a member of such a party. Otherwise, Chairpersons of Public Accounts Committee were invariably very Senior Members of the real opposition parties. Some notable names which can be mentioned in this context are, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Shri C.M. Stephen, Shri Jyotirmoy Basu, etc. They were men of eminence and also trenchant critics of the Government of the day. Herein lies the beauty of the tradition under which a strong critic of the Government guides the Committee which pries open and look into the entire financial management system of the Government.

Another healthy convention followed religiously by the Indian Parliament is to ensure that the Public Accounts Committee functions



on non-party basis. Of course, this approach is followed in other Committees as well. But it becomes crucially important in the case of Public Accounts Committee because this Committee is the Principal Financial Committee of Parliament. In this respect the Houses and the Committees present a contrasting picture. In the Houses one can see the unrestrained demonstration of adversarial politics whereas the Committee demonstrates the abandonment of divergent and often mutually irreconcilable political differences and the display of a commonality of purpose. That purpose is to exercise Legislative control over the executive and unearth the lapses, failings and deficiencies and ask the executive to mend its ways. To this end, the Committees, in particular, the Financial Committees have evolved a foolproof method of questioning the officials who represent the Government. Sending a detailed questionnaire and then intensive interrogation of the officials on the basis of the replies to the questionnaire received from the Government is the commonly accepted method. In earlier times, the Chairmen used to hold informal meetings of senior and vocal members in their chamber prior to the meeting and decide on the strategy for interrogation. There would follow a well-orchestrated and exhaustive interrogation of the officials which would continue for hours. There was a joke doing the rounds among officials those days that the Secretary who was to appear before the PAC would break a few coconuts before Lord Ganesha the previous night and pray that he would come back in one piece. Even humorous remarks by Members would be devastating for the officers. Once, in one of the meetings of the Public Accounts Committee in which one very senior and powerful Secretary who was said to be close to the then Prime Minister came to give evidence. Members knew that this officer, may be due to his closeness to the Prime Minister did not think much of the Members of Parliament. So naturally there was a very intensive questioning of him by senior members. They found that the Secretary was not giving the replies they wanted. So, Ravindra Varma, a senior member of the Committee told him "Mr. Secretary, you are creating a bush and beating around it. Please stop doing it and answer our questions". For once, the articulate Secretary was lost for words.

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Over a period of time things have changed. The Government officials are no longer in awe of Parliament or its Committees. In recent times there were press reports that officials did not appear before a Committee. There are increasing instances of Committee's members taking blatantly partisan positions on issues. There have been instances of members making allegations against the Chairman in public. Wise men of yore had thoughtfully created robust systems and healthy conventions so that Parliament could ensure the accountability of the executive. This cannot be ensured when Members of the Committees take partisan positions. The result would be that the system of Parliamentary scrutiny would weaken in course of time. It may be remembered that there is no practice of minutes of dissent in the Public Accounts Committee because the decisions of this Committee are based on broad consensus. It is the unity of purpose displayed by the members which enable the Committees to scrutinize issues with the required objectivity. If it is not there, then parliamentary scrutiny will become an empty ritual.

# PAC and Parliamentary Oversight

*By P. Sreedharan  
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## **Accountability to Parliament**

The past one hundred years witnessed rapid changes in the financial structure of the country and the accounting system of the Government. This was necessitated by new or amended legislations, adoption of international practices, advancement of technology, etc. The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) with the able assistance of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (C&AG) and its Secretariat has been able to absorb the developments and continue functioning in a relentless manner to keep a continuous vigil over the Executive. It may be pertinent, at this point of time, to have a close look at the functioning of PAC and discuss some of the suggestions which have been in public domain, to strengthen its role as an organ of Parliament to enforce accountability of the Executive to the Legislature.

## **Constitution and Functioning**

Rules 308 and 309 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha govern the functioning and constitution of PAC. The Committee consists of not more than 22 members, comprising 15 elected members by the Lok Sabha and seven members to be nominated by the Rajya Sabha for being associated with the Committee. The election of members by the Lok Sabha and nomination of members by the Rajya Sabha are carried out according to the principle of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote. The Chairman is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the Lok Sabha

members of the Committee. The term of office of the members of the Committee does not exceed one year at a time.

The functions of the Committee include, examination of Appropriation and Finance Accounts of Government of India, Accounts of the State Corporations, Autonomous Bodies etc, the audit of which is conducted by the C&AG and which are not allotted to the Committees on Public Undertakings, Reports of the C&AG including those related to Receipts, etc. The Committee is specifically mandated to examine each case of excess expenditure over voted grants and charged appropriations.

Broadly, the Committee undertakes the following functions:—

- (i) Detailed examination of paragraphs of the Reports/Reports of the C&AG, selected by PAC, and
- (ii) Examination of cases of excess expenditure incurred by the Government over voted grants and charged appropriations.

### **Examination of Audit Paragraphs/Reports**

Over the years, the nature of audit conducted by the C&AG has underwent significant changes. From mere transactions audit, currently, it conducts *inter-alia* system appraisals, performance reviews of programmes, plans, organizations, etc. designed and set up for public welfare. In fact, the International Association of Supreme Audit Institutions of which, the C&AG of India is also a member, defines the three key types of audit as follows:—

- (a) Financial audit focuses on determining whether an entity's financial information is presented in accordance with the applicable financial reporting and regulatory framework. This is accomplished by obtaining sufficient and appropriate audit evidence to enable the auditor to express an opinion as to whether the financial information is free from material misstatement due to fraud or error.
- (b) Compliance auditing is performed by assessing whether activities, financial transactions and information are in all material respects in compliance with the authorities, which govern the

audited entity. These authorities may include rules, laws and regulations, budgetary resolutions, policy established codes, agreed terms or the general principles governing sound public sector financial management and the conduct of public officials.

- (c) Performance audit focuses on whether interventions, programmes and institutions are performing in accordance with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and whether there is room for improvement. Performance is examined against suitable criteria, and the causes of deviations from those criteria or other problems are analyzed. The aim is to answer key audit questions and to provide recommendations for improvement. Compliance audit focuses on whether a particular subject matter is in compliance with authorities identified as criteria.

The PAC selects paragraphs from the Reports of C&AG, which are generally based on the above criteria, for detailed examination. Sometimes, it takes up the whole report, if the report has dealt with one subject only.

### **Examination of cases of excess expenditure**

The Appropriation Accounts of Government show the actual sums of money spent against each Service *vis-à-vis* the corresponding figures of voted grant or charged appropriation, as the case may be. Thus, the Accounts contain not only cases of voted grants, but also, charged appropriations, *i.e.* cases where the Consolidated Fund of India, has been charged. After examination of each case of excess, the Committee presents its consolidated report on all such cases of excess expenditure, every year, recommending their regularisation. Thereafter, Government introduces Appropriation Bill (Excess Demands) in Parliament and obtain vote of the House for regularising the excess expenditure. It must be mentioned here that the PAC, at the Centre, has always been prompt in the examination of excess expenditure and there had been no pendency on this score.

The PAC, at the Centre, has a well-structured system to obtain written information from the Ministries/Departments, record oral evidence of Government officials and other representatives, reporting and follow-up of recommendations. The Committee, at the Centre, has also evolved a procedure whereby Ministries/Departments are required to submit to the Committee, through the Ministry of Finance, remedial/corrective action taken on all Audit paragraphs. This has been designed to ensure accountability on all Audit paragraphs.

### **Suggestions for reforms**

The PAC, at the Centre, during the last 100 years, had made several recommendations of far reaching importance. This related, both to expenditure of the Government as well as its revenue receipts. Many of those recommendations had made a positive impact in curbing avoidable expenditure, checking leakage of revenue and in system improvements. Notwithstanding the achievements, the need for improving the efficacy of PAC, as an important tool of Parliament to exercise check on the executive, is, indeed, a factor which cannot be ignored. Some points arising therefrom are discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

The total expenditure of Government of India which was less than rupees one thousand crore in 1950-51, rose to Rs. 23,15,113 crore in 2018-19 [excluding loan liability]. Similarly, the revenue receipts of the Union Government which was less than Rs. 500 crore in 1950-51 increased to Rs. 16,65,695 crore in 2018-19. Consequent upon the rise in Government's financial business, the number of Reports of C&AG also went up from about six in the Seventies to around 20 in 2021. However, as against all this, the total number of Reports presented by PAC decreased from 53 in 1968-69 to 35 in 2018-19. Likewise, the number of sittings of PAC also slowed down *vis-à-vis* the figures of 1970s. Further, though the Committee select a large number of Audit paras/reports every year for detailed examination, the number of cases where examinations are actually completed and reported is also, relatively at a low level. There could be several reasons for this trend. Nevertheless, it would seem to suggest that the PAC needs to increase the frequency of sittings to do adequate justice to the rapidly increasing volume of work before the Committee.

One of the reasons attributed to the relatively lesser frequency of PAC sittings, perhaps, could be the situation arising out of the expansion of the Committee System in Parliament. Traditionally, the three Financial Committees, *viz*, PAC, Estimates Committee and the Committee on Public Undertakings exercised parliamentary oversight over the Executive in financial matters. Recognising the need for exercising effective control over the Executive, several other Parliamentary Committees, particularly, the Departmentally Related Standing Committees (DRSCs) were introduced in 1993. Presently, there are 24 such DRSCs, with a membership of 31 each covering all the Ministries/Departments of Government of India. Of course, there is a well-defined and clear cut demarcation in the Rules on the functions of DRSCs and the Financial Committees including PAC. But, the fact remains that all members of PAC are also members of one or more DRSCs. One of the suggestions which has come in the public domain is to reduce the membership, *i.e.* the number of members in each Committee so that they can devote exclusive time and provide quality attention to the individual Committees. Another related suggestion is that the terms of PAC could be considered to be increased from the existing period of one year so as to provide some continuity in membership.

A document titled, “Financial Committees—A Review”, prepared by the Lok Sabha Secretariat is laid in Parliament every year. A perusal of the document for successive years show that a high percentage of the recommendations of PAC, is accepted by Government. For example, as per this document for the year 2019-20, 78.81% of PAC’s recommendations were accepted. Indeed, this is a satisfactory trend. But, at the same time, it may be worthwhile for the Committee to take up a periodical review of actual implementation of accepted recommendations, perhaps, in a sector-wise, manner.

During the 80’s, the PAC introduced a system which required all the Ministries/Departments to submit remedial/corrective action taken notes on all Audit paragraphs through the Ministry of Finance [Department of Expenditure] to the Committee so as to enforce accountability on all Audit paragraphs. Perhaps, it is time for the Committee to take it further and restructure the procedure with a view to improving its impact.

We are now witnessing application of advanced technology in all spheres of the society. More and more transactions are being carried out through electronic/digital platform. Technological upgradation has also impacted financial business of Government considerably. This emphasises the need for PAC to keep adequate vigil and adopt suitable measures to meet the challenges arising therefrom.

The C&AG is the friend, philosopher and guide of the PAC. Articles 148 to 151 of the Constitution and the provisions of the Comptroller and Auditor General's (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971, govern the functioning of the institution of C&AG. Several suggestions have come in the public domain concerning C&AG to enable Parliament's scrutiny over Executive more effective. A Conference of the Chairmen of Public Accounts Committees of Parliament and State Legislatures is reported to have recommended in 2015, changes in procedure in the matter of appointment of C&AG and to make the C&AG accountable to Parliament. Further, the funding pattern for several centrally sponsored programmes for welfare of people has undergone changes after the introduction of the Panchayati Raj/Local Self-Government Institutions. Similarly, certain developmental activities are now undertaken through Public Private Partnership Projects. Suggestions have emerged to provide a wider mandate for C&AG to audit such institutions and projects so that Parliament could exercise sufficient control over the Executive in the matter of spending Government funds thereby. Also, it has been suggested that C&AG should be permitted to conduct audit of Non-Governmental Organisations or other enterprises or programmes where funding from Government is involved. Presently, only about 25 per cent or even lesser of the total budgetary expenditure of the Government is within the ambit of the discretion of Parliament and is subjected to vote. The rest of the expenditure is charged on the Consolidated Fund of India. Some, experts are of the view that C&AG should be facilitated to audit such items in a more meaningful way. It has also been suggested that in view of all these, the C&AG's (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971 should be re-visited and subjected to a review.

The Secretariat of PAC has always played an important role in the functioning of the Committee. With the rapid changes in the financial



structure, technology etc. there is an imperative need to strengthen the Secretariat to capacitate the Committee to meet the growing challenges effectively.

Along with the need for greater probity and effective enforcement of accountability, there has also been a demand to make the functioning of PAC more transparent. There has been a demand for opening of the proceedings of the Committee to the Press/Media, as being done in some Commonwealth and other countries. Those advocating it, believe that such a system would ensure greater transparency and would put an indirect pressure on Audit, Government and PAC to do a better job. On the other hand, certain weighty reasons have also been advanced in favour of the practice of not allowing outsiders to the sittings of the Committee. One such argument is that the Committees, unlike the House, functions, normally, in a non-partisan and non-political manner. Opening of the proceedings of the Committee to the media, might disturbs this. It has also been argued that the representatives of the Ministries/ Departments appearing as witnesses before the Committee, generally, express their views freely and frankly, and the presence of outsiders might discourage them to come forthright in their depositions. It has further been argued that subjective reporting and pre-publicity of the proceedings of the Committee might eventually influence the conclusions/ findings of the Committee thereby causing damage to the objectivity of the Report.

The suggestions recounted above, underscore the need for greater probity, transparency and accountability in governance. There could be several other ideas/proposals as well. All these points warrant a detailed examination in all their ramifications, with a view to enabling PAC to keep pace with changing times and play its watchdog role in parliamentary oversight over the Executive in a more effective manner.

# Public Accounts Committee and Technology

*by Snehlata Srivastava  
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Committees are the backbone of our Parliamentary system. In a limited time, the Business done by these Committees is voluminous. Public Accounts Committee (hereafter referred as PAC) is the most important Financial Parliamentary Committee which examines the Comptroller & Auditor Generals Reports and scrutinizes whether the expenditure incurred by various organizations has been done judiciously, economically and for the purpose provided for in the Budget.

The functions of the PAC are manifold. The Committee, following the examination of the C&AG Reports ensures that no expenditure in excess of the Parliament approved appropriation, is incurred outside the purpose and scope, it was budgeted for, and if there are savings in the budget the justification of the same. The Committee ensures that schemes meant for target groups are implemented in letter and spirit, also the procedures and performance of implementation agencies is improved through this scrutiny continuously.

Since PAC requires working closely with a large number of organizations to collect data, coordinate, correspond and get reports on subjects chosen by them, the use of technology is very necessary considering limited availability of time and complex nature of work. It is heartening that presently C&AG reports, PAC reports and Departments Action Taken Reports (ATRs) are available on concerned websites. On Parliament Digital website almost all PAC Reports have been uploaded in

2019 at <https://eparlib.nic.in/handle/123456789/13>. The C&AG Reports are also available on their website. This results not only in increasing transparency but speedy disposal of work and better communication of recommendations.

The Parliament of India is equipped with e-Office and official work is being done electronically. The notices of meetings, agenda of the meetings and recommendations etc. are circulated to the Committee Members only electronically and not made public till the Report is laid on the Table of the House. The Lok Sabha used to upload all the Reports presented to the House on APMS (Audit Para Monitoring System) Portal where the Ministries/departments concerned are also required to upload their Action Taken Replies on recommendations/observations of the Committee and the remedial/corrective Action Taken Notes on all the Audit paras contained in the various C&AG Reports, pertaining to the Union Government, that are selected by the Committee. The entire process of Audit Para settlement is online.

PAC is in a true sense a “Symbol of Democracy”. In fact, earlier, up to the 3rd Lok Sabha, Chairperson of PAC used to be appointed from the ruling party. Since then, the Chairperson of PAC is always chosen from the Opposition Party. The magnitude of the work of PAC is visible from the fact that since January 1950, it has presented 1646 Reports up to April 2020. The maximum number of Reports presented was during 5th Lok Sabha from 1971-77 and 7<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha from 1980-84. The Reports are used by media, students, researchers, courts and public etc. In PAC Reports, a lot of useful information is available on a number of subjects which help in making the procedures, schemes etc. simple, effective and speedy.

As mentioned earlier, looking in to huge number of Reports now available in public domain, it would be worthwhile to review these Reports and make an analysis to see how effectively the implementation has been done over the period of more than 70 years. The credit would go to PAC for getting such changes which have impacted the common man’s day to day lives in a fruitful manner. Also, the organizations have benefited

through recommendations made about procedures, layout of schemes, and providing enough provisioning in the budget. The Members of PAC know the ground situation and accordingly suggest such changes which may further improve the progress and result.

PAC being the most important Parliamentary Committee is working like a watch dog on government financial system. More the transparency and availability of documents to all through technology intervention, the whole system would be given a boost and showcase our country's vibrant democracy to the world.

# Public Accounts Committee: Role in Good Governance

*By P. C. Mody  
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The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), the oldest financial committee of the Parliament of India, has successfully completed hundred years of its functioning this year, which is an important milestone in history of our Parliament. Since its inception in 1921, the Committee has been diligently performing its role as a core institution of public financial accountability. It ensures that the Executive spends every single pie only in the manner mandated by the Parliament. With its origin during the British rule in India, the PAC has come a long way in its eventful journey of hundred years and has evolved as a vibrant and dynamic institution adapting to changing times contributing significantly towards the development and good governance of the country.

With the increase in size and complexity of the activities of the Government of India over the years, the need for managing the public resources efficiently and judiciously can hardly be over emphasized. The monumental increase in the budgetary spending can be gauged from the fact that the total expenditure estimated at Rs.197 crores in 1947 in Independent India's first Union Budget, has exponentially grown to approximately 35 lakh crores in 2021. With the tremendous increase in the public expenditure, the possibilities of financial profligacy and lapses have increased and the task of the Committee to safeguard the interest of the taxpayer has assumed immense importance. Notwithstanding the huge challenge of proper monitoring of the public expenditure, the PAC has acquitted itself creditably in strengthening the position of Parliament in securing legislative control over public purse and in ensuring the financial accountability of the Executive.

There are certain distinguishing features of the PAC which are highlighted as follows:-

**(i) Associating Members of the Rajya Sabha with the PAC**

In bicameral legislature in a parliamentary democracy, the Upper House is usually given a less significant position in financial matters as compared to the directly elected Lower House. This is based on the principle that only the directly elected representatives, who make up the Lower House, should have the authority to raise taxes and appropriate the money. Thus, when the two Houses of Parliament were constituted in 1952 as per the Constitution of India, the Public Accounts Committee membership was initially drawn only from the Lok Sabha. In 1954-55, the strength of the Committee was increased from 15 to 22 with inclusion of seven members from the Rajya Sabha. This was a radical departure from the practice prevailing in England, where no member of the House of Lords was ever associated with their Select Committee of Public Accounts.

**(ii) Convention of appointing Chairman from the Opposition**

According due respect and recognition to the Opposition is paramount to make the parliamentary system truly bipartisan, open and accountable. Prior to 1966-67, the Chairman of the PAC belonged to the ruling party. In 1967, it was decided to appoint a Member from the Opposition as its Chairman. However, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha appoints the Chairman from amongst the Members of the Committee belonging to the Lok Sabha.

The Chairman of the PAC is a prestigious position as he presides over the oldest of the financial Committees of Parliament. Many distinguished parliamentarians have held the Chairmanship of the PAC such as Shri R. Venkataraman who went on to become the President of India while two of them, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee later on became Prime Ministers of India. Most of the other Chairmen of the Committee held important ministerial portfolios. With these innovations, namely associating Members of the Rajya Sabha with the PAC and appointment of the Chairman from the Opposition, the Committee has, undoubtedly, gained a distinctive status and heightened stature in matters of securing executive accountability to the Parliament. Besides, the mode of election based on the principle of proportional

representation has enabled to reflect the due representation of parties in the Committee.

### **Functioning of Committee**

There cannot be any disagreement that the legislature's power of voting money for particular purposes is futile unless it is also empowered to satisfy itself that the money has been spent by the Executive for the purposes for which it was voted. The Committee's scrutiny powers, though criticized as being a post mortem of the implemented policies, are important to keep a vigil on the spending and performance of the Government, to bring to light inefficiencies, financial irregularities, wasteful expenditure, and negligence in the implementation of the policies and programmes. Its recommendations go a long way in streamlining the administration for efficient and speedy implementation of policies and programmes.

The Audit reports on appropriation/finance accounts are prepared meticulously by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (C&AG) and tabled in the Parliament. These Reports constitute the basis of the PAC's work. The C&AG which is a constitutional body assists the PAC in its work. There is a close working relationship between these two institutions to secure the accountability of the Executive in financial administration. Thus, the C&AG is rightly called 'friend, philosopher and guide' to the PAC. Parliamentary control over the public purse is full and complete only after Parliament goes through the C&AG's report. Nevertheless, it is neither possible nor necessary for the PAC to go into every issue dealt with in the Reports of the C&AG. The Committee is, thus, selective in its approach and focuses attention to the selected paras of the C&AG report. The Committee, however, does not confine itself to the C&AG report alone and can examine any irregularity which has become public or which has been brought to the notice of the Government. The Committee also goes into loopholes or lacuna in systems and procedures with a view to ascertain as to what extent the existing system has been able to fulfill the underlying objectives.

Over the years, the Committee has not only changed its composition, but also shown dynamism in breaking new grounds in its

functioning. For instance, in 1981, the PAC impressed upon the Ministries and Departments on the need for submission of notes showing remedial or corrective action taken in regard to the audit paras not selected by the Committee for examination. In 1995-96, the Committee recommended that such action taken notes be submitted to it within four months from the date of laying of Audit Reports on the Table of the House. To keep track of the remedial/corrective action taken notes on the C&AG paras, the Committee in their 11th Report of the 15th Lok Sabha recommended the Monitoring Cell, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance to develop the Audit Para Monitoring System (APMS) portal for real time monitoring of the same. As a result, the entire process of audit para settlement has become online leading to reduction in pendency and timely submission of action taken notes.

### **Stemming Corruption and Improving Economic Efficiency**

The examination of Audit Paras and identification of financial irregularities, improprieties and economic mismanagement by the Public Accounts Committee does have an inhibiting effect on corruption and graft often found in the functioning of public institutions, more so in the implementation of public programmes and schemes, etc. The regular monitoring done by the Committee to oversee the implementation of policies/programmes help identify any irregularity which prompts the Government to be alert about corrupt practices. The Committee helps to deter misutilisation of public resources and improve its proper management thereby enhancing the transparency and integrity of public governance. This ensures that the officials remain aware of the fact that they would be ultimately subject to parliamentary scrutiny and accountable for their acts of omission and commission. It goes a long way in promoting accountability, transparency and good governance in the functioning of the public institutions. The constant scrutiny of the public finances by the Committee also helps build confidence in foreign investors and attracts investments to the country.

### **Import of Reports/Recommendations of the Committee**

The findings of the Committee though advisory in nature carry immense weight. The PAC has made several path breaking



recommendations which have earnestly been accepted and implemented by the Government. For instance, the Appropriation Accounts relating to the Defense Services began to be examined by the PAC in the same manner as Accounts of other Departments following the Committee's report of 1948-49. Again, in accordance with the Committee's recommendation of separating Accounts from Audit mentioned in its 3rd Report of the First Lok Sabha, a decision was finally taken by the Government in 1975 to separate Accounts from Audit in a phased manner.

In recent times, during the 16th Lok Sabha, 76.46 per cent recommendations of the Committee were accepted by the Government. For instance, the Committee's recommendation to urgently operationalize all the pending sanctioned Anganwadi Centers (AWCs), contained in its 14th Report on "Integrated Child Development Services" (ICDS) during the 16th Lok Sabha, was given due credence by the Government and 13.46 lakh AWCs were made operational. On another occasion, the wage ceiling under the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) to include maximum number of workers under the ESI Scheme was raised in January 2017 following the Committee's recommendation contained in its 67th Report on "Performance Audit of Employees State Insurance Corporation and Special Audit of Medical Education Projects of ESIC" during the 16th Lok Sabha.

During the current 17th Lok Sabha also, the Committee has made some key recommendations in its various reports. For example, the Committee examined various Ministries/Departments regarding their preparedness for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in its 32nd Report observed that no comprehensive exercise had been undertaken to assess and identify financial resources required to implement SDGs by the audited/selected State Governments and the Ministry of Finance in the Centre. In this regard, the Committee observed that the integration of SDGs into the accounting and budgeting framework remains to be done at the Centre and most States and recommended to the NITI Aayog and Ministries/Departments concerned to take adequate/corrective steps to effectively achieve all the SDGs within a prescribed time limit.

The Committee conducted a detailed examination of the implementation of Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and found that some Nodal Banks had released funds in excess of what it was allotted in the period. In its 31st Report, the Committee (17th Lok Sabha) recommended that adequate checks should be instituted to ensure that funds are not sanctioned by the Nodal Banks before validating claims under the PMEGP.

In the same Report, the Committee observed that the sanction of loans by banks were slower in the first two quarters of the financial year during the period of Audit leading to crowding of sanctions during the last quarter and leading to poor quality projects being sanctioned. It cautioned that such exercise may lead to a rise in Non Performing Assets (NPAs). The Committee also noted that Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP) was closed in 2008 on its merger with the Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) and a new scheme called the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) was introduced. It further observed that an amount of 12.53 crores which was allocated to settle old claims has been lying idle for nearly a decade and expressed its displeasure at the lackadaisical approach of the concerned Ministry.

On an average, more than 70 per cent or nearly three-fourths of the recommendations of the PAC are now accepted by the Government, which underscores the prestige of and the moral authority exercised by the Committee and its effective role in ensuring sound fiscal management. The Government has also taken corrective action even before the Committee has presented its report.

Besides, the findings of the Committee have led to judicial enquiries, be it the G.S. Rajadhyaksha led inquiry into the various transactions relating to the purchases of fertilizers or the Mahandai Bridge Committee (Champhekar Committee) appointed by the Ministry of Irrigation and Power in pursuance of the recommendation of the PAC contained in its 6th Report of the First Lok Sabha.

Based on the Reports submitted periodically by this Committee, Members also raise parliamentary questions and give calling attention notices and sometimes even move adjournment motions. Many a debate

held in Parliament have focussed on the findings of the PAC and have resulted in punitive and corrective action.

The Committee constantly keeps a track of the implementation of its recommendations by the Government, thus, ensuring a robust system of accountability and transparency in the implementation of public policies/programmes/schemes.

## **Conclusion**

It is, thus, evident that the PAC has, over the years, contributed much to the establishment of sound financial practices in Government and at the same time has strengthened parliamentary control of the public finance. It plays an important role in ensuring financial accountability of the Executive to Parliament along with the other two financial Committees namely, Estimates Committee and the Committee on Public Undertakings. In fact, of the three parliamentary financial committees meant for oversight of the financial operations of the Government, PAC has been the most active as noticeable from the number of its sittings, which has been on a much higher side as compared to the Estimates Committee and the Public Undertakings Committee. The Committee though composed of members of all major parties has pointed out irregularities in public expenditure irrespective of the partisan considerations.

The Reports of the Committee are often taken up for studies by the public policy think tanks and highlighted in the media. The information contained in the reports of the Committee is also used by the civil society, an important component of good governance, to create awareness and exert social pressure to improve the implementation of the Government schemes and programmes.

To scrutinize the Government spending in the world's fifth largest economy and the second most populous nation is no small task. But the PAC has discharged its mandate with earnestness without fear or favour and irrespective of parties. Its findings have indeed ushered in financial probity and propriety and facilitated the transparency in the Government financial operations and has helped the cause of good governance. The Committee's work extends far beyond the post mortem of the

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implemented policies and programmes as it strives to look forward and suggest corrective measures for the future. It helps the administration to learn the right lessons from their mistakes/lapses while implementing the Government programmes and schemes.

In modern times, the orientation of the Government is focussed on providing social welfare support to the people particularly the poor, weaker and underprivileged sections. It is, therefore, important that the benefits of social welfare schemes reach the needy persons in timely manner. PAC as a vital tool of Parliament plays an important role in this direction as it undertakes detailed evaluation of the performance of the Government in implementing nationwide development programmes impacting vast segments of the population.

PAC of Parliament as an apex institution for the financial scrutiny and oversight mechanism of the financial administration by the Government can take legitimate pride in contribution it has made over the years in protecting the public interest and promoting the cause of good governance in the country. Centennial celebrations are an important occasion to appreciate the good work done by the Committee and motivate it to continue the zeal.

# Relevance and Impact of Public Accounts Committee

By  
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The Executive is accountable to the Legislature in a parliamentary system of governance. A critical aspect of this accountability is financial accountability of governments to the people through their elected representatives. The exercise of parliamentary oversight over financial activities of government and related executive processes is exercised in many parts of the world, largely through the instrumentality of parliamentary bodies, such as Public Accounts Committee (PAC). In India, the PAC established in 1921, occupies the pride of place among Parliamentary Committees.

The pre-eminence of PAC in the Committee system in Indian Parliament, is not merely by virtue of its antiquity of origin but on account of the nature of its mandate and the impact it has had in ensuring parliamentary control over public expenditure. The multi-party character of its composition, with a prominent leader of the principal opposition party in Lok Sabha as its Chairperson, the credibility and gravitas associated with the PAC is further bolstered by the support it receives from the independent constitutional office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). The practice of electing a member from one of the principal Opposition parties in the Lok Sabha as Chairperson was started in 1967-68 and is now a well established convention. Right from the inception of PAC in 1921, prominent leaders have adorned the office of Chairperson who later went on to occupy high political offices, such as, late Shri R. Venkataraman who rose to be President of India,

Shri P.V. Narsimha Rao and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee served as Prime Ministers of India whereas Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan later went on to become the first Prime Minister of Pakistan.

The collective wisdom, single minded perseverance and rich experience of Chairpersons and Members right from its creation in 1921, has earned the Committee a formidable reputation '*as the conscience keeper of the Nation in financial matters*'. The Committee examines cases involving losses, nugatory expenditure and financial irregularities. While examining the reports of C&AG on revenue receipts, the Committee examines various aspects of tax administration involving cases of under assessments, tax evasion, non-levy of duties, misclassification, arbitrary ministerial decisions causing loss to public exchequer, etc. and identifies loopholes in the administration of taxation laws and procedures and makes recommendations to check avoidable loss of government revenue or leakage of public fund. The financial oversight is exercised by the PAC by securing accountability for revenue receipts and expenditure both in qualitative and quantitative terms. The watchword or mantra of PAC's functioning is to chase the rupee from where it comes to where it goes.

The Committee has expanded the scope of its mandate from time to time to stay in step with the demands of changing times. The PAC is no longer content to confine itself to carry out scrutiny of CAG audit reports but have now undertaken evaluation of the wisdom, faithfulness and cost effectiveness of government expenditure. With complexities introduced by proliferation in governmental programmes and concomitant rise in public expenditure, emergence of new modes of public spending such as Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and special purpose vehicles, complex ramifications of globalization, inflow of foreign direct investment and growth of digital economy, rising demands for environmental auditing, issues arising out of e-governance, and preparation of Value For Money (VFM) reports (more well known as Performance

Audit Reports of the C&AG), the challenges confronting the PAC have taken formidable proportions.

### **PAC and C&AG – Watchdogs of the Public Exchequer**

The institution of C&AG derives its constitutional mandate and autonomy to provisions contained in Chapter V, Part V of the Constitution of India. The PAC in turn, owes its mandate to Rule 308-309 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha which emanates from the authority vested in each House of Parliament to frame rules for regulation of their business under Article 118 of the Constitution of India. The examination of results of audit of Accounts of the Union Government by PAC commences once reports of the C&AG are laid in Parliament and referred to PAC for scrutiny and report. The C&AG provides to the Committee with a 'key statement' relating to various Appropriation Accounts and Audit Reports, and also commends a memorandum of important points for consideration.

The reports of the C&AG often bring to fore, cases of significant variation from funds voted by Legislature, excess expenditure over grants, irregular, wasteful, infructuous or uneconomical expenditure. They also contain comprehensive reviews of developmental programmes and schemes. Since 1950, the PAC has, mainly based on the C&AG Reports on varied subject matters, examined and presented 1699 Reports. Many of these reports point out financial irregularities and shortcomings in executive functioning. A primary aim of the PAC since its inception has been to ensure that public finances are put to the most optimum public purpose in a cost-effective manner. The Committee has often taken up critical government programmes aimed at financially vulnerable sections of society for appraisal, such as the Agriculture Crop Insurance Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Scheme, Namami Gange and National Rural Drinking Water Programme. This approach of the PAC was aptly enunciated by Shri Mavalankar in 1950. While addressing the Committee, Shri Mavalankar had cautioned members that: 'it will not be sufficient

now for us to point out faults and holes in any scheme laid before us by the Government, but we shall have to study all the factors concerning any problem, think over as to what we would do if entrusted with the work and then suggest remedies. Unless we begin to feel that our function is to prepare ourselves for shouldering the responsibilities of Government ..... it will be difficult for our parliamentary system to function..... to the best advantage of the people’.

The C&AG participates in meetings of the PAC and supports the Committee with the examination of witnesses through technical and factual inputs on complex issues. These inputs provide perspective and understanding of matters under examination. The PAC considers the C&AG as its ‘friend, philosopher and guide’, and C&AG in turn draws strength and support from the PAC in securing full cooperation from Ministries/organizations at the time of audit. The Chairpersons of PAC have seen to it that independent and efficient functioning of the C&AG is not impeded in any way. The public expenditure and performance outcomes are, therefore, put through detailed scrutiny by the C&AG and thereafter examined threadbare by a multi-party parliamentary body, the PAC. More often than not, the deliberative but unanimous nature of findings and recommendations of the PAC, well grounded as they are, on audit findings, impel Governments to take corrective action.

The robust and highly symbiotic relationship between C&AG and PAC has helped ensure effective accountability of the Government. While C&AG is charged with auditing the accounts of the Executive, PAC is responsible for using the information provided to exercise Parliamentary oversight of Executive action. The wholesome effect of the Committee Reports force Ministries to take note of instances of misallocation of financial resources and take remedial measures. Reports of the Committee highlight instances of infructuous expenditure, failure to execute approved plans and programmes within the stipulated time leading to cost and time overruns, underspending/overspending, wrongful classification of



expenditure incurred leading to underestimation of expenditure, faulty budgetary assumptions, poor accounting system, lack of expenditure control mechanism, poor value for money, unauthorized expenditure in violation of legislative sanction etc. which impose a very high but avoidable cost on the nation. Therefore, Governments have often relied on the Committee's recommendations to bring about appropriate policy changes.

### **Impact of PAC**

Over the last hundred years since its inception, PAC has made a large number of recommendations in its reports which have led to significant changes in the working of Government Ministries/Departments. It would be worthwhile to recall on this historic occasion in the journey of PAC, a few instances that clearly demonstrate the impact of recommendations of PAC on Government policy.

The recommendations made by the very first PAC (1921-22) with regard to reporting on and regularizing Excess Expenditure later became a Constitutional provision in the form of Article 115(1)(b). Similarly, the introduction of Administrative Audit, now known as Departmental or Internal Audit, was the result of recommendation made by PAC in 1947-48. After India become a Sovereign Democratic Republic in 1950, the Committee, in 1951-52 recommended that the independence of the Election Commission be safeguarded and no Ministry of the Government should normally act as a supervising administrative authority over its affairs. This recommendation contributed to emergence of the Election Commission as a credible and independent authority. In the following year (1952-53), the Committee, while examining excesses relating to that year, recommended in their Report that as soon as excess in accounts relating to a year which had just closed came to notice, the C&AG would, in advance of its main audit report on Appropriation Accounts, report such excesses to Parliament in the prescribed manner. This new procedure followed from 1953-54 resulted in the expeditious regularization of such excesses and ensured that time-lag between

detection of excesses and regularization by Parliament was reduced to the unavoidable minimum.

There have also been several instances where taking note of Committee recommendations, Governments chose to not only introduce new processes and procedures but also effect amendments in Central laws. A few of such instances, which substantiate this contention are indicated below in brief:

- In their 180th Report (7th Lok Sabha) on the subject **“Union Excise Duties – Exemption of Goods falling under Tariff item 68”**, Committee observed that there was a major lacuna in the scheme of excise concessions to small scale sector which often led to a situation where excise duty paid by a small scale unit was more than net profit accruing to it from the excess production. The matter was pointed out in the course of evidence of official representatives by the PAC. Even before the Report of the Committee (180th Report, 7th Lok Sabha) was presented to the House, the law was amended to rectify the situation by providing for duty liability on small scale manufacturers only when production crossed a specified financial ceiling.
- The Committee vide its 104th Report, (10th Lok Sabha) on the subject **“MODVAT Scheme-Fraudulent Availment of Credits”**, examined a case wherein a manufacturer of motorcars availed of Modified Value Added Tax (MODVAT) credit in excess of duty paid on inputs. When this was pointed out in the Report, Government amended the Central law, thereby plugging a loophole that enabled wrong/fraudulent availment of MODVAT credit.
- As a follow up of the Committee’s recommendation as contained in their 25th Report, (13th Lok Sabha) on the subject **“Case of M/s. PILCOM”**, the Ministry of Finance carried

out necessary amendment in the Income Tax Act, 1961 thereby bringing within the purview of Income Tax Act various transient entities that generated substantial incomes but managed to escape payment of Income Tax.

Coming to more recent times, 16th Lok Sabha on the basis of recommendations of the PAC as made in the 103<sup>rd</sup> Report, Government chose to introduce new codes and sub-codes in the Income Tax Returns forms for entities engaged in medical education, and research, and those practicing alternate medicine. Further amendments were effected in the Income Tax Act, 1961 for ensuring a robust mechanism for verification of charitable activities to help justify exemptions extended to Trusts, Hospitals etc.,

The Audit Para Monitoring System (APMS), an online application maintained by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) owes its origin and evolution to recommendations made by the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) from the 15th Lok Sabha onwards, the latest being the 66th Report of the 16th Lok Sabha. The APMS has now evolved into a single point multi user web portal for submission and monitoring of Action Taken Notes on Non-Selected C&AG paragraphs (Financial, Compliance and Performance Audit) of Civil and other Ministries; Action Taken Reports (ATRs) on PAC paragraphs ; and Explanatory Notes on savings and excess expenditure of Rs. 100 crore and above against a grant.

Besides these reports, there have also been numerous instances where the Committee's recommendations have been aimed at general welfare of common people. These include matters relating to rehabilitation of scavengers, AIDS victims, theft of energy and cases of malnutrition. Such instances, worthy of recollection are presented in subsequent paragraphs.

In the 9th Report, (14th Lok Sabha) on the subject **“National Scheme for Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their dependents”**, Committee emphasised the need for fresh survey to be

undertaken immediately so as to ensure availability of reliable data on the number of scavengers to be rehabilitated. The Committee further recommended that a single national programme be formulated and implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment as a mission with the objective of eliminating this scourge. As a follow up, the Central Government directed State Governments to carry out surveys on an urgent basis.

The Committee, in their 19th Report (14th Lok Sabha) on the subject **“National Aids Control Programme”**, recommended that with a view to providing better care and support to persons living with HIV/AIDS, National Aids Control Organisation (NACO) should set up more Community Care Centres, on top priority basis in all highly infected areas since prevention and care are keys to limiting the spread of HIV/AIDS. The Committee also suggested that Government enlist the support of corporate bodies, NGOs, VOs, Community Based Organisations and civil society in setting up Community Care Centres. In pursuance thereof, a technical expert group was constituted and a protocol for management of Opportunistic Infections (OIs) prepared, with a view to ensuring prompt and uninterrupted availability of critical drugs for direct supply to Treatment Centres and maintain a buffer stock of drugs.

The Committee, in their 77th Report (14th Lok Sabha) on the subject **“Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme”**, recommended adherence to guidelines in regard to setting up vigilance squads, detection and follow up of cases involving theft of energy, including prosecution of offenders, periodic review of cases and severe penalties for tampering with meter seal. Committee further suggested installation of automated systems and application of information technology for recording of data on priority basis.

In the 14th Report, (16th Lok Sabha) on the subject **“Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS)”**, Committee recommended for urgent steps to operationalise all sanctioned Anganwadi

Centres (AWCs)/Mini AWCs. In pursuance thereof 13.63 lakh AWCs have already been made operational till February 2019.

### **PAC as a Development Partner**

The ultimate aim of Parliamentary scrutiny is to nudge the executive further on the path of good governance. Over the past several years, PAC has been consistently selecting flagship programmes in the socio-economic sector for evaluation of outcomes such as those in the health, education, employment and irrigation sectors. In addition, sustainable development and environmental conservation have become key concerns of the Committee.

C&AG carried out a Special Audit of the Ganga Action Plan on the suggestion of PAC and presented a Report to Parliament on 22 December, 2000, which was thereafter taken up by PAC for examination. The Report of the PAC led to local bodies given responsibility for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of assets and a well-documented O&M plan was made part of detailed project reports to be submitted by State Governments. In addition, local bodies were required to provide firm commitment for bearing the entire cost of O&M after a stipulated period of 3 to 5 years. This was a major amendment in the programme with the view to enhancing ownership and participation of local bodies in O&M of community assets. Yet another example is in the 28th Report of PAC submitted in the 15th Lok Sabha which led to revision in the guidelines for engaging NGOs for supply of mid-day meal to schools with a view to checking misuse of public funds in the guise of Public Private Partnership. Similarly, a recommendation in the Report on Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana resulted in a clause being incorporated in the schemes to make availability of encumbrance free land a conditionality in the MoU to be signed by Government of India with State Governments before grant of approval for new AIIMS. The Report on Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana was responsible for development of standalone and web based

GIS database for Rural Roads Information System. The PAC has thus played a positive and constructive role in the development of the nation. PAC members with their rich and diverse experience of ground level realities have often made valuable contributions in bringing about improvements in the design and delivery of programmes and schemes of the Governments at the centre and in States.

### **Role of PAC in ensuring Citizen's right to due process**

Selection of citizen-centric special cases that are not part of Audit Reports for examination is yet another method through which PAC has endeavoured to meet the expectations of common citizens. There have been occasions when PAC has on its own volition sought to address expectations of common citizens from Parliament to enforce 'due process' under the laws, by identifying subject matters for examination even though the topic may not have formed part of the audit report.

In 1958-59, PAC took up for consideration the Coal Mines, Labour Safety and Conservation Fund and Coal Mines, Labour Housing and General Welfare Fund, even though these topics were not included in Audit Reports. Similarly, matters regarding unauthorised import of infected hop plants; foreign participation and collaboration in a number of medical and agricultural research projects in India; tax evasion by a foreign bank; planning process and monitoring mechanism in relation to irrigation projects; time and cost overrun in the development and production of the Main Battle Tank; impact of central excise duty concessions on manmade fibres and yarn on prices were examined by the Committee. There has been an instance when "Privatization of Bailadila Iron Ore Mines", a matter of public concern was entrusted by Speaker to Public Accounts Committee (1995-96 and 1996-97) for detailed examination during the course of a debate on this subject in the Lok Sabha. In another instance, the severe hardships faced by lakhs of devotees visiting the Sabarimala shrine was selected by PAC (2003-04) for examination which led to an illuminating Report 'Pilgrimage to Sabarimala-Human Problems and Ecology'.

## **Conclusion**

In hindsight, it can be said that the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament is a multi-party deliberative body which enjoys immense prestige and stature in our parliamentary system. The high status of this Committee also derives from its non-partisan deliberations and discussions that has sought to keep public interest first. Over the years, the Committee has built up a reputation of being a relentless and uncompromising crusader of financial discipline and rectitude in public spending by Governments. Though not bound to accept recommendations of the Committee, Governments, nevertheless, have always accorded a very high priority to consideration and implementation of PAC recommendations because of the reflection of unanimity, quality, objectivity, rigour and transparent public interest in the Reports, irrespective of the composition of the Committee or the politics of the ruling dispensation. The PAC has also shown flexibility in selecting subjects not covered in Audit reports whenever public interest so demanded. Wherever it was not possible for Governments to accept such recommendations, a well reasoned response has invariably been provided. Since accountability and transparency are important hallmarks of democracy, it is through the instrumentality of a body like the PAC which through its composition reflects the will of the people in Parliament but led by the opposition in the best traditions of a democratic polity, that our Constitutionally mandated system of checks and balances, of accommodation of diverse shades of opinion, has sought to earn the faith, respect and participation of the people of India in our governance structure and in the destiny of the nation.

# **The Functions and Practices of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Jamaica. Are they Effective?**

*By Anila McCarthy  
Committee Coordinator, Houses of Parliament  
Jamaica, October 2021*

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*“The failure of any Government agency to properly account for public funds is of serious concern and every effort must be made to ensure full accountability”* (current PAC Chairman, Robinson, 2021).

According to Yamamoto (2007), there can be no democratic system of Government without transparency and accountability. He posits that the primary responsibility in this field falls squarely on the shoulders of Parliament. Through its core oversight function, Parliament holds the Government to account on behalf of the people, ensuring that Government policy and action are both efficient and commensurate with the needs of the public.

The Parliament, as the legislative branch of Government, is the body that represents the people. It is called upon to ensure that the administration of public policy reflects and meets the people’s needs. Yamamoto (2007) states that Parliament is also called upon to ensure that the agreed policy is properly implemented and delivered to target citizens. This is the role of parliamentary oversight. He defines parliamentary oversight as “the review, monitoring and supervision of government and public agencies, including the implementation of policy and legislation” (Yamamoto, 2007). Consequently, parliamentary oversight is crucial in checking excesses on the part of the Government and is conducted through the establishment of Committees which offer varying



degrees of scrutiny; namely, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee.

This article focusses on the functions and practices of the PAC of Jamaica as an effective means of parliamentary oversight over public expenditure. It highlights the challenges impacting the PAC's functions and practices as well as outlines recommendations that may improve the functions and practices of the Committee.

## **Background**

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament of Jamaica is among the most vibrant PACs in the Caribbean Region in terms of activities and leading practices. Like other PACs in the Region, the PAC of Jamaica focusses primarily on the non-partisan audit of public expenditure. A study done on PACs in small Parliaments reveals that *“the PAC is one of the most active parliamentary committees in Jamaica: it meets every week when the House is in Session and on average, has one to three inquiries in progress concurrently and averages 18 meetings per session”* (Staddon, 2014).

## **What is the PAC's Mandate ?**

The PAC was established and mandated to provide financial oversight and scrutiny of the Executive. The work of the Committee is done by overseeing the effective management of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The Committee is focussed on the control or protection of the public purse and the manner in which public funds have been used in the implementation of agreed policies.

Standing Order (SO) 69 outlines the Terms of Reference of the PAC, which include the duty to examine (i) the accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by the Legislature to meet expenditure; (ii) such other accounts as may be referred to the Committee by the House or under any law; and (iii) the report of the Auditor General on any such accounts. All Accounts and Financial Statements laid upon the Table of the House in respect of Statutory Boards, Public Corporations and Public Companies in which the Government hold majority shares

are deemed to be automatically referred to the PAC for examination and report. The PAC examines:

- reports produced by the Auditor General of Jamaica. These include Annual Reports (compliance audits); Performance Audit reports (value for money audits); and Special Audit reports;
- other reports referred by the House of Representatives; and
- Annual Reports with Audited Financial Statements of entities in which the Government holds majority shares.

### **Membership and leadership of the PAC**

The PAC is a Sessional Select Committee that consists of not less than 6 members, including the Chairperson, none of whom is to be a Government Minister or Parliamentary Secretary. By convention, the Committee is chaired by the Opposition Spokesperson on Finance. The Chairman participates in the deliberations, but the principal role being to guide the proceedings, to ensure that each Member has an equal opportunity to participate in the debates and to ensure that the discussion is focussed on the specific issues before the Committee. The convention that all key sessional Parliamentary Committees should be chaired by Opposition Members to ensure transparency was initiated by former Prime Minister Bruce Golding in 2007.

According to Professor Trevor Munroe (2020), the convention being practiced has contributed to the Opposition playing an important role in Parliament, holding the Government to account. He opines that this function is not exclusively the responsibility of the Opposition, but of the entire Parliament, including Government backbenchers. Upon appointment as PAC Chairman in December 2020, MP Julian Robinson stated that *“many of the members will be serving on the PAC for the very first time and I wish to remind you [members] ... our primary responsibility is ... to focus on the control and protection of the public purse and the manner in which public funds have been used in the implementation of agreed policies...”* (Jamaica Gleaner, Dec. 2020).



Julian Robinson, MP, Current Chairman, PAC Hearing, January 2021 (PBCJ)

### **Powers of the PAC**

The PAC scrutinizes the management and expenditure of public resources entrusted to MDAs, with particular focus on certain aspects of Public Financial Management (PFM), including whether:

- spending objectives are or are not being achieved, that is, whether these are in line with the programmes for which they were intended;
- there are clear lines of accountability;
- there are excesses on approved expenditure;
- waste and inefficient use of public money can be eliminated;
- there are other ways of accomplishing these objectives at lower costs;
- funds are being spent legally;
- the accounting and financial reporting systems are adequate; and
- there is strict adherence to the established rules and guidelines.

Pursuant to its mandate and its powers, the PAC, like all other select Committees, is empowered to compel groups and individuals to give testimony and/or produce documents. Specifically, House SO 77(3) gives Select Committees the power to send for persons, papers and records, however, in practice, evidence/submissions are always secured in response to an invitation. In effect, the PAC possesses an unrestricted right to consider issues of efficiency and economy of programme implementation. However, the PAC and all other committees of Parliament do not have the power to sanction persons or entities.



Diane McIntosh, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Security & Officials of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF)  
PAC Hearing, November 2019 (Jamaica Observer)

## **Processes and Working Practices**

### *The Role of the Supreme Audit Institution (the Office of the Auditor General)*

Under the Westminster model, the Auditor General (AG) reports to the legislature (and the public at large) on whether public sector resources are appropriately managed and accounted for by the Executive and such reports are used as the cornerstone of the work of PACs

[Stapenhurst, Jacobs, & Pelizzo, 2014]. In Jamaica, section 122 (1) and (2) of the Constitution mandates the AG to ensure that there is probity and transparency in Government. The AG has the duty to certify and report on the accounts of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, and Public Bodies. PACs need useful information to perform their oversight and other functions effectively. In Jamaica, this information is provided by the AG. The work of the PAC is closely tied to that of the AG's Department where majority of the work of the Committee consists of reviewing the AG's annual reports, as well as other special reports produced by that Department from time to time.

#### *Setting the Agenda/Initiating an Inquiry*

As indicated above, the terms of reference for setting an agenda and initiating hearings of the PAC in Jamaica are defined by the SO of the House of Representatives without the consultation with other parties.

#### *The Inquiry Process of the PAC*

The AG submits Annual Reports (Compliance Audit Report) to the Speaker of the House of Representatives before December 31st of each year. The Report is tabled in December or at the earliest possible time in January of the following year and other reports are tabled from time to time. These Reports as we are referred to the PAC.

The PAC Committee Clerk liaises with the PAC Chairman to identify the entities to be examined. Based on a preliminary assessment, the Committee will pursue its examination according to different options, including summon Accounting Officers of MDAs and other witnesses as required; and request papers/documents/information needed to assist the Committee in its deliberations. Currently, Permanent Secretaries and Chief Executive Officers of Executive Agencies who are designated Accounting Officers, appear before the PAC to answer financial questions and to respond to audit queries. Whilst it has been argued that the PAC has the authority to summon any public official, in practice, Ministers of Government do not appear before the PAC.

In consultation with the Auditor General and the Chairman, the Committee Clerk, develops a provisional Schedule of Meetings for the PAC. The provisional Schedule is circulated to all members of the Committee.

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## **Public Access**

One area of effectiveness for the PAC is public access to hearings. Former member of the PAC in Jamaica, MP Mikael Phillips, states that *“one benefit [is] that committee meetings are open to the public”* [October, 2021]. Public access to observe PAC hearings is allowed where individuals, including school-aged children and the media, sit and watch from the gallery of the Parliament’s Chamber but are not allowed to contribute to the deliberations. The proceedings are also broadcast live on public broadcasting television *via* Public Broadcasting Corporation of Jamaica (PBCJ). This allows the interested public and media to be a part of the workings of the committee and helps with the scrutiny of public officials and their management of public resources. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020, direct access to the Chamber has been restricted.

## **Opportunities gained during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Despite the limitations brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, a ground-breaking opportunity was gained for the PAC with the passage of a motion in the House on March 30, 2021. This motion allows the PAC to hold hybrid meetings that are partly virtual and partly physical, that is, some members may sit in the Chamber whilst others are allowed access and participation from remote locations, by way of available Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Thus, allowing for the work of the PAC to continue despite ongoing challenges and restrictions resulting from the pandemic.

## **Reporting Hearing Findings and Recommendations**

At the end of its deliberations, the Committee with the assistance of the AG’s Department and the Committee Clerk uses the evidence gathered to prepare and submit a report to directly the Parliament outlining its findings, conclusions and recommendations. The SO provides that the Chairman, through the Committee Clerk, prepares a draft report that is presented to the Committee for consideration and ratification. The SO also provides that alternate drafts may be submitted to the Committee for consideration by any member of the Committee. The PAC reports are tabled they are all subjected to parliamentary debate.

In assessment of the PAC's compliance, Golding states that "the PAC is mostly compliant with the principle which states that PACs need to ensure that there are robust arrangements in place to follow up their recommendations, including timelines. Such follow up may be carried out by the Supreme Audit Institution and/or the Ministry, Department or Agency concerned. Where the PAC finds that government bodies have been slow in implementing recommendations, the senior officials of these bodies are often summoned to appear before the Committee to explain themselves" (2021).

### **PAC Effectiveness**

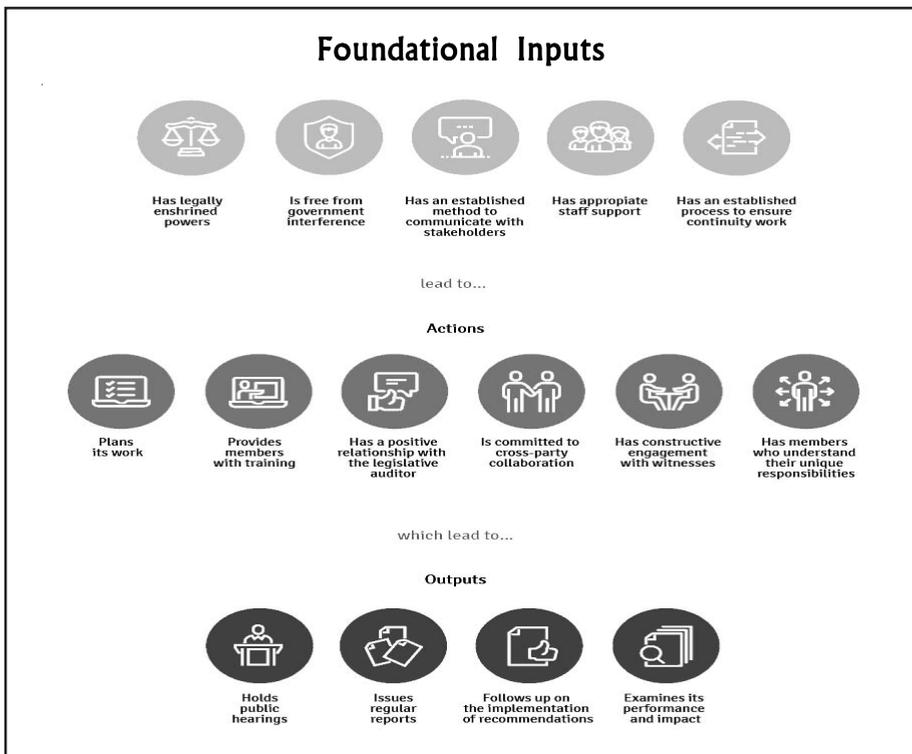
Indicators of the PAC's effectiveness can be measured by various indicators. The success (effectiveness) of the PACs is believed to depend on how a PAC's power and mandate is institutionalized. Stapenhurst, Jacobs, and Pelizzo (2005; 2006; 2014) suggest that in order to be effective PACs' should:

- (a) focus on Governments' financial activity and accountability rather than evaluating or assessing the content of the Governments' policies.
- (b) have the power to investigate all past and present Government expenses, regardless of when they were made.
- (c) have a close working relationship with the Auditors General.

The success of the PACs was also found to depend on the behaviour of its members and the functioning of the committee itself. They identified best practices such as: PAC members acting in a non-partisan fashion and seeking to have a good working relationship with members of other committees despite possible partisan differences; and striving for consensus. It was also found that effectiveness in the PACs' activity increases whenever committee members "study the documentation and prepare themselves before the PAC and...keep the transcripts of their meetings, publish their conclusions and recommendations, and seek to involve the public and the media".

## Good practices for an effective PAC

The table below summarizes good practices recommended by **the Canadian Audit and Accountability Foundation**<sup>1</sup> in one of its latest research and education document, *Accountability in Action: Good Practices for Effective Public Accounts Committees*, 2017, page 1. As the title suggests, these good practices are applicable to the PAC. The Foundation cautions that *“Not every practice will be appropriate for every jurisdiction. Many smaller countries face budget and personnel restraints on the resources available to their committee.”*



### How effective is the PAC in Jamaica?

In comparing the good practices highlighted in the table above by the Canadian Audit and Accountability Foundation and the table (Box 2) below, the conclusion must be drawn that the PAC in Jamaica has been effective in achieving its mandate.

<sup>1</sup>The Foundation may be visited online at [www.caaff-car.ca](http://www.caaff-car.ca)



<b>Leading PAC Practices in Jamaica</b>	
<b><i>Meeting basic pre-requisites for an effective committee:</i></b>	<p><i>[Outputs]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PAC hearings over the period 2018-2021 are [2018:12; 2019:13; 2020:10; 2021:16], and PAC meetings are held in public.</li> <li>• The PAC operates on a one-year planning horizon.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Constructive partisanship and planning:</i></b>	<p><i>[Actions]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PAC is “bipartisan”.</li> <li>• The PAC, through the Committee Clerk, calls Heads of Departments, not Government Ministers, to appear before the PAC.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Holding an effective hearing:</i></b>	<p><i>[Actions]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PAC reviews the Auditor General’s performance audits on MDAs and other public bodies.</li> <li>• The PAC meets in camera to discuss and plan its approach for a hearing and to prepare its Committee Report for tabling in the House of Representatives.</li> <li>• When the Auditor General’s Report is tabled, MDAs are required to respond to any queries provided by the PAC in a set amount of time. Any unresolved queries are documented.</li> <li>• The Auditor General and her support staff attend PAC meetings and support the work of the PAC members.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Bringing about corrective action Jamaica:</i></b>	<p><i>[Outputs]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAC reports are tabled in the House and are deemed adopted.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Communicating with the Parliament, the media and the public:</i></b>	<p><i>[Actions]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAC proceedings are broadcast on television in real time and YouTube and Facebook livestream by way of Public Broadcasting Corporation of Jamaica (PBC).</li> </ul>

**Box 2 (Leading PAC practices in Jamaica)**

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## **View & Thoughts of MPs on the Effectiveness of the PAC**

Mikael Phillips, MP, former [Opposition] PAC Member

*Congratulations on achieving the important milestone of 100 years as a Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament in New Delhi, India. It is indeed worthy of tribute and celebration.*

*The people and the Parliament of Jamaica have benefitted from the work of the PAC along with the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee (PAAC), not only in highlighting weaknesses in Government expenditures, but also helping in the process of continued assessment of Government operations with regular performance audits of key agencies. Public Accounts Committees have been an integral part of our democracies. We have a commitment to protect public resources and to provide better governance for the people we represent. Importantly, we need the mechanisms in place to ensure that the recommendations coming from the PAC hearings are implemented, as they are important to the improvement of good governance (October 26, 2021).*

Mark Golding, MP, former [Opposition] PAC Chairman

*It was an honour and pleasure to serve as a past Chairman of Jamaica's PAC and be a part of its critical work. I commend the Parliamentary House of New Delhi, India, on achieving the 100th year of its Public Accounts Committee!*

*The PAC plays a critical role in providing transparent oversight and promoting integrity in public affairs in Jamaica. The quality of the reports which it considers, and the extensive coverage of its work by the media, have made it into a potent weapon in the fight against graft, nepotism and other administrative malfeasance in the public sector. The prominence given to its public deliberations has led to greater levels of accountability and has therefore strengthened our democracy (October 29, 2021).*

Franklin Witter, MP, current [Government] PAC Member

*The PAC of the Jamaican Parliament has been proven to be quite effective in terms of its mandate to examine government expenditure.*

*Over the years, it has been able to highlight a number of challenges in respect of deficiencies in internal controls of government expenditure in MDAs. It also has been able to make meaningful recommendations to (the) Parliament and the Executive which has resulted in positive adjustments as it relates to the introduction of new and improved procurement guidelines. Having also the Committee chaired by an Opposition member has given rise to public confidence in its operations (October 30, 2021).*

### **Challenges Impacting the PAC in Jamaica**

Like other PACs in Caribbean region, Jamaica's PAC faces several challenges which may undermine its effectiveness:

- ✓ **Staff Complement:** There is an absence of adequate parliamentary staff (*e.g.*, Committee Clerks or Researchers) to support Parliamentary Committees, including the PAC (Parl Americas, 2012). The PAC in Jamaica is currently equipped with a single Committee Clerk and two researchers who are spread across the various Committees as additional support staff. Despite being a small Parliament, most of the Parliamentary Committees in Jamaica are in operation. The ratio between the frequency of meetings held by Committees/work load and existing parliamentary staff (Committee Clerks) often leaves the Committee Clerks overwhelmed.
- ✓ **Executive/Government Response:** There is no requirement in the Standing Orders for the Executive/MDAs to follow up to formally respond to the Committee reports/recommendations in an effort to bring about corrective action.
- ✓ **Parliamentary Committee Meeting Rooms:** Currently, Jamaica's Parliament has a single chamber for Sittings of the House (of Representatives), the Senate and all Parliamentary Committees, which means it is often difficult to schedule meetings because of the overlapping demands for using the Chamber (Golding, 2021). Furthermore, whilst there is now an opportunity to meet outside of the Chamber by utilizing ICT to hold hybrid meetings, the complement of Hansard writers is small and therefore, simultaneous meetings would be impeded.

- ✓ **Committee Access to Resources and Support:** Access to resources and support for PAC members and staff is a crucial and various deficiencies in sufficient resources, training and support have been identified across the Region. It was stated by regional PAC practitioners in 2012, that there was no formal training for any of the PACs, with some PAC members and staff taking part in no training (ParlAmericas, 2012). However, the Parliament of Jamaica in recent times has facilitated orientation sessions for new and existing parliamentarians as well as other training programmes for PAC and PAAC members.

Golding (2021) states that in relation to PACs having an adequate budget to cover their personnel and other operational costs, training and capacity building costs, as well as costs associated with hearings, publication of reports and sourcing external advice, there is no specific budget allocated to the PAC, and apparently no plans to become compliant in this regard.

## **Conclusion**

I conclude that despite operating in a small, under resourced Parliament, the PAC in Jamaica has been effective in its functions and practices of parliamentary oversight where it has been successful in holding the Government and by extensions MDAs to account in respect of how the taxpayers' money is used and highlighting waste within the machinery of Government and public agencies. Thus, bringing about improvement in the efficiency, economy and effectiveness of Government operations. The PAC has been able to perform its oversight function by using various tools through the office of the Auditor General and the rules that govern the parliamentary procedures (the House Standing Orders). These tools while different in nature include:

- the Parliament, through the PAC, requesting information from the Government; and
- the Parliament, through the PAC, being able to express its view to the Government and the public.

However, Golding (2021) remarks that the PAC has made meaningful progress towards becoming, but has not yet fully become, a mechanism which effectively holds the Government of our nation (Jamaica) accountable to its use of taxpayer dollars and transparent in its dealings. He states that “the PAC remains inadequately resourced with support staff and meeting facilities required to effectively complete its work, and therefore remains behind in addressing the large volume of reports produced by the Auditor General.”

### Recommendations

While the mandates of PAC in Jamaica are very clear, there is need to take critical steps to strengthen its operations and practices to fulfill its functions. Therefore, the following summarizes the recommendations to improve PAC operations and procedures in Jamaica:

- **Increasing PAC resources, including providing a Secretariat to support the PAC:** There is need to increase the resources provided to the PAC to include a Secretariat with a working research team that is dedicated to the work of the PAC, not only to summarize reports presented, but to be able to assist members in looking at past reports which may be helpful in examining new reports (Phillip, 2021). Former PAC Chairman Mark Golding states that the PAC remains inadequately resourced with support staff and meeting facilities required to effectively complete its work, and therefore remains behind in addressing the large volume of reports produced by the Auditor General (2021).
- **Greater Balance:** The PAC would benefit from a greater gender balance, and a more equitable balance of Government and Opposition representatives (Golding, M., 2021).
- **Greater Independence from Executive Dominance:** Greater independence from Executive dominance would be secured by empowering the chairperson (who, under the Standing Orders, is appointed by the Opposition) to determine and scheduling and to set the agenda of PAC meetings (Golding, M., 2021).

- **Establishing and Equipping Additional Committee Meeting Rooms :** Jamaica's Parliament has a single chamber for sittings of the house, the Senate and all Committees, which means it is often difficult to schedule meetings because of the overlapping demands for using the chamber. This needs to be addressed by establishing and equipping additional committee meeting rooms. The opportunity to provide additional meetings rooms was realized with the approval granted for Parliamentary Committee meetings to be held by way of ICT platforms such as Zoom meetings. It also allows for Parliamentary Committee meetings to be held simultaneously; however, additional resources in the form of the Parliament's technological infrastructure being bolstered, as well as the engagement of additional Committee Clerks and Hansard writers would be required.
- **Amendment of the House Standing Orders:** The PAC's specific mandate in the Standing Orders is not in fact what it spends its time doing. The PAC typically focuses performance audits undertaken by the Auditor General, and not on the financial accounts of public bodies. This suggests a variance from the principle that PAC members should have a common understanding and articulation of the PAC's mandate, roles and powers. The Standing Orders should be amended to reflect what the PAC actually does, as the review of performance audits is a vital element in keeping the Executive accountable and reducing administrative inefficiency, graft and other malfeasance in the public sector. In fulfilling this mandate, the PAC benefits from an effective working relationship with the Supreme Audit Institution/the Office of the Auditor General [Golding, 2021].
- **Public Engagement and Media Coverage:** Countries around the world have increasingly recognized the importance of open governance. It is recommended since the PAC is open to the media and interested public, a formal communication strategy should be devised to include electronic, print and social media. Since PAC reports can be quite complex,

the PAC should publish press releases in an understandable format, highlighting issues and recommendations that can be easily understood by the public.

Currently, the media and the interested public are able to access tabled documents, including minutes. Since detailed minutes are recorded, I recommend that once they are tabled and confirmed by the PAC they should be posted promptly on the Parliament's website for increased access by the interested public.

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Conference of Chairmen of Public Accounts Committees held at New Delhi, on 16-17th December, 1978.  
Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Chairman of Public Accounts Committee, Lok Sabha and others attending the Conference.



Conference of Chairmen of Public Accounts Committees inaugurated by the Speaker of Lok Sabha, Sardar Hukam Singh in New Delhi on April 23, 1966. The Chairman of the Conference, Shri B.R. Morarka, M.P., is seen seated to the left of the Speaker.



A meeting of the Public Accounts Committee of the Kwa Zulu Natal Province, South Africa with the Public Accounts Committee, Lok Sabha was held on 17.01.2008 at Parliament House Annex, New Delhi. Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, Chairman, Public Accounts Committee, Lok Sabha addressing the meeting.



Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Chairman Public Accounts Committee addressing the inaugural function of the Financial Committees held in the Main Committee Room of Parliament House Annexe, on 30th September, 1991 presided over by Hon'ble Speaker, Shri Shivraj V. Patil.

## Public Accounts Committee

*By Payyavula Keshav  
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee  
Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly*

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In a parliamentary democracy, the sovereignty of the people supersedes all other authority, including the Executive authority. Executive accountability to the Legislature is one of the keystones on which the edifice of a parliamentary democracy stands. It is also one of the crucial components of good governance which, in turn, ensures transparency and prudent use of available financial resources. It is imperative, therefore, to ensure that parliamentary control over public expenditure is not limited only to voting of moneys required for carrying on the administration of the country but to also ensure that the objectives underlying the policies approved by the Parliament are achieved. The Legislature grants appropriations to the Executive for Public expenditure, but mere power to grant funds will not achieve the intended purpose, unless the Legislature ensures that the moneys voted by it are spent by the Executive for the specified purpose.

Financial Committees discuss in detail the policies, programmes, and the budgetary proposals of the Government in a very comprehensive manner and provide valuable inputs into their streamlining and fine-tuning. Over the decades, they have emerged as a very viable mechanism to secure Executive accountability to the Legislature.

The Andhra Pradesh Legislature has an organized system of committees. Under the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the Council and the Assembly, the Andhra Pradesh Legislature has adopted and constituted various Committees. As everyone is aware that Committees are miniature Houses in themselves, and being smaller in size, are an effective instruments for detailed examination of the issues and subjects.

Administrative accountability in financial matters is ensured through the financial committees of the Legislature *i.e.* the Public Accounts Committee, the Committee on Public Undertakings and the Estimates Committee. These three Committees cover most of the Governmental activities and over the years the activities of these Committees have increased in scrutinizing the administrative and the executive activities.

The Committee on Public Accounts is one of the most powerful arms of the Legislature in ensuring Executive accountability. The Public Accounts Committee probes into the transactions carried out, it conducts a *post-mortem* examination of the Governmental accounts. The examination, if properly and effectively carried out, leads to general efficiency of the administration and acts as a guide for both future estimates and policies. Proper functioning of the process of Legislative control over public exchequer is directly linked to the capability of the CAG to provide high quality and timely Reports to the State Legislature and the ability of the Public Accounts Committee to examine the reports and give their recommendations effectively and speedily. The previous Committees presented Reports and made Recommendations pertaining to all Departments.

### **What are the challenges faced by PAC ?**

The PAC's power to scrutinise expenditure provides for Parliamentary oversight over Executive decisions and acts as a check on slackness, negligence and even wrongdoing on the part of the Executive. However, the lack of technical expertise hinders the PAC's examinations. Officers are sometimes able to dodge PAC summons, which has prompted suggestions that it should have the power to hand out harsher punishments. Consensus and controversy have been the contradictory faces of the PAC's functioning over the past few decades. While the PAC cannot finalise any report without consensus, the lack of consensus has frequently seen controversy over the role of the Chairman. It is felt that since each PAC operates in a specific political context and faces issues unique to the legislature, it serves, its major focus should be on the administration of policy rather than policy itself to avoid political strife.

### **Way Ahead**

The report of the All India Conference of Chairpersons of PACs of Parliament and State/UT Legislatures suggested that the PAC should be consulted on the appointment of the CAG, and that it should have powers to examine Public-Private Partnership projects. The report also proposed that services of experts should be availed on technical matters, among other suggestions.

# Various Aspects of Functioning of the Oversight Mechanism of the Legislatures

*by Punjabhai Vansh  
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,  
Gujarat Legislative Assembly*

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In the parliamentary democracy Parliament/Legislature has to carry out three major activities:

1. to frame the Laws;
2. to approve the annual financial statement of the Government; and
3. to keep an eye and exercise control over the Government Administration.

As L.D. White said “Power in democratic society requires control and the greater the power the more need for control”. To control and keep an eye on the administration, certain mechanisms are established in the parliamentary system.

The Legislatures in India resort to various methods of exercising control over the Executive which can be divided mainly into the following categories.

1. By participating in the debates on the Bills in the House;
2. By asking Questions on the floor of the House;
3. By participating in the debate on the Budget;
4. By moving various kinds of Motions for consideration of the House; and
5. By means of the various Committees of the House.

Parliamentary Committees play a crucial role in a Parliamentary democratic Government. The plenary of the Legislative bodies being too large to secure full accountability of the executive, a well defined Committee System has come into existence at the core of developed democratic politics everywhere. American Scholars go to the extent of calling their Congressional Committees as “Little Legislatures”.

The Financial Committees of the Legislatures play an important role to control and keep an eye on the Government Administration. The Estimates Committee is watchful on Government’s budgets and after examining the budget and various related publications, this Committee gives its recommendations relating to the Budget. On the other hand, the Public Undertakings Committee examines various lacuna relating to the administration of the Government Enterprises. In recent times, when the Government enterprises run in losses, the Committee on Public Undertakings is also useful for suggesting ways and means for improving the administration. Panchayati Raj is a concept relating to the rural as well as the Urban India. The Committee on Panchayati Raj examines the report of local funds. This way, the Legislature can control and keep an eye on the grass root administration of the State. The Public Accounts Committee examines all the financial Accounts and various reports laid by the Accountant General in the House.

The House normally employs various means as described above to exercise control over the Executive. However, some problems of the administration are such, which require deep and exhaustive study in detail without which it is not possible to exercise control over it or to exercise effective supervision over its flaws, mistakes or the irregularities. Members, being large in number, it is not convenient to hold detailed discussions in the House itself and hence a method of constituting the Committees of the House has been evolved to undertake a deep and detailed study with a view to keeping a close watch on the activities of the Executive, which has proved most convenient and effective in the parliamentary democracy.

In the Committees, members discuss various matters relating to the administration above party line and politics, so that at the end of the day, the Committee arrives at a neutral conclusion which later converts into recommendations of the Committee in its report.



In the financial matters of the administration, we know, the Executive cannot levy or collect any tax and cannot even spend a single paisa without the sanction of the House. The Public Accounts Committee constantly remains watchful on misappropriation, excess expenditure or savings. This way the administration becomes more accountable so far as the matters relating to the performance audit. The PAC thoroughly examines the various schemes of the Departments, gives its valuable Observations/Suggestions which are useful to the administration for their upcoming schemes or for rectifying their running schemes.

Before concluding this article, I would like to quote the following observation of an American Political Scientist K.C. Wheare about the functioning of the Parliamentary Oversight Mechanism:

*“In the Committee functioning there comes out unity out of plurality, direction out of confusion and decision out of discussion.”*

By this opportunity, I heartily wish all success to the historic occasion of the Centennial Celebrations of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament.

# **Implementation of the Recommendations of Public Accounts Committee; Adherence to Timelines and Mechanism for Strict Compliance**

*By Sunny Joseph  
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee  
Kerala Legislative Assembly*

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The importance of Parliamentary Committees in modern Parliamentary form of Government was rightly brought to the limelight by the late American President Woodrow Wilson, who said, "Congress in session is congress in exhibition, whilst congress in its committee rooms is congress at work". Not only in US Congress but in other Parliaments across the world as well, substantial part of Parliamentary work is done through Committees. Legislature Committees have, within a short span of time, become an integral and indispensable part of the parliamentary proceedings. The basic purpose of the committee system in modern democracies, is to use the delegation of responsibilities assigned to committees so that they could consider questions of detail, or of a technical nature. Committees are the instrumentalities of legislature through which the House ensures that the Executive is accountable to it.

In the Parliamentary system of responsible Government the Committee system enables the Legislature to fulfil meaningfully the role assigned to it under the Constitution.

The Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) is constituted for the examination of accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by the legislature for the expenditure of the Government, the Audit Reports prepared by the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Annual Finance

accounts of the Government and such other accounts laid before the Legislature as the PAC may think fit. This Committee has been conceived of as one of the instruments to ensure proper parliamentary control over finance.

In scrutinising the appropriation accounts and the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, it is the duty of the Committee to satisfy itself that the money shown in the Accounts as having been disbursed, were legally available for and applicable to the service or purpose to which they have been applied or charged and that every appropriation has been made in accordance with the provisions made in this behalf under the rules framed by competent authority.

The PAC examines not only from a legal and formal point of view to discover technical irregularities but also from the point of view of the economy, prudence, wisdom and propriety. The sole purpose to do this is to bring out cases of waste, loss, corruption, extravagance, inefficiency and nugatory expenses.

As a matter of well-established convention, whenever any case of proven negligence or fraud resulting in loss or extravagance comes to notice, the Committee interests itself in the action taken by the Government, disciplinary or otherwise expresses an opinion as to the adequacy of such action, with a view to seeing that the public interests are safeguarded in future and a high sense of public morality is maintained in financial matters. In order to make its function effective, the PAC needs to show necessary concern to see that its recommendations are duly and promptly implemented by Government.

G.V. Mavalankar, the first Speaker of Lok Sabha, rightly depicted the usefulness of PAC in the following words:

“The very fact of consciousness, that there is someone who will scrutinise what has been done is a great check on the slackness, negligence or absolutism of the Executive. The examination, if it is properly carried out, thus leads to general efficiency of the administration. The examination by the Committee may also be useful as a guide for both future estimates and future policies.”

The Committee finalises its report after examining the audit report. The conclusions/recommendations of the Committee are embodied in its reports which are presented to the Legislature. Since the Committee works on non-party lines, its conclusions embody the consensus reached by members.

Government is expected to take action on the recommendations of the Committee and keep it informed of the action taken or proposed to be taken by them. The Committee watches the implementation of its recommendations, since its work is a continuous process.

However, the inordinate delay in submission of the action taken statements by the Government is a stumbling block in the effective functioning of PAC. Sometimes the departments concerned show reluctance in implementing the recommendations of PAC, citing frivolous reasons. The delay in the implementation of the recommendations of PAC, in some cases, tend to save the delinquent officials from punishment or disciplinary action. Delay on the part of the relevant Department in implementing the recommendations also endangers the transparency of administrations – which is a corollary to good governance. Therefore, the legislature has to be vigilant to make sure that the Executive is accountable to people in every sense of the term and that its function is fruitful in the vibrant democratic society.

The general criticism levelled against the PAC is that its work is only post mortem. However, the Committee habitually pursues its enquiries and its decisions affect future performance and also act as a guidance to the department officials.

Within the framework of our Constitution, the Parliament and the State Legislatures may prescribe procedures and devise methods for ensuring executive accountability. Such accountability is the essence of parliamentary democracy.

The principle of this executive accountability to the legislature in parliamentary democracy can be materialised in its real form by strengthening these instruments. There should be constant examination to assess the efficacies of the methods employed by the Committee for getting its works done. The rules and framework may be amended, if

need arises, to suit to the changing needs of the system. The complexities of modern society and administration demand corresponding changes in parliamentary procedure also.

Instance of delay in the implementation part can be traced back to 1932-34 period as shown in the Book titled 'Financial Committees of the Indian Parliament' by R.N. Aggarwala, is as follows:—

“The Public Accounts Committee, on the accounts for 1933-34, however, complained about the delay which occurred in implementing the recommendations of the Committee. The Departments were asked 'to avoid such delays in futures'. It was suggested by the Committee that a special meeting of the Committee should be held some time during the Delhi session, if so desired by the members, to examine the action taken by the departments on the various recommendations and suggestions of the Committee. As late as 26th November, 1946, when the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the accounts for 1944-45 was signed, the Committee was still urging on the Departments the need for prompt action on its recommendations and desired that, the Departments should not only issue orders for such implementations, but should also see that the recommendations were actually carried out in practice.”

In this connection, it is pertinent to note a recent discussion held in the Kerala Legislative Assembly on the delay in implementing the recommendations of Legislature Committees by the Government Departments on 3.8.2021.

Summarising the discussion, Hon'ble Speaker, Kerala Legislative Assembly observed that such a complaints had been repeatedly raised by Chairmen of Legislature Committees at a meeting with them. He observed that with the inherent powers of the Legislature Committee, it could summon any official including the Chief Secretary of a State in its meeting and seek explanation for the delay or lapses. The Committee could also initiate privilege issues against the Department heads if it found an officer wilfully evading the recommendations of the Committee. He then exhorted the Chairmen of Legislature Committees to effectively

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utilise such inherent powers of the Committee for strict compliance of the Committee's recommendations. I think, it may be a new foundation on the basis of which we can proceed further.

On the occasion of the centenary celebrations of Public Accounts Committee, we must strive to strengthen the parliamentary wings of the Legislatures, *viz.* the Legislature Committees, so as to ensure that greater transparency and efficiency is achieved in all echelons of Governance, which, in turn, will hopefully make our entire society a better place to live in. For this, a suitable mechanism may be figured out during the ensuing interactions and discussions.

## वर्तमान समय में लोक लेखा समिति का कार्यकरण, चुनौतियां और भावी कार्यप्रणाली

द्वारा पी.सी. शर्मा

सभापति, लोक लेखा समिति, मध्य प्रदेश विधान सभा

संसद एवं विधान सभाओं की सभी समितियां महत्वपूर्ण होती हैं, लेकिन लोक लेखा समिति सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण वित्तीय समिति है जो कार्यपालिका के वित्तीय मामलों में अपव्यय का प्रभावी रूप से नियंत्रण करती है। यह एकमात्र ऐसी समिति है जिसके सभापति विपक्ष के वरिष्ठ सदस्य होते हैं। इस समिति का काम मुख्यतः यह देखना होता है कि विधायिका द्वारा बजट के ज़रिए जो धनराशि विभागों के लिए मंजूर की जाती है, जो सार्वजनिक धन होता है, उसका व्यय जिस उद्देश्य के लिए धनराशि दी गई है, उसी उद्देश्य के लिए विभागों द्वारा उचित रूप से किया गया है अथवा नहीं। इसकी विस्तृत जांच यह समिति करती है और इतना ही नहीं यह समिति शासन की नीतियों और कार्यक्रमों के समग्र कार्यान्वयन में होने वाली निष्फलता, अपव्यय, आधिक्य और विभागों की अन्य असावधानियों को भी सामने लाती है। यह समिति शासन के वार्षिक लेखों को भी देखती है और यही एकमात्र समिति है, जिसमें समिति की सहायता हेतु महालेखाकार भी उसकी बैठकों में मौजूद रहते हैं।

महालेखाकार द्वारा विभागों की लेखापरीक्षा के पश्चात् एक प्रतिवेदन बनता है, जिसे विधान सभा में प्रस्तुत किया जाता है। फिर लोक लेखा समिति विभागों से जानकारी प्राप्त कर उस प्रतिवेदन की जांच करती है। अपूर्ण या अप्राप्त जानकारी के आधार पर समिति विभागीय प्रमुख सचिवों को साक्ष्य के लिए भी बुलाती है। विभाग द्वारा दी गई जानकारी की जांच करने की दृष्टि से समिति आवश्यकतानुसार स्थल निरीक्षण भी करती है। साथ ही दूसरे प्रदेशों की समितियों से चर्चा करने और उनकी कार्य प्रणाली समझने की दृष्टि से समिति दूसरे प्रदेशों का अध्ययन दौरा भी करती है। विभागों से प्राप्त सारी जानकारियों की विस्तृत जांच करने के पश्चात् समिति अपना प्रतिवेदन बनाकर सदन में प्रस्तुत करती है और उसके द्वारा की-गई-सिफारिशों को शासन को भेजा जाता है। उस पर शासन द्वारा की-गई-कार्रवाई पर भी समिति अपनी बैठकों में विचार करती है। इस तरह यह विधान सभा की सभी वित्तीय समितियों में एक महत्वपूर्ण वित्तीय समिति होती है।

लोक लेखा समिति की गतिविधियों में ये प्रावधान है कि भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखापरीक्षक के प्रतिवेदनों को सभा के पटल पर रखे जाने के उपरांत लोक लेखा समिति इन प्रतिवेदनों की समीक्षा करती है। समीक्षा के तहत समिति कंडिकाओं को लिखित एवं मौखिक कंडिकाओं के रूप में वर्गीकृत करती है। जिन कंडिकाओं को लिखित की श्रेणी में वर्गीकृत किया जाता है, उन कंडिकाओं का उत्तर विभाग से प्राप्त होने के उपरांत समिति द्वारा अपनी अनुशंसाएं दी जाती हैं। जहां तक मौखिक साक्ष्य के लिए चयनित कंडिकाओं का प्रश्न है, इन कंडिकाओं पर समिति द्वारा विभाग प्रमुख का मौखिक साक्ष्य लिया जाता है तथा विभाग से प्राप्त उत्तर तथा मौखिक साक्ष्य में उपलब्ध कराए गए तथ्यों के आधार पर अनुशंसाएं दी जाती हैं। लोक लेखा समिति की परंपरा अनुसार समिति का दायित्व मात्र इतना है कि समिति अपनी अनुशंसाएं देती है, परंतु अनुशंसाओं का कार्यान्वयन विभाग द्वारा किया जाता है। समिति की अनुशंसाएं पटल पर रखे जाने के उपरांत विभाग द्वारा अनुशंसा अनुसार कार्रवाई की जाती है। देखा गया है कि समिति की अनुशंसा को विभाग द्वारा गंभीरता से नहीं लिया जाता है एवं अनुशंसा के पालन में मात्र औपचारिकता निभाने के उद्देश्य से लघु शास्त्रि स्वरूप कार्रवाई की जाती है, जो प्रकरण की गंभीरता के अनुरूप नहीं होती है। इसके साथ ही अभी तक लोक लेखा समिति द्वारा मात्र अनुशंसाएं दी जाती हैं। समिति को कार्रवाई करने का कोई अधिकार प्रदत्त नहीं है जिसके परिणामस्वरूप समिति अपने दायित्वों का निर्वहन उतने प्रभावी ढंग से नहीं कर पाती है जितने प्रभावी ढंग से उसे करना चाहिए। चूंकि लोक लेखा समिति एक संवैधानिक समिति है, समिति को दोषियों के विरुद्ध सीधे कार्रवाई करने हेतु आदेश दिए जाने पर विचार किया जाना चाहिए।

कुछ महत्वपूर्ण सुझावों एवं चुनौतियों को मैं साझा करना चाहता हूँ:—

1. लेखापरीक्षा के समय विभागों द्वारा महालेखाकार को समय पर उत्तर न देना, उनको संतुष्ट न करने के परिणामस्वरूप जांच में विलंब के कारण ही विभिन्न विभागों की लेखापरीक्षा आपत्तियां बनती हैं और समिति के समक्ष पुराने प्रकरण ही जांच हेतु आते हैं। जांच में विलंब के कारण दोषी अधिकारी एवं कर्मचारीगण सेवानिवृत्त हो जाते हैं, और वे दंडित भी नहीं किए जा सकते हैं। इसलिए तात्कालिक स्वरूप के प्रकरणों की जांच हेतु समिति को अधिकार मिलने चाहिए जिससे समिति का उद्देश्य पूरा हो।
2. विभागों को समय-सीमा के अंदर समिति को उत्तर देने के लिए बाध्य करने की दिशा में भी सोचना चाहिए। बार-बार स्मरण पत्र भेजने के बाद भी समय पर विभाग द्वारा उत्तर न देने से कंडिकाएं लंबित रहती हैं। अतः, समिति को विभागों पर कड़ी कार्रवाई करने का अधिकार होना चाहिए।
3. प्रदेश के मुख्य सचिव को इसके लिए उत्तरदायी बनाने की आवश्यकता है कि वह समय-समय पर लोक लेखा समिति की सिफारिशों पर कार्रवाई करने के संबंध में विभागीय प्रमुख सचिव को सचेत करते रहें ताकि समिति द्वारा वांछित जानकारी



समय पर समिति को भिजवा दी जाए जिससे समिति द्वारा लेखापरीक्षा संबंधी आपत्तियां निपटाने में विलंब न हो। गैर-अनुपालन की स्थिति में संबंधित विभाग के प्रमुख सचिव एवं मुख्य सचिव को उत्तरदायी माना जाना चाहिए।

4. विभागीय प्रमुख सचिव कई बार समिति के साक्ष्य से बचने के लिए खुद न आकर अपने अधीनस्थ अधिकारियों को भिजवा देते हैं, जबकि समिति द्वारा उन्हें यथासमय समिति की बैठक में आने की सूचना दे दी जाती है। कई बार वह न तो दूरभाष पर और न ही लिखित में समिति को सूचना देते हैं, जोकि समिति की अवमानना है। इसके लिए भी नीति निर्धारित होनी चाहिए और उन पर कार्रवाई का प्रावधान भी होना चाहिए।
5. कई बार समिति की सिफारिशों को विभाग समय पर क्रियान्वित नहीं करते हैं और समिति को कंडिकाओं का निराकरण करने में असुविधा होती है। इसलिए कुछ ऐसी व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए कि सदन में प्रतिवेदन प्रस्तुत होने के पश्चात् लोक लेखा समिति द्वारा सिफारिश भेज दिए जाने के बाद 6 माह की अवधि के अंदर विभाग स्वयं सरकार को समिति की सिफारिशों पर की-गई-कार्रवाई संबंधी रिपोर्ट प्रस्तुत करें, जिससे विभागों पर समुचित नियंत्रण हो सकेगा।
6. समिति की सिफारिशों पर समय पर जवाब न देने वाले संबंधित अधिकारियों पर विभाग द्वारा उनकी गोपनीय रिपोर्ट (सी.आर.) में प्रतिकूल टिप्पणी दर्ज की जानी चाहिए।
7. समिति का कार्यकाल एक वर्ष निर्धारित है, जबकि इस समिति की गंभीरता को देखते हुए समिति का कार्यकाल दो वर्ष निर्धारित होना चाहिए।
8. समिति के सभापति को मंत्री दर्जा देने का भी प्रावधान होना चाहिए।

# Need for Checks and Balances

*By K. Selvaperunthagai  
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Representativeness, Responsiveness and Accountability are the foundational pillars of a Parliamentary democracy. In a parliamentary democracy, the Parliament has broadly two functions, which are law making and oversight of the executive branch of the Government. The Parliament is the embodiment of the people's will. The original meaning of the term 'Democracy' is 'the power of rule of the people'.

The Greek historian Polybius analysed the ancient Roman mixed constitutional under three main divisions: monarchy (represented by the consul); aristocracy (the Senate); and democracy (the people). He greatly influenced later ideas about the separation of powers.

In the 2nd Century Tamil literature like *Silapathikaram* and *Manimegalai* we can find presence of advisory Committees like *Imperunkuzhu*, *Enperayam* apart from the usual Kings court. These Committees advised the King on various local issues and the King too empowered them to take decisions on local issues. It consists of people from the court and outside the court.

"Checks and balances" are the fundamentals of any progressive democracy. India is a democracy, which is progressive and follows the checks and balances system. Our forefathers, headed by Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar designed the constitution on the same lines. The Committees are an instrument of the Parliament for its own effective functioning with checks and balances.

Today, in Parliament we have four kinds of Committees. They are, Financial Committees, Department Related Standing Committees. Ad hoc/ Select Committees and Administrative Committees. The three Finance related Committees are Committee on Public Accounts, Committee on Estimates and Committee on Public Undertakings. Amongst these, Committee on Public Accounts is the one which has powers of scrutinizing the Appropriation Accounts of the Government of India.

In the United Kingdom, the Committee on Public Accounts was first established by Gladstone when he was the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1861. In India, it was first conceived in the year 1921 in the wake of Montague-Chemsford Reforms and today, we are celebrating the centenary of this Committee.

The Public Accounts Committee is charged with a critical function of the legislature-overseeing Government finances. The PAC hold Ministers accountable to the audit reports of the Comptroller and the Auditor General, inquires whether Government funds were spent for purposes for which they were allocated and also looks into the reasons for any excess expenditure by Government.

### **PAC in Tamil Nadu**

The Legislature is one of the three wings of the State and it is the duty of every democratic legislature to keep a close watch through the Committee on the administration of public expenditure. In Tamil Nadu, the Committee on Public Accounts has been in existence since 1923. The Committee examines the accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by the House for expenditure of the State Government, the annual finance accounts of the State Government and such other accounts laid before the House as the Committee may think fit.

The Committee consists of 19 members including 3 *ex-officio* members. Tamil Nadu has the uniqueness of having the Finance Minister as an *ex-officio* member along with the Chairman of the Committee on Estimates and the Chairman of the Committee on Public Undertakings (from 14 November 1979). Other members are elected by the Assembly

from among its members according to the principle of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote and in accordance with the regulations framed in this behalf by the Speaker. The term of the Office of the members is one year and a fresh election will be held before the end of the year for constituting a Committee and in case it could not be held, the existing members of the Committee continue to hold office until new members are elected. The Chairman of the Committee will be amongst the members of the Committee, preferably from those belonging to the Opposition.

Any progressive democracy has to adapt to changes as per the need. In the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Rules, following important changes were made in connection with Committee on Public Accounts:

- 1957 – Chairman of Committee on Public Accounts will be the *ex-officio* member of Committee on Estimates and Committee on Public Undertakings.
- 1960 – The term of office of a member of the Committee will be one year instead of one financial year.
- 1979 — The leaders of the opposition parties are appointed as Chairman of Committee on Public Accounts by rotation.

From the 1st Assembly to the 15th Assembly (1952-2021), the Committee has presented more than 1908 reports in the Assembly. There were many recommendations made by the Committee and to important recommendations are;

1. The Committee recommended that the departments should closely monitor the implementation of development schemes with an eye on the objectives based on which financial assistance is sanctioned by Government instead of waiting for the Audit to point out deviations in the implementation of the scheme, resulting in non-achievement of the benefits of the scheme. {[9th assembly] (1989-1991) Fifty-Third Report}.
2. The Committee observed that the Additional Sanction Ledger (ASL) is not a fool proof system; the department obtained

the ASL number and incurred expenditure without provision of funds and did not bother to send proposal for the inclusion of the amount in Final Modified Appropriation (FMA). The Committee recommended that the finance department and the other departments should ensure that the ASL Number and the inclusion of the ASL amount in FMA are linked through the ongoing computerised Integrated Financial & Human Resource Management System (IFHRMS) to avoid such instances of omission to include the ASL amount in the FMA leading to excess expenditure. {[15th Assembly] [2018-2021] One Hundred and Eighty Sixth Report}.

### **Improve, Change and Strengthen PAC:**

**“To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often” – Winston Churchill**

Does the functioning of the Committee on Public Accounts need improvement, change and strengthening? The answer is yes and the areas are:

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|------------------------------|---------------------|
| (i) Time and Transparency    | (ii) Accountability |
| (iii) Citizens Accessibility | (iv) Technology     |

#### **[i] Time and Transparency**

The PAC instructs and recommends the Executive to take corrective measures to redress the socio-economic hardships endured by the citizens on account of executive action and also avert recurrence of such instances in future. Presently, the Committee on Public Accounts is, to some extent, merely an examiner of past events, as its investigations are related to expenditure already incurred. The audit report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India upon which it relies and examines, is presented to the House much later after the actual expenditure is incurred. The result is that there are delays and procedural procrastination in the administration. To avoid this, methods should be devised so that audit reports are presented to the Legislature by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India within a period of the 6 months of the close of the financial

year and Committee on Public Accounts should examine these reports expeditiously and present its report to the Legislature either before or during the following budget session. However, in most of the cases, there is a long gap between the time when an irregularity is brought out and the time when necessary corrective measures are recommended by the PAC after due deliberations.

Pendency of briefs and action taken reports are very high though we have a strict time frame to furnish a reply from the department concerned. Through timely intervention, effective follow-up of the instructions/recommendations by the PAC would definitely expedite corrective measures by the Executive and deter such instances in future. It is high time that we should have a TAT (Turn Around Time) for any communication.

Most of the committee activities are confidential as per the rule. But it is a time that we need some transparency in the process so that the citizens can know what is happening. In a democracy, holding the Executive accountable to the Legislature and in turn to the citizens cannot be ensured without acquainting the citizens of instances where the Executive failed to deliver and corrective measures recommended by PAC to redress such failures. This can be achieved by disseminating the information available in PAC Reports by means of print as well as electronic media and also on the website to ensure transparency.

## **[ii] Citizens Accessibility**

Financial control and executive accountability are the essence of every Parliamentary democracy. It is based on the principle that there can be no taxation without the people's consent and no public expenditure without people's authority.

A taxpayer is an individual or organization or entity obligated to make payments to municipalities or government as tax. In India, everyone is a tax payer either directly or indirectly. The taxpayers' money becomes a part of the public fund, which comprise of all the money spent or invested by the Government to satisfy individual or collective needs to generate

future developments. As the taxpayer is one of the contributors to the exchequer, he is entitled to expect and receive an efficient outcome from these organs.

Many decisions which are taken by the PACs impact the common man positively but some times, it impacts them negatively too. Few citizens or organizations or industries are affected because of the fault of executive decisions and they are not heard in the current functioning.

All the functioning of the PAC are based on the CAG reports, but there are many areas which are left out by the CAG because of the vast area of Government functioning. We should give access to citizens, organizations and industries to reach out to the CAG or the PAC to flag the irregularities or the concerns and to address the areas which are not covered by the CAG.

### **[iii] Accountability**

Most of the time we find the executive or the department which enforced decisions is not held accountable for their actions, which has resulted in loss, delay or impact on the desired result. We need to find out whether the action of the executive or the department was deliberate or oversight or negligence. Based on that, we should make the Executive or the department accountable and appropriate action has to be taken. If need be, acts and rules should be enacted or passed to bring in accountability.

### **[iv] Technology**

Working remotely is the new normal and in this scenario, information empowerment becomes fundamental to a successful democracy. The advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has nurtured the swift emergence of a global Information Society that is changing the way people live, learn, work and communicate. In the present scenario, the role of technology becomes more significant in ensuring good governance and public service delivery.

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Transparency, Citizen participation, and Open Government are technological tools by which citizens can hold Governments accountable. New technologies can improve citizen participation and political process monitoring efforts, thus increasing Government accountability.

Today, the way the bills are introduced without sending it to department committees for review undermines the pillars of democracy. India is the largest democracy in the world and it is the right of every citizen to protect it. On this Centenary Celebration of the Committee on Public Accounts of Parliament, we should thank all the people who have guarded and strengthened these Parliamentary Committees. Change is the only constant thing in the world. Let us unite to implement changes to strengthen the Indian Democracy.



# Working of Public Accounts Committee of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly

*By Sudhir S. Mungantiwar  
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In a parliamentary democracy, Legislature is the supreme body empowered to pass, repeal or amend the Laws for the purpose of governance and implementation of the Government policies, Schemes and Programmes for the welfare of the people by the Executive. Legislatures legislate but it is also the responsibility of the legislature to oversee the actions of the Executive to ensure what is executed is in line with what is legislated and therefore the Executive is made accountable to the Legislature. The accountability of the Executive to the legislature is mainly ensured by the two key agencies, namely the Comptroller and Auditor General of India and Legislative oversight committee such as Public Accounts Committee.

In a Parliamentary democracy like ours, the Committee system assumes great importance. Administrative accountability to the Legislature becomes the *sine qua non* of such a Parliamentary system. The check that State Legislature exercises over the executive system comes from the basic principle that Legislative Assembly embodies the will of the people and it must therefore, be able to supervise the manner in which public policy laid down by State Legislature is carried out. However, the phenomenal proliferation of governmental activities has made the task of Legislatures very complex and diversified. By its very nature, State Legislature as a body cannot have an effective control over the Government and the whole gamut of its activities. Administrative accountability to the Legislature through Committees has been the

hallmark of our political system. The Committee on Public Accounts enjoy the place of pride in our Committee System and is one of the most important Financial Committees in Parliamentary Democratic System.

An important function of the Committee is to ascertain that money granted by Legislature has been spent by Government “within the scope of the demand.” The implications of this phrase are that (i) money recorded as spent against the grant must not be more than the amount granted, (ii) the expenditure brought to account against a particular grant must be of such a nature as to warrant its record against the grant and against no other, and (iii) the grants should be spent on purposes which are set out in the detailed demand and they cannot be spent on “any new service not contemplated in the demand.” The functions of the Committee extend “beyond the formality of expenditure to its wisdom, faithfulness and economy.” Another important function of the Committee is the discussion on points of financial discipline and principle. The detailed examination of question involving principal and system is a leading and recognized function of the Committee. The Committee is not concerned with questions of policy in the broad sense. As a rule, it expresses no opinion on points of general policy, but it is within its jurisdiction to point out whether there has been extravagance or waste in carrying out that policy.

One of the imperatives of public administration is the achievement of efficiency at all levels. The system's strength is visible in the action in implementing Government policies/programmes/schemes by achieving its objectives in a transparent manner as per the applicable laws in force for the benefit of the society without any discrimination. This can be further strengthened if the administration has its own control system to see that there is no diversion from any of the objectives of the schemes/programmes of the Government.

Impact of PAC can be assessed by way of changes effected in policy by the Government on the recommendations of the PAC which eventually proved to be beneficial for the public as well as for the Government. By assessing their impact and value added, PACs can be confident that their work is making a substantive difference in the delivery of public services. This will help the PAC to communicate that difference to the legislature, media and public.

The performance of the Government's programmes/schemes is tested on three main criteria *viz.* efficiency, effectiveness and economy. Hence, it is essential that the Government shall spend public money in an efficient, effective and economical manner. The CAG of India is entrusted with the duty to report on the overall implementation of Government schemes/programmes through performance audit based on above three criteria and framing the recommendations to be implemented by the Government on which action taken by Government is assessed by the PAC.

The foregoing review underlines the need for revitalisation of the present system. These relate to budgetary control, committee system of scrutiny, and use of technology. Evidently there is scope for a more proactive role of Parliament/State Legislatures to ensure that budgetary projections are realistic and their execution does not transgress the approved budgetary policy and ceiling. This will also reduce the scope of successive re-appropriations and supplementaries. To facilitate better control of Parliament/State Legislatures, the Demands for Grants need to be supported by expenditure plan. In view of the tendency towards excess expenditure almost routinely in the States, exchequer control in some form at the State level consideration to ensure integrity of budgetary control of legislature. Given the advancement in information technology, exchequer control in some form at the center should also be considered.

Due to pandemic situation and lock down that prevailed in the State during 2020-2021 adversely affected functioning of the Committee too, causing some unavoidable backlog in scrutinizing the CAG's Reports. But with the return of a stable situation, the Committee could take up in right earnest the examination of all the pending Reports. The Committee's renewed activism is contributing significantly towards greater transparency and accountability in the governance of the State.

## लोक लेखा समिति

द्वारा महबूब अली  
सभापति, लोक लेखा समिति, उत्तर प्रदेश विधान सभा

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संसदीय लोकतंत्र की सफलता हेतु यह अनिवार्य शर्त है कि कार्यपालिका जनाकांक्षाओं के अनुसार अपने कार्य या अधिदेश का पालन करे। इसके लिए समितियों की एक प्रणाली विकसित की गई है जिसके माध्यम से सदन, प्रशासन पर प्रभावी निगरानी रख सके। कार्यपालिका की सदन के प्रति जवाबदेही सुनिश्चित करने में लोक लेखा समिति महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती है। समिति के महत्व को उजागर करते हुए स्वतंत्र भारत के पहले अध्यक्ष, श्री जी.वी. मावलंकर ने 10 अप्रैल, 1950 को आयोजित लोक लेखा समिति की पहली बैठक के उद्घाटन भाषण में यह टिप्पणी की थी:

*"यह चेतना की संवीक्षा करने वाला कोई है, इससे कार्यपालिका की निष्क्रियता अथवा लापरवाही पर बहुत अधिक नियंत्रण रहता है। लेखों और साक्षियों की समुचित जांच किए जाने से सामान्य प्रशासन की कार्य कुशलता बढ़ती है। समिति द्वारा की गई जांच भावी प्राक्कलनों और भावी नीतियों, दोनों के लिए मार्गदर्शक के रूप में भी उपयोगी हो सकती है।"*

लोक लेखा समिति, समस्त समितियों में से सबसे अधिक महत्वपूर्ण वित्तीय समिति है जिसका गठन विधान सभा और विधान परिषद, दोनों सदनों के सदस्यों में से समेकित रूप से किया जाता है। जिस कारण यह समिति और भी अधिक महत्वपूर्ण बन जाती है। स्थापित परिपाटी के अनुसार लोक लेखा समिति ही एकमात्र ऐसी समिति है जिसमें सत्तापक्ष के सदस्यों की संख्या अधिक होते हुए भी समिति के सभापति का चयन विपक्ष के सदस्यों में से किया जाता है।

लोक लेखा समिति का कार्य मुख्यरूप से यह देखना होता है कि सरकार ने सदन द्वारा प्रदत्त धनराशि का व्यय मांग के दायरे के अन्तर्गत किया है अथवा नहीं? आवंटित धन का व्यय सही दिशा में हुआ है या उस धन का अपव्यय हुआ है। इस प्रकार, समिति घाटे, निरर्थक व्यय और वित्तीय अनियमितताओं से सम्बन्धित मामलों की जांच करते हुए अगर यह पाती है कि कहीं अपव्यय हुआ है तो समिति उसकी

विस्तृत जांच शासन की नीतियों, निष्फल व्यय, अधिक व्यय और विभागों की अन्य असावधानियों को भी उजागर करती है। भारत का नियंत्रक-महालेखापरीक्षक लोक लेखा समिति का तकनीकी सलाहकार के रूप में कार्य करता है और इसे ठीक ही समिति के "मित्र, दार्शनिक और पथ-प्रदर्शक" कहा गया है। समस्त समितियों में से लोक लेखा समिति ही एकमात्र ऐसी समिति है, जिसकी बैठकों के समय उसकी सहायता हेतु वित्त विभाग एवं प्रधान महालेखाकार भी मौजूद रहते हैं।

लोक लेखा समिति अपनी मर्जी से ऐसी विभिन्न अनियमितताओं की जांच कर सकती है, जो सार्वजनिक हो चुके हो अथवा जिसे सरकार के संज्ञान में ला दिया गया हो, भले ही उन विषयों पर कोई औपचारिक लेखा परीक्षा प्रतिवेदन प्रस्तुत नहीं किया गया हो। समिति मुख्यरूप से भारत के नियंत्रक-महालेखापरीक्षक के प्रतिवेदनों को दोनों सभाओं के पटल पर रखे जाने के पश्चात्, इन प्रतिवेदनों की समीक्षा करती है और अपनी सुविधानुसार विभागों को साक्ष्य हेतु आमंत्रित करती है तथा सम्बन्धित स्तरों के निस्तारण पर विभाग से चर्चा करती है किन्तु समय-समय पर आवश्यकता पड़ने पर समिति अपनी अनुशंसाएं भी देती है जिस पर कार्यवाही करना शासन का दायित्व होता है। लेकिन कभी-कभी कुछ विभाग उक्त अनुशंसाओं पर कार्रवाई करने में गंभीरता नहीं दिखाते हैं जो कि दुःखद है। चूंकि, समिति को सीधे कोई कार्यवाही करने का अधिकार नहीं है जिसके परिणामस्वरूप समिति अपने दायित्वों का निर्वहन उतने प्रभावी ढंग से नहीं कर पाती है जितने ढंग से उसे करना चाहिए। चूंकि लोक लेखा समिति एक संवैधानिक वित्तीय समिति है। अतः समिति को दोषियों के विरुद्ध सीधे कार्यवाही करने का अधिकार दिए जाने पर अवश्य और शीघ्र विचार किया जाना चाहिए।

लोक लेखा समिति ने विभिन्न सरकारी विभागों के कार्यकरण और उनके उद्देश्य तथा निष्पक्ष दृष्टिकोण का उचित, निर्भीक और रचनात्मक मूल्यांकन करने के मामले में अपनी एक विशेष छवि बनाई है। समिति द्वारा सरकारी व्यय पर सतर्क निगरानी रखने और समय पर प्रतिवेदन प्रस्तुत किए जाने से वित्तीय प्रशासन के मामले में सदन की स्थिति को सुदृढ़ करने और इसे ठोस बनाने के लिए पर्याप्त उपाय करने में निःसन्देह मदद मिली है। वर्ष-दर-वर्ष समिति ने अपने प्रतिवेदन में कई करोड़ रुपए के घाटे, परिहार्य और निष्फल व्यय के मामलों को उजागर किया है।

इस प्रकार, यह उल्लेख करना कोई अतिशयोक्ति नहीं होगी कि लोक लेखा समिति ने जनहित की रक्षा करने में प्रमुख भूमिका निभायी है और सदन की सबसे पुरानी वित्तीय समिति होने के कारण यह विभिन्न करों की वसूली और विभिन्न कार्यकारी अभिकरणों द्वारा किए गए व्यय के क्षेत्र में भी करदाताओं के हितों की रक्षा करने में योगदान देने में गर्व महसूस कर रही है।



Speaker, Lok Sabha, Shri Balram Jakhar, arriving for the inaugural function of the Sixth Conference of Chairmen of Central & State Public Accounts Committees, held at Parliament House Annexe, on Feb. 19, 1983.

## Committee on Public Accounts of Nagaland Legislative Assembly

*By K. Tokugha Sukhalu, IAS (Retd.)  
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee  
Nagaland Legislative Assembly*

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The democratic polity of Indian Republic is a nicely balanced mechanism of Executive, Legislature and Judiciary: Judiciary serving as equipoise of the Executive – Legislative duo. The concept of Welfare State replacing the concept of *Laissez-Faire* has widened the responsibility, obligation and responsiveness of the Legislators in Parliamentary democracy. In the scheme of things of Legislature, Executive and Judiciary trio, Legislature is the most important organ as the onus of ensuring a better and fuller life for the common masses rests with it. The representative status of the Legislators confer on them a special duty for articulating the socio-economic needs and aspirations of the masses both on the floor of the House and outside of it and for proposing measures for their all round well-being.

The above premise has a significant bearing upon the subject “Executive accountability to the Legislature in a democratic polity”. If the Country has to progress as planned, the Executive which is the implementing agency in the administrative set-up, has to account for its actions, expenditures and outputs to the Legislature, *i.e.*, the institution that represents the people who are supreme in a Parliamentary democracy. The Executive accountability to Legislature falls under three categories - Legislative, Administrative and Financial. The Financial accountability is ensured through the Financial Committees of the House. Among the different aspects of executive accountability, financial accountability is most vital. It has three overriding dimensions *viz*: (1) Scrutiny of policy, (2) Examining the merit of expenditure, and (3) Tracking the audit

comments. At the root of accountability is the executive's obligation to reveal, explain and rectify its policies, programmes and actions thereupon and the Legislature is to oversee, scrutinize and ensure that the Government's actions are in conformity with the principles of a Welfare State as visualised in the Directive Principles of the Constitution.

In effect, there is hardly any subject of human interest that does not concern a modern Legislature. The Legislature as a whole, therefore, cannot go into all the details and scrutinise them. The House has therefore, evolved the mechanism of Public Accounts Committee to ensure, on behalf of the House, that the money was legally available for the service and purpose and spent prudently and economically conforming to the authority which governs it. Though CAG's report is the main basis for PAC's scrutiny, the Committee can stretch its arms to other relevant areas also and examine it for arriving at the logical conclusion after proper analysis. The Public Accounts Committee, as one of the oldest Parliamentary Committees in India has played a significant role in helping the Legislatures to exercise effective control over public expenditure. Since its inception, The Public Accounts Committee has occupied a special status in the Legislature.

For exercising such a systematic oversight of the Executive, the Committee on Public Accounts in Nagaland was constituted on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1964, at the very inception of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly. The Committee commenced its work from 26<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> July 1965. It functions more or less in accordance with the same norms of the Public Accounts Committee in the Lok Sabha. It is guided by the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Nagaland Legislative Assembly as well as its own the Internal Working Rules. The Committee examines the finances and appropriation accounts of the Government of Nagaland as reported by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India and any other accounts laid before the Assembly as the Committee may think fit.

The Committee examines in detail the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India and also takes up spot visits and study tours. After extensive scrutiny, the Reports of the PAC are presented to the Legislature. The whole process culminates with the Action Taken



Reports. Over the years, the Committee has earned credibility with the findings of many financial irregularities, procedural lapses, executive delays and cases of lack of co-ordination between different Government Departments forcing them to initiate corrective measures and often fixing accountability for both acts of omission and commission, leading to avoidable loss to the exchequer. The PAC has also examined the various irregularities which have come into the public domain directly. With the shift from “transaction audit” to “performance audit”, the PAC, in recent times has been evaluating the performance of the Executive in implementing the various Centrally Sponsored schemes and programmes. Besides these, the Committee also takes up certain issues with the Government for remedial corrective action. The Committee has also intervened in situations of numerous pending Court proceedings relating to the various Executive agencies which are not being pursued by the Department concerned seriously. Such system and procedures hampers the effective and expeditious finalization of Reports. Despite constraints, many Government Departments have shown considerable improvement in the way the Executive implements the recommendations of the PAC. The Committee during its various sittings adopts an attitude of engaging with the Senior Officials of the Government of Nagaland, sensitizing them on the need to follow the best practices in governance and in public expenditures, ensuring the most prudent spending practices adhering to the norms of transparency and accountability.

The functioning of the Public Accounts Committee in Nagaland in recent years has been all the more challenging. An uncertain political atmosphere that prevailed in the State during 2015-2018 had adversely affected the functioning of the Committee too, causing to create some unavoidable backlog in scrutinizing the CAG’s Reports. But with the return of a stable political environment since 2018, the Committee could take up in right earnest the examination of all the pending Reports and come up with six Reports during the period of last three years. The Committee’s renewed activism is contributing significantly towards greater transparency and accountability in the governance of the State. The cooperation and support the Committee is receiving from all sections of the House and the officers of the Government are making the functioning of the Committee very effective and meaningful.

It has been an honour for me to be the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, Nagaland Legislative Assembly, for the fourth consecutive term. With the support of the Hon'ble Members, always pursuing non-partisan and objective approach towards the issues before them have made my four years tenure a successful one. It is with such enthusiasm and commitment following great work ethics and impartiality, that the Public Accounts Committee of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly has earned a reputation for working in an atmosphere of complete cordiality and common agreement in the larger interest of the State.

# **Functioning of PAC in Present Times, Challenges and Way Forward**

*By Harvinder Kalyan  
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee  
Haryana Legislative Assembly*

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**Undertaking financial scrutiny is challenging as public finance documents are often technical and contain a high volume of information. It is also a challenge for Members of Parliament/Legislative Assembly to balance the demands of financial scrutiny alongside their other roles and responsibilities in the legislature.**

## **The Public Accounts Committee (PAC)**

However complex or sophisticated the Committee system is, there are five basic questions that the Committee seeks to answer in reviewing government accounts and performance:

- [1] How does the government spend the money?
- [2] On what does the government spend money?
- [3] How do we know the money was spent as Parliament intended?
- [4] How well have resources been applied to achieve desired results?
- [5] In achieving results, whether due consideration been given to efficiency and economy?

## **The work of PAC**

The process of financial scrutiny is based on collecting evidence on the appropriateness of government plans cum actions, and communicating

conclusions and any recommendations for improvement to Parliament/ Legislative Assembly and the public. Based on this work the Committee usually produces a report containing its conclusions on the issues examined. The objective for post-expenditure scrutiny is to recommend changes and improvements that will prevent past problems recurring in future.

### **Characteristics of an Effective PAC**

While PACs may differ in their structure, there are a number of shared characteristics contributing to effectiveness and impact. These typically blend formal powers and informal ways of working and thereby, effective financial oversight committees:

- focus on the management of public finances and not policies, endeavouring to gain consensus on behalf of the taxpayer and citizen rather than on purely party-political considerations;
- demand relevant documents for the inquiry, or rely on independent audit of such documents mainly by the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI);
- report directly to the Legislature; and
- make recommendations to which Government must formally and publicly respond.

### **The Effective PAC Approach**

The PAC works effectively when it:

- is appropriately sized, involving members from across Legislative Assembly/parliamentary parties reflecting the make-up of the legislature or includes non-members of the House with acknowledged relevant expertise;
- works with a non-partisan culture focusing on financial management improvement to benefit citizens and taxpayers;
- preferably holds meetings open to the public and the media, with all documentation published soon after the meeting;
- publishes reports and recommendations which are easy for the public and the general readers to understand and which require a written response from the Government;

- maintains active and constructive relationships with the SAI;
- has access to appropriate support from parliamentary/Legislative Assembly staff;
- engages in a balanced manner with the media to increase public awareness of PAC's role and work;
- operates, often in conjunction with the SAI, effective systems to follow-up recommendations and report regularly on the extent to which these recommendations have been implemented; and
- develops and publishes its own plans and reports regularly to the Parliament/Legislative Assembly on its' activities and key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## **Scrutiny Objectives**

### **Financial Performance:**

Parliaments/Legislative Assemblies expect governments to report back to them on how they spent the money allocated to them when the expenditure plan was approved. This is usually in the form of annual accounts. Timetables for the production of financial reports will usually be set out in law or regulations.

PACs scrutinise accounts in order to check a range of risks to taxpayers' money including:

- the organisation spending more than expected;
- the organisation becoming less financially efficient; and
- examples of waste, fraud or contentious payments.

Serious problems with the legality and compliance of spending will usually be highlighted in the SAT's Report on the accounts. Given the volume audited by SAI, it is important that PAC prioritise their efforts focusing on the major problems emerging from the audit. Minor issues should be handled directly between the SAI and the relevant Ministry/Department.

## **Supporting the PAC**

The PAC may be able to draw on a range of resources to support Committee's work.

### **Parliamentary/Legislative Assembly staff:**

PACs are more effective if they are resourced with parliamentary/Legislative Assembly support staff saving members time and allowing them to focus on the major issues that require discussion and action. Potential roles are:

- providing advice on procedure to the Committee chair and members;
- arranging meetings, managing correspondence and helping the smooth running of committee business; and
- providing expertise and necessary research, preparing briefing in advance of meetings and drafting reports and recommendations.

Resources can be limited and the Committee should be able to draw on other resources to supplement those available with parliamentary/assembly staff and the SAI. The Accountant General is, in effect, the principal adviser to the Committee. The PAC may also call on other relevant experts as witnesses on specific hearings. The Accountant General should attend all Committee hearings as the representative of the Executive.

### **The Supreme Audit Institution (SAI):**

#### **The SAI audits government accounts and performance on behalf of the Parliament/Legislative Assembly.**

The SAI is the national body responsible for scrutinising public expenditure and providing an independent professional opinion on how the government has used public resources. This is the body referred to in the UN General Assembly Resolution A/66/209 as 'Promoting the efficiency, accountability, effectiveness and transparency of public administration by strengthening Supreme Audit Institutions'.

It provides most (if not all) of the reports that the PAC examines in the course of its work. The SAI may be able to provide additional briefing, advice and outputs to PAC members and staff when requested, depending on the skills and other resources available. There are two types of key support—

- [a] performance audit (value for money studies); and
- [b] financial & compliance audit.

## **The focus of PAC Accountability Meetings (hearings)**

### **Performance Audit:**

A PAC can choose to hold meetings or wider inquiries in response to a SAI report. A single meeting will tend to focus on questioning senior officials from the organisation featured in the report; a broader inquiry may also involve the finance ministry, other ministries & agencies and experts from outside the Government.

In preparing for a PAC hearing with an accountable organisation, committee staff should:

- undertake analysis of the SAI report and identify the main findings. Key issues and data are usually, highlighted in the summary section of the report. Chapter and paragraph headings may also point up the key issues;
- obtain clarification and further briefing on complex issues from the SAI, if required;
- summarise the key facts from the report into a briefing for committee members;
- prepare suggested questions for members to use during the meeting. Typical areas of questioning will include:
  - reasons why performance fell short of expectations;
  - what has been the impact of failure on service delivery and the public;
  - whether expectations, targets and plans were realistic;

- what changes have been put in place to correct failures and prevent any recurrences; and
- what wider lessons the organisation might apply to similar programmes and activities?

### **Financial and Compliance Audit:**

Where the audit work reveals serious concerns, the SAI will attach a report to the accounts detailing the issues. This report can form the basis of a hearing where the PAC will question the officials responsible about the problems that occurred.

Typical questions to be considered when preparing a brief may include:

- what caused the problem;
- when did management become aware of the problem and how was it identified;
- what management have done to prevent or contain the problem;
- what impact the problem had on the overall result; and
- how will the recurrence of the problem be prevented in future?

### **Making an Impact**

The aim is to encourage improvements in the way public resources are managed. A hearing's report should be publicly available and contain recommendations. This report should go to Government, directly or after a debate in the Parliamentary/Legislative Assembly Chamber. The Government should issue a formal reply indicating which recommendations it accepts and how it plans to implement them.

The PAC should ensure that there is a monitoring system in place to track these recommendations. Parliament may put in place such a system, or the SAI may follow-up the recommendations — bringing to Parliament's attention those cases where an entity has failed to act, or act too slowly.



## PAC Planning and Procedures

The PAC is a committee operating on behalf of the Parliament/ Legislative Assembly, even when they are not in session. The PAC is formally independent of Government. The Parliament issue Committee Standing orders to regulate all committee proceedings. It is important that the PAC's Standing Orders clearly delineate the powers and authority of the Committee and the Chair in relation to:

- terms of reference including mandate, make up and quorum, reporting, publication of reports, follow-up of recommendations and accountability;
- planning and monitoring the committee's programme during the parliamentary year;
- the calling and conduct of meetings, including the legitimate subject matter, power to call witnesses and require government response, and the openness of committee hearings; and
- Support available to the committee, including parliamentary/ Legislative Assembly staff and SAI.

Parliament/ Legislative Assembly should delegate authority to the PAC to act on its' behalf within committee mandate, ensuring formal accountability to Parliament *via* timely reports and an annual parliamentary debate on the floor of the House on the PAC's work during the year. Unfortunately, the Reports of the Committees were not discussed in the House of Haryana Legislative Assembly earlier. Now a provision is made in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Haryana Vidhan Sabha that the Speaker may, after considering the state of Business, allot such time as may be compatible in the public interest for the discussion on the report of the Committees. Individual reports can be:

- debated on the floor of the House before being sent for Government response; or
- be sent directly to Government.

The Government should be required to respond formally to PAC recommendations within a given period (say two months) and the same may be made public. It is valuable for the Government to co-ordinate responses to all the reports of PAC through a pre-determined channel, usually the senior official in the Ministry of Finance, *viz.* Finance Secretary Level.

A constructive PAC focusing on financial management rather than policy should provide the Government with a level of assurance that policies are being implemented within the law, within parliamentary intentions and with due regard to effective, efficient and economical resource use.

## **Committee System of Meghalaya Legislative Assembly**

*By Charles Pyngrope  
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee  
Meghalaya Legislative Assembly*

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Article 164 (2) of the Constitution of India provides that "The Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly of the State". This is the corner stone of our Constitution. This is put in practice by the Rules of Procedure of the House framed under Article 208 of the Constitution of India. The Rules of the House are as sanctimonious as the very provisions of the Constitution of India. The Constitution of India does not deal with the Committee system, which is the very soul of the parliamentary democracy, but the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the House do.

The Legislature is the embodiment of the people's will. Its primary role is deliberation, discussion and recommendation, which are the hallmarks of any democratic institution. Its Committees are an instrument for its own effective functioning. They also function on bipartisan basis, generate reports and recommendations beyond party considerations and ideologies. In our Legislative Assembly, we have a very vibrant and powerful Committee system.

Of all the Committees, the Public Accounts Committee is one of the most important financial Committee in a Legislature. The mandate of the Public Accounts Committee has been laid down in Rule 24 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Meghalaya Legislative Assembly. Having granted the Executive the funds, the Legislature is then entitled to hold the Executive to account for the proper expenditure.

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Therefore, it is essential that the Committees have to be powerful and call for relevant documents and summon officials for questioning from time to time, inspect implementation of the various schemes and projects. Committees have to ensure that its Reports and recommendations are implemented and departments submit Action Taken Report on time. Non-compliance of the recommendations of the Committee should be taken as a privilege issue and referred to the Privileges Committee.

Committees should meet frequently so that issues of public importance are dealt with required focus and urgency. Chairmen of the Committees need to chalk out monthly time tables for the Committee work and make the Committee system more successful.

On this historic occasion of Celebration of hundred years of existence of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament of India, I would like to convey my best wishes and successful celebration of the occasion.

## Challenges of Public Accounts Committee

*By Vanlalhlana  
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee  
Mizoram Legislative Assembly*

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It is a matter of great pride for me to pen a few lines by way of an article for the Souvenir being brought out to mark the historic celebration of the Centenary of Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Parliament of India. Over the past hundred years of its illustrious existence, the PAC has acted as a watchdog of the public purse by examining the budgetary appropriations and accounts of the Government and Reports of Comptroller and Auditor General (under Article 151) on the execution of the projects and programmes by the various ministries; and thus rendered a remarkable contribution to the nation.

As we all aware, the PAC's main function includes an examination of the legality of funds available, the competency of its sanctioning by appropriate authority and the extent to which existing procedures are followed. However, this practice has, time and again, invited criticism as the Committee does not look into the policy aspect; which often led to it being seen as a recommending agency rather than, "The Mother of all Legislative Committees". In this regard, I would like to illustrate a short topic that I have assigned myself to, *i.e.* "Challenges of Public Accounts Committee (With reference to Mizoram Legislative Assembly)", which indeed would be a tall task to anyone.

While the Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts was first set up in the wake of the Montague-Chelmsford reforms (1921); Mizoram, the then Lushai Hills was yet to attain the status of District Council under united Assam. However, the Public Accounts Committee started to function since 1975 *i.e.* three years after attaining the union Territory

status and has been in operation since then. Since its inception, the Public Accounts Committee of Mizoram Legislative Assembly has had fifteen Chairpersons.

While the Committee had been working tirelessly to establish financial accountability of the government through these years, there still exist issues and challenges which need to be addressed:

1. Though the Committee continues to unfold irregularities in public expenditure, there seems to be a limit on how corrective measures are to be enforced. A definite, if not unambiguous direction, needs to be put into effect for this end.
2. Recommendations made by the Committee are often perceived only as advisory in nature and are not binding on the Ministry of the day. This seems to cripple the dynamic and vigor of the Committee to a great extent.
3. As many objections appearing in the Audit report relate to the questions of policy matters, the extent to which the Committee can intervene/refrain itself may be established.
4. Mizoram being a close-knit, NGO-abounded society; what could have been a proliferant collaboration with them is being ruled out while their inclusion would no doubt, in many cases lead to the alleviation of the PAC in its functioning.
5. The conclusion of a report through a Statement laid in the House calls for a more effective termination as some topics could still be left unsettled. This practice, if once taken for granted, could lead to complacency and undermine the Committee.

The efficacy of the public purse vigilante can thus be questioned not only in Mizoram; but also in other States and even in the Parliament. Hence criticisms have been observed in many occasions which leaves public opinion against the Government. The mentioned concerns, if addressed, may alleviate the sanctity of the Public Accounts Committee with the change of time.

The PAC continues to work on the account details of a ministry, interrogates its representatives and submit a report on the basis of the irregularities observed. Such reports are thought to be unbiased and recommendations made through them are followed by submission of action taken notes by the Government. Hence, the independent functioning of PAC continues to ensure one of the most crucial exercise in a democratic set up and remains a vital entity that helps combat corruption and promote good governance.

## **A Radical Transformation is needed to Revamp Committees**

*By Ninong Ering  
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Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly*

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Since the occasion is to celebrate hundred years of Public Accounts Committee of Parliament of India, I think, it is befitting that I start this article sharing my overviews, both as a former Member, Public Accounts Committee, Lok Sabha and current Chairman, Public Accounts Committee of Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly.

The Indian Constitution ratified the parliamentary form of government at the Centre and in the States as well on British model. As a consequence, three financial committees *i.e.* (1) Public Accounts, (2) Estimates, and (3) Public Undertakings have been set up in the Parliament and in the State Legislatures. These Committees play a significant role in the matter of parliamentary control over finances.

The Public Accounts and Estimates Committees had its origin in Great Britain, but not a true replica of the procedure obtaining in the House of Commons of the United Kingdom. In the matter of broad principles, there is a similarity between the two systems. But there is also wide range of differences between the two in respect of details and actual working in India.

The members of PAC are elected by the parliament and State legislatures every year from amongst its members according to the principle of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote so that all parties may find due representation on it. The Chairman of the committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the members



of these committees. But in case of Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly, term of the Public Accounts committee is thirty months – a rare phenomenon for other State legislatures. This has been done to ensure continuity. And more often than not, an opposition member is appointed as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee by the Speaker.

The function of PAC is not only confined to keep vigil on the spending and performance of the Government, but it has to bring to light inefficiencies, wasteful expenditure and carelessness in the implementation of policies and programmes approved by the Government. PAC is to make recommendations to streamline the administration for efficient and speedy implementation of programmes in a judicious manner too.

Sadly, PAC carry out only a postmortem examination of public accounts, it cannot conduct sufficient checks over misappropriation and various irregularities done by the executive. Public Accounts Committee an instrument with authority yet, has no power to hand out punishment to the Executive for wrong doing. As a consequence, time and again, the Departmental heads pay less attention to the PAC summons and suggestions as well. And before the matter spins out of hand, this needs to be addressed. As such, a Committee has to be set up and new rules are to be framed so that the executives have fear of committing irregularities in implementation of policies and programmes approved by the Government.

On the other hand, Committees are the keys to enhancing governance. There were days when the voices of the Committees were loudly heard in Government corridors. These days, the legislature Committees in the states are in dying stages and as such, their glory is in steady decline. In some States for want of experts, Committees rarely meet. While in some states, fearing flak at the hands of Budget Committees, they suspend the Rules thereof, year by year, thereby attenuating accountability. Absence of a vibrant Committee structure adversely affects the accountability of Governments. Now, the time has come for a radical transformation to revamp Committees.

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In my view, a minimum Committee system must be part of the Constitution of India so that Committees are, at least perfunctorily operable. And all Committees must be headed by only members of the Opposition and in absence of Opposition, ruling party members may head the Committees. And the Chairman of the Committees is to be accorded appropriate status so that they function as shadow cabinet.

A Committee's report may be adopted by majority or may be adopted by a composition of all members' views including the Chairman in case majority eludes. Such an arrangement would ease the Committees from the pressure of politics of majority. And in both cases, the reports of the Committees should be mandatorily discussed in the House and resolution passed over the points which the Committees examined for action to be taken by the Government.

In my State – Arunachal Pradesh, from the very inception, along with other Standing Committees, these financial Committees have been doing remarkable work and contributing a very healthy influence on financial discipline in public expenditure and has been a turning point in our democratic system. The effective financial control rendered by these Committees has led to a rapid development process planned for the benefit of the people.

## लोक लेखा समिति की चुनौतियां

द्वारा अजय चंद्राकर  
सभापति, लोक लेखा समिति, छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा

राष्ट्र की वित्त व्यवस्था पर संसद का नियंत्रण, वस्तुतः, विधायिका के प्रति कार्यपालिका की जवाबदेही, जो किसी भी लोकतांत्रिक राज व्यवस्था का एक बुनियादी घटक है, को सुनिश्चित करने में प्रमुख भूमिका निभाता है। संसदीय परंपरा के जनक ब्रिटिश संसद को भी सार्वजनिक वित्त पर नियंत्रण का अधिकार प्राप्त करने में कई शताब्दी लग गए। ब्रिटिश संसद का इतिहास 1215 ईसवी में "मैग्नाकार्टा" से आरंभ होता है तथा अप्रैल, 1861 में जाकर प्रथम बार लोक लेखा समिति का गठन हुआ। किन्तु, यह भी प्रभावी नहीं हो सका। तत्पश्चात् एक पूर्णकालिक विशेषज्ञ — नियंत्रक एवं महालेखापरीक्षक तथा पेशेवर लेखापरीक्षकों के स्टाफ को समिति की सेवा में नियुक्त किया गया जिसके बाद समिति प्रभावी हो सकी। भारत में लोक लेखा समिति का गठन मांटैग्यू — चेम्स फोर्ड सुधारों के परिणामस्वरूप प्रादुर्भूत 1919 के भारत सरकार अधिनियम के उपबंधों के अनुरूप 1921 में किया गया। किन्तु, 26 जनवरी, 1950 से भारत के संविधान के प्रभावी होने के पश्चात् ही समिति को न्यायसंगत स्थान मिल सका और उसे एक पूर्ण संसदीय समिति बनाकर लोक सभा अध्यक्ष के नियंत्रण में रखा गया तथा समिति के ही एक सदस्य को सभापति निर्वाचित किए जाने का प्रावधान किया गया। लोक सभा में वर्ष 1967 में एक कन्वेंशन में प्रतिपक्ष के सदस्य को समिति का सभापति चुना जाना तय हुआ और तब से प्रतिपक्ष के सदस्य को समिति का सभापति नियुक्त करने की स्वस्थ परंपरा आज तक जारी है। समिति को लेखापरीक्षा प्रतिवेदनों के गहन परीक्षण की शैली एवं गैर-दलीय भाव से कार्य करने के कारण अत्यधिक प्रतिष्ठा और प्राधिकार प्राप्त है। समिति के कुछ प्रतिवेदनों से सरकार की नीतियों में भी बड़े-बड़े परिवर्तनों का मार्ग प्रशस्त हुआ है।

संविधान के अनुच्छेद 113(2) एवं 203(2) के अनुसार व्यय के अनुमानों को मांगों एवं अनुदानों के रूप में संसद/राज्य विधान मण्डलों में प्रस्तुत किया जाता है। भारतीय संविधान के अंतर्गत, विधायिका द्वारा पारित कानून के प्राधिकार के बिना शासन द्वारा सचिव निधि से न तो कोई राशि निकाली जा सकती है और न ही खर्च की जा सकती है। संविधान के अनुच्छेद 149 से 151 के द्वारा नियंत्रक एवं महालेखापरीक्षक केन्द्र एवं राज्यों के लेखा का परीक्षण कर संसद/विधायिका में प्रतिवर्ष प्रतिवेदन प्रस्तुत करता है। लोक लेखा समिति मुख्यतः विनियोग लेखाओं

तथा उन पर नियंत्रक और महालेखापरीक्षक की लेखापरीक्षा रिपोर्ट के आधार पर परीक्षण करती है। यह समिति प्रतिवेदनों के आधार पर न केवल व्यय लेखों का परीक्षण करती है, वरन् इस बात की भी जांच करती है कि शासन, विभिन्न कल्याणकारी योजनाओं से संबंधित वित्तीय दायित्वों का निर्वहन कर रहा है या नहीं तथा योजनाओं का समुचित ढंग से क्रियान्वयन कुशलता एवं मितव्ययिता के साथ हो रहा है या नहीं।

छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा की लोक लेखा समिति प्रक्रिया तथा कार्य संचालन संबंधी नियम 222 के अंतर्गत कार्य करती है। छत्तीसगढ़ की पांचवीं विधानसभा में अब तक कुल 19 बैठकें आयोजित कर विभागों की मौखिक कंडिकाओं पर साक्ष्य लिया गया है तथा प्रतिवेदन सभा में प्रस्तुत किया गया है। छत्तीसगढ़ विधानसभा की लोक लेखा समिति ने कोरोना महामारी के कारण उत्पन्न विषम परिस्थितियों में भी अपने दायित्वों का निर्वहन कुशलतापूर्वक किया और कोविड प्रोटोकाल का पालन करते हुए बैठकें कीं। यह मेरा सौभाग्य है कि मुझे वर्ष 2020-2021, 2021-2022 एवं 2022-2023 के लिए लगातार लोक लेखा समिति का निरंतर सभापति नियुक्त किया गया है। माननीय सदस्यों के उत्साह, गैर-पक्षपातपूर्ण और निष्पक्ष दृष्टिकोण के कारण ही लोक लेखा समिति प्रभावी ढंग से कार्य करती रही है। समिति की बैठकों में कंडिकाओं के परीक्षण हेतु छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य के महालेखाकार, उनके सहयोगियों तथा शासन के वित्त सचिव का भी महत्वपूर्ण योगदान रहा है और यही कारण है कि छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य के गठन के पश्चात् से जुलाई, 2021 तक कुल 375 प्रतिवेदन सभा में प्रस्तुत किए जा चुके हैं।

लोक लेखा समिति की भूमिका की कई बार संवीक्षा की गई है। भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखापरीक्षक द्वारा दी गई जानकारी को आधार बनाकर जांच करने के कारण कई बार इसकी भूमिका को छिद्रान्वेषी प्रकृति का समझा जाता है। यह भी कहा जाता है कि चूंकि सरकारी लेखा प्रस्तुत होने और नियंत्रक एवं महालेखापरीक्षक के रिपोर्ट प्रस्तुत होने के बाद समिति कार्य करती है इसलिए इसका अर्थ हुआ कि समिति अनियमितता होने के बाद परीक्षण करती है और शासन के व्यय पर रोक या प्रतिबंध लगाने का कोई अधिकार समिति को नहीं होता। मोटे तौर पर समिति को शासन के नीतिगत विषयों में हस्तक्षेप करने का कोई अधिकार नहीं होता है और न ही दिन प्रतिदिन प्रशासन पर हस्तक्षेप करने का ही कोई अधिकार होता है।

ऑडिट पैराओं की जांच के उपरांत समिति की अनुशंसा मात्र सलाहकारी होती है और शासन के लिए इन्हें मानने की कोई बाध्यता नहीं होती है। समिति के समक्ष काम का बहुत अधिक बोझ होता है जबकि इसके पास समय साधन और स्टाफ की कमी होती है। ऑडिट पैराओं का परीक्षण एक श्रम-साध्य एवं विलम्बकारी एवं पेचिदा कार्य है। समिति के पास विषय विशेषज्ञों एवं तकनीकी ज्ञान की कमी भी इसके कार्यों में बाधाएं हैं। इसी दिशा में वर्ष 2015 में आयोजित संसद एवं विधान मण्डलों में लोक लेखा समिति के सभापतियों के अखिल भारतीय सम्मेलन में प्रस्तावित एक रिपोर्ट के आधार पर यह भी मत व्यक्त किया जा रहा है कि नियंत्रक एवं महालेखापरीक्षक को संसद के प्रति उत्तरदायी बनाया जाए।

सामान्यतः यह भी देखा गया है कि लोक लेखा समिति के बहुत से प्रतिवेदन पर उनके द्वारा की गई अनुशंसाओं पर शासन द्वारा अत्यंत विलंब से अथवा कोई कार्रवाई ही नहीं की जाती है। लोक लेखा समितियों द्वारा उठाए गए राष्ट्रीय महत्व के मुद्दों पर सार्वजनिक बहस कम होती है। ऐसे महत्वपूर्ण मामले तभी प्रकाश में आते हैं, जब समाचार पत्रों में उसका प्रकाशन होता है अन्यथा कई अच्छी सिफारिशें फाइलों में बंद पड़ी रह जाती हैं, क्योंकि वे जनता के संज्ञान में नहीं आ पाती हैं। यह भी देखा गया है कि लोक लेखा समिति के प्रतिवेदनों पर शायद ही कभी विधायिका में चर्चा होती है। अतः, मैं यह सुझाव देना चाहूंगा कि प्रत्येक सत्र में लोक लेखा समिति के प्रतिवेदनों और उन पर शासन द्वारा की गई कार्रवाइयों पर चर्चा होनी चाहिए।

लोक लेखा समिति ऑडिट पैराओं की जांच हेतु नियंत्रक एक महालेखापरीक्षक द्वारा उपलब्ध कराई गई जानकारी एवं दस्तावेजों तथा शासन द्वारा प्रस्तुत जानकारी एवं दस्तावेजों पर पूर्णतः निर्भर होती है। समिति के समक्ष बाहरी स्रोतों, अशासकीय स्रोतों से अथवा अन्य किसी भी माध्यम से प्राप्त जानकारी तथ्यों एवं दस्तावेजों का सर्वथा अभाव होता है, जिससे कई बार प्रकरण से संबंधित सभी राज्य उजागर नहीं हो पाते हैं। छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा की समितियों के स्थल निरीक्षण के समय स्थानीय निवासियों द्वारा उपस्थित होकर कई तथ्यों से अवगत कराया जाता है, जिसे समिति विचार में भी लेती है। हालांकि यह भी हो सकता है कि बाहरी स्रोतों से प्राप्त जानकारी कितनी विश्वसनीय होगी किन्तु यह भी सच है कि कई बार बाहरी स्रोतों से प्राप्त तथ्य अत्यंत लाभकारी एवं उपयोगी हो सकते हैं। अतः विभिन्न अशासकीय स्रोतों का उपयोग करने हेतु एक रूपरेखा बनाना उचित होगा।

अंत में मैं इस बात पर जोर देना चाहता हूँ कि संसद एवं विभिन्न राज्यों के लोक लेखा समितियों के साथ अधिक से अधिक चर्चा करने तथा यथासंभव दूसरे देशों से भी संपर्क कर अच्छी तकनीकों एवं प्रक्रियाओं को अपनाने का प्रयास किया जाना चाहिए। इस प्रकार से समितियों के कार्य प्रणालियों पर चर्चाओं के आदान-प्रदान से अलग-अलग तरह की नई एवं प्रभावी कार्य प्रणाली विकसित हो सकेगी, जिसके अच्छे परिणाम आ सकेंगे। लोक लेखा समिति को अधिक प्रभावी बनाने के लिए निश्चय ही हमें नए विचारों को अंगीकार करना होगा, ताकि समिति अपने उद्देश्यों को प्राप्त कर सके।

## पीएसी एक विकास भागीदार के रूप में प्रणालियों को मजबूत करने और बढ़ावा देने पर ध्यान केंद्रित कर रहा है

द्वारा नीलकंठ सिंह मुंडा  
सभापति, लोक लेखा समिति, झारखंड विधान सभा

**पी. ए. सी. एक विकास भागीदार के रूप में प्रणालियों को मजबूत करने और बढ़ावा देने पर ध्यान केंद्रित कर रहा है—**

विकास शब्द से स्पष्ट होता है — बेहतर बनाने की प्रक्रिया। लोक लेखा समिति इस कार्य में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका अदा कर रही है। समिति के गठन का उद्देश्य यह सुनिश्चित करना होता है कि क्या धन प्राधिकृत रूप से व्यय किया गया है और उसी प्रयोजन के लिए व्यय किया गया है जिसके लिए वह प्रदान किया गया है। भारत/राज्य सरकार द्वारा विभिन्न मदों पर किया गया व्यय प्रायः देश/राज्य की जनकल्याणकारी योजनाओं से या फिर देश/राज्य की सुरक्षा से जुड़ा होता है। सभी व्ययों से संबंधित विपत्रों को लेखाओं के रूप में सही ढंग से रखना आम तौर पर प्रशासनिक अधिकारियों का काम होता है। लेखाओं से ही प्राप्तियों, आय और व्यय के उद्देश्यों का पता चलता है। सरकारें इन व्ययों की जांच एजेंसी के माध्यम से करवाती है। जिसका प्रावधान संविधान के अध्याय-5 के अनुच्छेद 148 में नियंत्रक-महालेखापरीक्षक के रूप में है। नियंत्रक-महालेखापरीक्षक द्वारा लेखापरीक्षा-प्रतिवेदन को संघ के लेखाओं के संदर्भ में राष्ट्रपति को तथा राज्य के लेखाओं के संदर्भ में राज्यपाल को प्रस्तुत किया जाता है। जो उसे क्रमशः संसद तथा विधानमंडल के समक्ष वित्त विभाग के माध्यम से सदन/सभा पटल पर उपस्थापित करते हैं। तत्पश्चात् महालेखापरीक्षा प्रतिवेदन संसद/विधानसभा की प्रक्रिया एवं कार्य नियमावली के अधीन गठित लोक लेखा समिति को विचारार्थ सौंप दिया जाता है।

लोक लेखा समिति का महत्वपूर्ण कार्य यह पता लगाना है कि क्या संसद/विधान सभा द्वारा अनुदत्त धन सरकार ने मांग के अनुसार खर्च किया है। लोक लेखा समिति का कार्य विस्तार में जाकर लेखाओं की जांच करना नहीं है अपितु इस प्रकार के लेखाओं के संबंध में नियंत्रक-महालेखापरीक्षक के प्रतिवेदनों से अवगत होना, घाटे के विशिष्ट मामलों, निरर्थक व्यय, वित्तीय अनियमितताओं के मामलों की जांच करना तथा यह देखना है कि क्या संसद/विधान सभा द्वारा स्वीकृत नीतियों का सरकार तथा इसकी एजेंसियों द्वारा मितव्ययिता से तथा ईमानदारी से पालन किया जा रहा है।

लोक लेखा समिति राजस्व प्राप्तियों संबंधी रिपोर्टों की जांच करते समय यह देखती है कि क्या प्रशासन में कोई ढील, अकुशलता या फिजूल खर्च तो नहीं है। विशेष तौर पर प्रचलित कर

संबंधी कानूनी प्रक्रियाओं में कोई त्रुटियां अथवा कमियां तो नहीं हैं जिनका प्रयोग कर बचाने या कर चोरी के लिए किया जा रहा हो। समिति यह भी देखती है कि सरकार द्वारा दी गई कर संबंधी विभिन्न रियायतों/छूटों जिनमें सरकार को अपने बहुत अधिक राजस्व से वंचित होना पड़ता है, से उन प्रयोजनों की प्राप्ति हो रही है अथवा नहीं जिनकी वजह से ये दी गई हैं। समिति की राजस्व प्राप्तियों संबंधी प्रतिवेदनों से कर प्रशासन की बहुत सी कमियों को दूर करने में सहायता मिली है।

लोक लेखा समिति महालेखापरीक्षक द्वारा प्रस्तुत प्रतिवेदनों की जांच के क्रम में यह भी देखती है कि कंडिका जो जन कल्याण एवं राजस्व से संबंधित होती है, वह अपने उद्देश्यों को पूर्ण करने में कहां तक सफल है। समिति यह भी देखती है कि विभिन्न योजनाओं के संबंध में सरकार अपने वित्तीय दायित्व को किस तरह से निभाती है और पता लगाती है कि इन योजनाओं को क्यों निष्पादित किया जा रहा है और उनका संचालन कुशलता तथा मितव्ययिता से किया जा रहा है तथा क्या उनके अपेक्षित परिणाम प्राप्त हुए हैं। सभी तथ्यों पर विचार करते समय समिति प्रणाली तथा प्रक्रिया में सुधार हेतु उपर्युक्त सिफारिश करती है। वर्तमान में अर्थव्यवस्था में तेजी से विकास सुनिश्चित करने के लिए योजना प्रक्रिया आरम्भ करके देश/राज्य में सरकार के द्वारा विभिन्न विकास तथा कल्याण संबंधी कार्यक्रमों में वृद्धि की गई है। जिसके कारण लोक लेखा समिति का उत्तरदायित्व और भी बढ़ गया है। भारत के नियंत्रक-महालेखापरीक्षक का प्रतिवेदन समिति की चर्चा का आधार होता है। लेकिन समिति की जांच मात्र लेखापरीक्षा प्रतिवेदनों से उत्पन्न मामलों तक ही सीमित नहीं होती है। समिति ने स्वयं कई अवसरों पर उन विभिन्न अनियमितताओं, मामलों की जांच प्रारंभ की है जो कि सार्वजनिक बन गए हैं। समिति ने हाल के वर्षों में जांच के लिए नए क्षेत्रों को लिया है। समिति ने सरकार के कार्यक्षेत्र में आने वाले मामलों का सावधानीपूर्वक चयन किया जो अत्यंत लोक महत्व के होते हैं। समिति लेखापरीक्षा की रिपोर्टों में सामने लाए गए विभिन्न पहलुओं के बारे में तथ्यात्मक दृष्टिकोण अपनाने तथा रचनात्मक सुझाव देने का प्रयास करती है। समिति यह भी जांच करती है कि जिन योजनाओं को निष्पादित किया जा रहा है उनका संचालन कुशलता तथा मितव्ययिता से किया जा रहा है अथवा नहीं तथा उनके क्या अपेक्षित परिणाम प्राप्त हुए हैं एवं लापरवाही से किए गए कार्यों पर समिति सिफारिश भी करती है।

कार्य निष्पादन में आई कमी के संबंध में समिति के निष्कर्ष तथा वित्तीय और प्रशासनिक प्रणालियों में सुधार के लिए समिति द्वारा दिए गए सुझाव काफी महत्वपूर्ण होते हैं क्योंकि समिति के निष्कर्षों से यह स्पष्ट पता चलता है कि प्रणालियों तथा प्रक्रियाओं में किस प्रकार सुधार लाए जा सकते हैं ताकि विभिन्न कार्यक्रमों/योजनाओं के लिए आवंटित किए गए धन का अधिक से अधिक सदुपयोग किया जा सके जिससे देश/राज्य का विकास हो। समिति का संबंध नीतिगत मामलों से नहीं होता है लेकिन जब समिति को प्रतिवेदनों के निष्पादन के क्रम में ऐसा लगता है कि संबंधित नीति से उद्देश्यपूर्ण परिणाम नहीं आ रहे हैं तो समिति सदन/सभा को सूचित करती है कि नीति में परिवर्तन किया जाना चाहिए।

आम तौर पर समिति की अनुशंसाएं तकनीकी रूप में सरकारों के लिए बाध्यकारी नहीं होती हैं लेकिन सामान्य रूप से इसकी अनुशंसाओं को गंभीरता से लिया जाता है और उन पर सरकारें सदन में कार्रवाई टिप्पण भी रखती हैं। सरकार के कार्रवाई टिप्पणों की समीक्षा करने का भी अधिकार लोक लेखा समिति को है और फिर उसके आधार पर जांच के लिए समिति अनुमोदन कर सकती है। इस प्रकार लोक लेखा समिति कार्यक्षेत्र में रहकर अपने कर्तव्यों का निर्वहन करते हुए देश/राज्य सरकारों पर अपनी पैनी नजर रखते हुए विकास के एक भागीदार के रूप में खड़ी है।



Shri G.M.C. Balayogi, Speaker Lok Sabha addressing the Conference of Chairmen of Public Accounts Committees of Parliament & State Legislatures at Parliament House, New Delhi on 17.1.2001





MESSAGES FROM THE CHAIRPERSONS  
OF PACS OF STATE/UT LEGISLATURES

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**MESSAGE**  
**from**  
**Wazed Ali Choudhury**  
**Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,**  
**Assam Legislative Assembly**

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It gives me immense pleasure to know that the conference of Chairpersons of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) is scheduled to be held on 4 & 5 December, 2021 to commemorate the Centenary of PAC, Parliament of India. I feel proud that I can add a few lines in the souvenir which is going to be brought out to mark the occasion of the Centennial Celebration of the PAC of the Parliament.

The Committee on Public Accounts was first setup in 1921 in the wake of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms.

At the present scenario of the Nation, PAC constituted in the State Assembly, performs very crucial role to complete its task of examination of the reports of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India relating to the Appropriation Accounts and Finance Accounts of the State Government with special focus on the issue that the money spent during the Financial year is for the purpose for which it is granted by the Legislature in order to move the Nation ahead with prosperity.

Besides, PAC also plays an important role to examine the Audit reports brought before them. PAC makes recommendations to the Government to take appropriate measures on the issues needed to be focused upon relating to the financial matters laid before the Committee for examination.

In a democratic country like India, Executive is accountable to Legislature. The Committee on Public Accounts is one of such Media through which the Legislature extends its democratic control over the Government in matter of raising and appropriation of public fund. Executive is bound to furnish the information and report sought by the

Committee. They furnish evidence by taking oath. The Committee may summon any official if the Committee finds it justifiable in discharging its functions.

The Audit plays a crucial role in the functioning of the Committee on Public Accounts and the Principal Accountant General is often termed as 'friend, philosopher and guide' of the Committee.

On this auspicious occasion. I extend my best wishes for the successful Centenary Celebration of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of India.

**Wazed Ali Choudhury**

**MESSAGE**  
**from**  
**Surendra Prasad Yadav**  
*Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,*  
*Bihar Legislative Assembly*

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It is quite gratifying to note that the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament of India is organising a Conference to mark the Centennial Celebration of its existence. I feel immense pride to be a part of it while representing Bihar Legislative Assembly on this esteemed platform.

Organising such an event at this point of time reinforces our objective and the increasing public demand for Government's transparency and financial accountability. I am sure that this Conference will provide an affable environment to all the participating Chairpersons of the Public Accounts Committees. We will gain immensely from the discussions and exchange of ideas to stand upon, which is the need of the hour.

Let us take this opportunity to re-examine the changing role and responsibilities of this crucial Committee and let us change the appalled images and for what it is often referred as "toothless watchdog". This Committee has kept the Executive accountable to the Legislature and thereby lending an additional dimension to strengthen the Nation's fiscal policies and programmes. Let us contribute in building them to be more robust, sustainable, transparent and accountable.

It is sure to be a landmark event in the history of Indian Parliament and be pivotal in shaping the future course of working of the Committee in the emerging New India.

Best wishes and felicitations to the Organising Committee and staff involved for their untiring efforts to make this event a grand success and for publishing the Souvenir on the occasion.

**Surendra Prasad Yadav**

**MESSAGE**  
**from**  
**\*Ramalinga Reddy**  
**Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,**  
**Karnataka Legislative Assembly**

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On the occasion of the Centenary Celebration of Central PAC, I feel it is my duty to go beyond the formality of extending my greetings. Central PAC has been and always will be the guiding force in enforcing legislative supremacy. The central PAC has evolved from the days of Montague-Chelmsford Reforms to an independent legislative committee entrusted with solemn duty of ensuring probity in public finances. The practices and precedences of the historic Central PAC have persistently upheld the principle of Executive accountability to the Legislature.

**Ramalinga Reddy**

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\*Term of PAC, Karnataka Legislative Assembly expired on 09.II.2021.

**MESSAGE**  
**from**  
**Pradipta Kumar Naik**  
**Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,**  
**Odisha Legislative Assembly**

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It gives me immense pleasure to know that the Centenary of Public Accounts Committee of Parliament of India is being celebrated on 4 and 5 December 2021 at New Delhi. During this “two day Conference” fruitful discussions on functioning of the PAC, implementation of its recommendations and the future course of action will be held. It is good that a Souvenir is going to be published to mark the occasion.

I wish the Conference a grand success.

**Pradipta Kumar Naik**



**MESSAGE**  
**from**  
**Gulab Chand Kataria**  
*Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,*  
*Rajasthan Legislative Assembly*

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It gives me great pleasure to be a part of the Centennial Celebrations of the Public Accounts Committee of the Indian Parliament. The long and illustrious history of this Committee reinforces our belief in strong democratic ideals of our polity. In Indian political system, the Legislature is entrusted with the responsibility to make laws and devise public policies, to sanction the budget, discuss critical issues of public interest thus ensuring efficiency of Executive branch. The Public Accounts Committee is the key mechanism to ensure financial and administrative accountability of the Executive to the Parliament.

I have the privilege of heading the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly. The PAC was formed on 31 March 1953 and has since been performing stellar role in ensuring accountability of Executive. The Committee has provided critical oversight of the State Government's effectiveness in delivering programs and services, as well as implementing policies.

The PAC takes up matters arising out of the Comptroller & Auditor General's Reports on accounts of State Government of Rajasthan. The Committee, ably assisted by the Office of the Accountant General, Rajasthan has been conducting thorough examination of the Audit Reports, making suitable recommendations and monitoring the follow up action taken by the Executive Departments. The PAC during the years 2014-15 to 2018-19 conducted 348 meetings and after careful consideration of the replies submitted by the Departments and the submissions made during oral evidence, it presented 313 Reports in the State Assembly. Similarly for the current 15th State Assembly, the PAC (for the years 2019-20 and 2020-21) has conducted 98 meetings so far

and has presented 100 Reports. The Committee has completed discussion on Paras of CAG Audit Repots till the year 2015-16.

The Public Accounts Committee of the Rajasthan Vidhan Sabha has performed its duties with distinction and has truly lived up to the expectations of the Stakeholders. This is reflected in the incisive, extensive and thought-provoking discussions held which culminate in preparation & finalisation of various reports containing practical and far-reaching recommendations. The Committee, though, headed by a member belonging to the opposition party and consisting of majority of ruling party members, has always worked with unity of purpose. The political differences have never ever hindered or interfered with the smooth functioning of the Committee. All the members have always worked in total harmony and coordination, cutting across party lines to ensure that the Committee fulfils its statutory mandate and upholds the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution.

I believe, in keeping with changing times, with information revolution in the society and resultant growing expectations of the masses, the PAC should have closer interaction with its ultimate stakeholder *i.e.* the public at large. It can solicit the views of the general public, through newspapers advertisement and /or using the Vidhan Sabha website, to suggest topics of public interest to the Accountants' General for the audit exercise. The PAC should also work towards adopting latest technological changes for further enhancing its effectiveness *i.e.* use of video conferencing for conducting oral examinations of the witnesses, accepting Action Taken Notes through electronic mode, hosting of the reports of PAC on the Assembly's/PAC's website and encouraging CAG to prepare digital reports, all of which can be significant environment friendly initiatives. Last but not the least I believe that the PAC should have certain enforcement powers in nature of initiating disciplinary action and/or effecting financial recovery in cases where action has not been initiated on its recommendations.

I take this opportunity to again congratulate the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament for its effective and arduous functioning and I am confident it will continue to work tirelessly to ensure accountability of the Executive to the Legislative in future.

**Gulab Chand Kataria**

**MESSAGE  
from  
Asha Kumari**

*Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,  
Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly*

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It is a matter of great pleasure that the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of India is celebrating 100 years of its existence.

A Souvenir is being brought out to mark the occasion and a Conference is also being organized on 4 and 5 December 2021 in the Parliament House Complex. The Committee on Public Accounts enjoys the place of pride in our Committee System and is one of the most important Financial Committees in the Parliamentary/Legislative/Democratic System.

I wish all success of the Conference.

**Asha Kumari**

**MESSAGE**  
**from**  
**Aditya Golay (Tamang)**  
**Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,**  
**Sikkim Legislative Assembly**

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I am delighted to know that the Souvenir containing valuable articles and write-ups of eminent dignitaries, is being brought out to mark the Centennial Celebration of Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Parliament of India.

The commemorative publication of the Souvenir on the historic occasion is bound to be commendable and inspiring. This publication would immensely serve as an informative document and literature thereof, which may guide the future generations connected with Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in the Indian Parliamentary Democracy.

Lastly, I would like to convey my best wishes to the entire publication team for their enthusiastic endeavour in bringing out the Souvenir.

**Aditya Golay (Tamang)**

**MESSAGE**  
*from*  
**Pratapsingh Raoji Rane**  
*Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,*  
*Goa Legislative Assembly*

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On this historic occasion and to commemorate the Centenary of the Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India, I extend my good wishes and heartiest congratulations. The Comptroller and Auditor General has been truly described as a friend, philosopher and guide to the Public Accounts Committee, which depends on the strong edifice of the three 'Es', that is economy, efficiency and effectiveness, which require spending less, spending well and spending wisely.

During my long career, I had the privilege of being the Member and the Chairperson of the PAC Committee several times right from 1978 till date. On this account, I have seen the working of the Committee from a very close quarter. Reports of this Committee contain vital lessons for the Executive and are one of the chief instruments of ensuring the Executive's accountability to the people through the State Legislatures. The reports of the PAC are a great source of empowerment for the citizens and provide valuable information and feedback to the various stakeholders including the policy makers.

My position as a Chairperson of this Committee is indeed an enormously responsible one, and requires devotion of great deal of time and a high degree of commitment. I am glad to learn that the present Committee has also dwelt into various subjects of contemporary relevance and submitted several reports.

In a democratic system of governance, the State affairs run on the tax-payers' money —the appropriation of funds and implementation of

policies require proper monitoring and examination to ensure that money is being utilised in accordance with the sanctioned Budget and schemes.

To encourage reform and innovation of effective accountability practices, PAC, also highlights the best practices and notable achievements of an organisation. There is a need to adopt a balanced approach so that, innovations and initiatives to ensure effective transparency is ensured.

CAG and PAC together deal with three 'A's — Accounts, Audit and Accountability. They audit the Accounts of Government Departments to fix accountability. I would expect, if possible, another 'A' is added to this in the form of 'Appreciation' which includes innovative good practices.

PACs need to find innovative responses to newer emerging challenges in the current world scenario. They should scrutinise the growing volumes of information as available and give their recommendations in a judicious manner. The Committee Members need to acquire new skills to deal with changed circumstances.

The Public Accounts Committee is indeed a pillar of parliamentary accountability and this pillar rests on our strong shoulders as Chairpersons. Let us be reminded of the great words of Erskine May, which states that the Public Accounts Committee's interest is in whether policy is carried out efficiently, effectively and economically. Its main functions are to see that public moneys are applied for the purposes prescribed by Parliament/State Legislatures and that sound financial practices are ensured in administration.

**Pratapsingh Raoji Rane**

**MESSAGE**  
*from*  
**Akbar Uddin Owaisi**  
*Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee,*  
*Telangana Legislative Assembly*

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I am happy to learn that the Centennial celebrations of the Public Accounts Committee, Parliament of India are being held on 4th and 5th December, 2021 in the Central Hall of the Parliament, New Delhi.

The Public Accounts Committee has very important role to play in ensuring that Public funds are put to effective use. Administrative accountability to the Legislature through Committees has been the hallmark of the Political System. The Committee on Public Accounts enjoys the place of pride in the Committee System.

In the year 1967, a convention was set to appoint a Member of the Opposition Party nominated as the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. This healthy convention of appointing a Member of the Opposition as the Chairman has been continuing since then.

An important function of the Committee is to ascertain that money granted by Legislature has been spent by the Government “within the scope of the demand”. If any money has been spent by the Government on a service in excess of the amount granted by the House for the purpose, the Committee examines with reference to the facts of each case, the circumstances leading to such an excess and makes such recommendations as it may deem fit. Such excesses are thereafter required to be brought up before the House by Government for regularisation in manner envisaged in Article 205 of the Constitution of India.

The Public Accounts Committee’s work depends a great deal upon the results of audit and examination of the Accounts of the State

Government carried out by the Comptroller and Auditor General [C&AG]. As an effective watchdog on the Government spending and essentially working on the Report of the C&AG, this Committee has been credited with detection of many financial irregularities, procedural lapses, Executive delays and even cases of lack of co-ordination between different Government departments. The position of Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee is indeed an enormously responsible one, and requires devotion of great deal of time and high degree of Commitment.

In a democratic system of governance, the State Affairs run on the tax-payers' money, the appropriation of funds and implementation of policies require proper monitoring and Examination to ensure that money is being utilised in accordance with the sanctioned Budget and Schemes. To encourage reform and innovation, Public Accounts Committee should also highlight the best practices and notable achievements of an Organisation.

We need to find out innovative methods to newly emerging challenges in view of current pandemic scenario. We should scrutinise the growing volumes of information as available and give our recommendations in a Judicious manner.

We have to work on Exchange of information and sharing of experiences would help in strengthening the process of accountability, so that the Executive at all levels becomes a more effective instrument of realising the aspirations of people.

I would like to convey my good wishes to the Chairperson, PAC Lok Sabha, all participants & Delegates and wish the conference all success.

**Akbar Uddin Owaisi**





## APPENDICES

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COMPOSITION OF  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE OF  
PARLIAMENT OF INDIA  
FROM 1921 TO 2021

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## COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE IN PARLIAMENT FROM 1921 TO 2021-22

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### 1921

1. Mr. W. M. Hailey—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. Asad Ali Khan Bahadur
3. Mr. T. V. Saslagiri Ayyar
4. Mr. K. C. Neogy
5. Khan Sahib Mirza Muhammad Ikramulla Khan
6. Chaudhuri Shahab-ud-Din
7. Mr. N. M. Samarth
8. Dr. H. S. Gour
9. Mr. A. B. Latthe

### 1922

1. Sir Basil P. Blackett— *Chairperson*
2. Shri Baidyanath Prasad Singh
3. Sardar Gulab Singh
4. Mr. K. G. Bagde
5. Rai Bahadur Bakshi Sohan Lal
6. Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas
7. Mr. N. M. Samarth
8. Mr. N M. Joshi
9. Rao Bahadur P. V. Srinivasa Rao
10. Sir M. De. P. Webb
11. Sir V. D. Thackersey\*
12. Mr. Darcy Lindsay

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\* On the death of Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey, Mr. N. B. Saklatvala was nominated with effect from 14-9-1922.

**1923**

1. Sir Basil P. Blackett—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. Braja Sundar Dass
3. Mr. B.N. Misra
4. Mr. N.M. Joshi
5. Mr. Syed Babi Hadi
6. Mr. Ambica Prasad Sinha
7. Mr. K. Ahmed
8. Mr. K. G. Bagde
9. Mr. K. C. Neogy
10. Rao Bahadur P. V. Srinivasa Rao
11. Sardar Gulab Singh
12. Rai Sahib Lakshmi Narayan Lal

**1924**

1. Sir Basil P. Blackett—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. N. M. Joshi
3. Mr. K. C. Roy\*
4. Mr. K. C. Neogy
5. Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar
6. Mr. W.S.J. Willson
7. Sardar V. N. Mutalik
8. Sardar Gulab Singh
9. Mr. K. Ahmed
10. Mr. H. Calvert\*\*
11. Mr. H. G. Cocke
12. Sir Chimanlal Harilal Setalvad\*\*

**1925**

1. Sir Basil P. Blackett—*Chairperson*
2. Maulvi Mohammad Yakub

\* Pandit Shamlal Nehru was elected *w.e.f.* 22-5-24 *vice* Shri K. C. Roy resigned his seat.

\*\* Mr. C. A. H. Townsend and Dr. S.K. Datta were nominated in place of Sir Chimanlal Harilal Setalvad and Mr. H. Calvert who resigned their seats. Mr. M. Webb was nominated in place of Mr. Townsend who also resigned his seat.

3. Mr. H. G. Cocke
4. Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan
5. Dr. K. G. Lohokare
6. Pandit Harkaran Nath Misra
7. Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar
8. Kumar Ganganand Sinha
9. Maulvi Syed Murtaza Sahib Bahadur
10. Mr. N. M. Joshi
11. Sardar V. M. Mutalik
12. Mr. M. Webb

**1926**

1. Sir Basil P. Blackett—*Chairperson*
2. Pandit Nilkantha Das
3. Sardar Gulab Singh
4. Mr. K. C. Neogy
5. Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan†
6. Maulvi Syed Murtaza Sahib Bahadur
7. Dr. K. G. Lohokare
8. Rev. Dr. E. M. Macphail
9. Sardar V. N. Mutalik
10. Mr. N. M. Joshi
11. Dr. S. K. Datta
12. Col. J. D. Crawford

**1927**

1. Sir Basil P. Blackett—*Chairperson*
2. Maulana A. H. Natique\*
3. Mr. H. G. Cocke
4. Maulvi Abdul Matin Chaudhury
5. Mr. B. Das

---

† Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan by accepting an office under the Crown vacated his seat in the Assembly and consequently ceased to be a Member of the Committee. In view of the fact that the Assembly was to be soon dissolved it was decided not to fill the vacancy.

\* Mr. S. C. Mitra was elected in place of Maulana A. H. Natique.



6. Mr. K. C. Neogy
7. Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar
8. Maulvi Syed Murtaza Sahib Bahadur\*\*
9. Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer
10. Mr. N. M. Joshi
11. Mr. G. Sarvotham Rao
12. Mr. Kabeer-ud-Din Ahmed

### 1928

1. Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. S. C. Mitra
3. Mr. H. G. Cocke\*\*
4. Maulvi Abdul Matin Chaudhury
5. Mr. B. Das\*\*
6. Mr. K. C. Neogy
7. Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar\*\*
8. Maulvi Syed Murtaza Sahib Bahadur\*\*
9. Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer
10. Lt. Col. H. A. J. Gidney
11. Mr. W. Alexander
12. Khan Bahadur Mian Abdul Aziz

### 1929

1. Sir George Schuster—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. S. C. Mitra†
3. Maulvi Abdul Matin Chaudhury†
4. Mr. K. C. Neogy†
5. Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer†
6. Mr. T. A. K. Shervani
7. Mr. B. Das

\*\* Mr. T.A.K. Shervani, Mr. B. Das, Haji Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan and Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah were elected in place of Mr. H. G. Cocke, Mr. B. Das, Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar and Maulvi Syed Murtaza Sahib Bahadur.

† Mr. S. C. Mitra, Kumar Ganganand Sinha, Maulvi Abdul Matin Chaudhury and Mr. K. C. Neogy were elected/ re-elected in place of Mr. S. C. Mitra, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer and Maulvi Abdul Matin Chaudhury who had retired.

8. Haji Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan
9. Rao Bahadur M. C Rajah
10. Mr. K.C. Roy
11. Lt. Col. H.A.J. Gidney

**1930**

1. Sir George Schuster—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. B. Das
3. Haji Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan
4. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah
5. Maulvi Abdul Matin Chaudhury
6. Mr. K. C. Neogy
7. Mr. S.C. Mitra
8. Mr. G. Sarvotham Rao
9. Mr. Mohammad Anwar-ul-Azim
10. Maulvi Muhammad Yakub
11. Mr. K.C. Roy
12. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott

**1931**

1. Sir George Schuster—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. S.C. Mitra
3. Kunwar Hajee Ismail Ali Khan
4. Sardar Sant Singh
5. Mr. T. N. Ramakrishna Reddi
6. Mr. B. Das
7. Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury
8. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah
9. Mr. Muhammad Anwar-ul-Azim
10. Maulvi Sir Muhammad Yakub
11. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
12. Dr. R.D. Dalal

**1932**

1. Sir Alan Parsons— *Chairperson*
2. Sardar Sant Singh
3. Mr. B. Das

4. Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury
5. Mr. Muhammad Anwar-ul-Azim
6. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah
7. Mr. T. N. Ramakrishna Reddi
8. Kunwar Hajee Ismail Ali Khan
9. Mr. S.C. Mitra
10. Maulvi Sir Muhammad Yakub
11. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
12. Dr. R. D. Dalal

### 1933

1. Mr. A. H. Lloyd— *Chairperson*
2. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah
3. Mr. T. N. Ramakrishna Reddi
4. Kunwar Hajee Ismail Ali Khan
5. Mr. S. C. Mitra
6. Mr. K. P. Thampan
7. Mr. B. Das
8. Mr. Muhammad Anwar-ul-Azim
9. Mr. A.H. Ghuznavi
10. Maulvi Sir Muhammad Yakub
11. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
12. Dr. R. D. Dalal

### 1934

1. Sir James Grigg—*Chairperson*
2. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah
3. Mr. T. N. Ramakrishna Reddi
4. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
5. Mr. S. C. Mitra
6. Mr. K. Uppi Saheb Bahadur
7. Kunwar Hajee Ismail Ali Khan
8. Mr. B. Das
9. Captain Sardar Sher Mohammad Khan
10. Dr. R. D. Dalal
11. Maulvi Sir Mohammad Yakub
12. Mr. Muhammad Anwar-ul-Azim

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**1935**

1. Sir James Grigg—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. B. Das
3. Mr. S. Satyamurti
4. Prof. N. G. Ranga
5. Dr. Thein Maung
6. Maulvi Sir Muhammad Yakub
7. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
8. Captain Sardar Sher Mohammad Khan
9. Bhai Parma Nand
10. Dr. R. D. Dalal
11. Rai Bahadur Sir Satyacharan Mukherjee
12. Khan Sahib Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha

**1936**

1. Sir James Grigg— *Chairperson*
2. Mr. B. Das
3. Prof. N. G. Ranga
4. Dr. Thein Maung
5. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
6. Captain Sardar Sher Mohammad Khan
7. Mr. S. Satyamurti
8. Maulvi Sir Mohammad Yakub
9. Bhai Parma Nand
10. Dr. R. D. Dalal
11. Rai Bahadur Sir Satyacharan Mukherjee
12. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha

**1937**

1. Mr. J. C. Nixon—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. B. Das
3. Prof. N. G. Ranga
4. Sirdar Jogendra Singh
5. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
6. Captain Sardar Sher Mohammad Khan
7. Mr. S. Satyamurti

8. Maulvi Sir Mohammad Yakub
9. Bhai Parma Nand
10. Dr. R. D. Dalal
11. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha
12. Khan Bahadur Sir Abdul Hamid

### 1938

1. Sir James Grigg—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. Umar Aly Shah
3. Mr. B. Das
4. Sirdar Jogendra Singh
5. Prof. N. G. Ranga
6. Mr. S. Satyamurti
7. Bhai Parma Nand
8. Captain Sardar Sir Sher Mohammad Khan
9. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
10. Dr. R. D. Dalal
11. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha
12. Khan Bahadur Sir Abdul Hamid

### 1939

1. Sir Jeremy Raisman—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. B. Das
3. Mr. S. Satyamurti
4. Bhai Parma Nand
5. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
6. Captain Sardar Sir Sher Mohammad Khan
7. Sirdar Jogendra Singh
8. Prof. N. G. Ranga
9. Maulvi Mohammad Abdul Ghani
10. Dr. R. D. Dalal
11. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha
12. Khan Bahadur Sir Abdul Hamid

### 1940

1. Sir Jeremy Raisman— *Chairperson*
2. Captain Sardar Sir Sher Mohammad Khan

3. Sirdar Jogendra Singh
4. Prof. N. G. Ranga
5. Maulvi Mohammad Abdul Ghani
6. Mr. Mohamed Azhar Ali
7. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
8. Mr. Suryya Kumar Som
9. Sir Syed Raza Ali
10. Dr. R. D. Dalal
11. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha
12. Khan Bahadur Sir Abdul Hamid

**1941**

1. Sir Jeremy Raisman—*Chairperson*
2. Professor N. G. Ranga
3. Maulvi Mohammed Abdul Ghani
4. Mr. Mohamed Azhar Ali
5. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
6. Sir Syed Raza Ali
7. Lieut-Colonel M. A. Rahman
8. Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra
9. Mr. H. M. Abdullah
10. Dr. R. D. Dalal
11. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha
12. Khan Bahadur Sir Abdul Hamid

**1942**

1. Mr. C. E. Jones—*Chairperson*
2. Professor N. G. Ranga
3. Maulvi Mohammad Abdul Ghani
4. Mr. Mohamed Azhar Ali
5. Mr. J. Ramsay Scott
6. Sir Syed Raza Ali
7. Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra
8. Mr. H. M. Abdullah
9. Kunwar Hajee Ismail Ali Khan
10. Sir Ratanji Dalal

11. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha
12. Khan Bahadur Sir Abdul Hamid

**1943**

1. Sir Jeremy Raisman—*Chairperson*
2. Professor N. G. Ranga
3. Maulvi Mohammad Abdul Ghani
4. Mr. Mohamed Azhar Ali
5. Sir Syed Raza Ali
6. Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra
7. Mr. H. M. Abdullah
8. Kunwar Hajee Ismail Ali Khan
9. Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer
10. Sir Ratanji Dalal
11. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha
12. Khan Bahadur Sheikh Habibur Rahman

**1944**

1. Sir Cyril Jones—*Chairperson\**
2. Professor N. G. Ranga
3. Maulvi Mohammad Abdul Ghani\*
4. Mr. Mohamed Azhar Ali
5. Sir Syed Raza Ali
6. Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra\*
7. Mr. H.M. Abdullah
8. Kunwar Hajee Ismail Ali Khan
9. Mr. T. Chapman Mortimer
10. Sir Ratanji Dalal
11. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha
12. Khan Bahadur Sheikh Habibur Rahman

**1945**

1. Sir Archibald Rowlands—*Chairperson\**
2. Professor N. G. Ranga
3. Maulvi Mohammad Abdul Ghani\*

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\*Also Members of the Military Accounts Committee.

4. Mr. Mohamed Azhar Ali
5. Sir Syed Raza Ali
6. Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra\*
7. Mr. H. M. Abdullah
8. Kunwar Hajee Ismail Ali Khan\*
9. Mr. Geoffrey W. Tyson
10. Sir Ratanji Dalal
11. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha
12. Khan Bahadur Sheikh Habibur Rahman

**1946**

1. Sir Eric Coates— *Chairperson*  
Dr. John Matthai—*Chairperson*  
Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan—*Chairperson*
2. Professor N.G. Ranga
3. Mr. G.W. Tyson
4. Shri Mohan Lal Saxena
5. Mr. Tamizuddin Khan
6. Srijut B.S. Hiray
7. Pandit Sri Krishna Datta Paliwal
8. Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi
9. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang
10. Sir Cowasjee Jehangir
11. Raj Bahadur Devendra Mohan Bhattacharyya
12. Raja Sir Saiyid Ahmad Ali Khan Alvi

**1947**

1. Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan\*\*—*Chairperson*  
Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty\*\*\*—*Chairperson*
2. Prof. N. G. Ranga
3. Mr. G. M. Tyson
4. Shri Mohan Lal Saxena

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\* Also Members of the Military Accounts Committee.

\*\* Shri Liaquat Ali Khan was *Chairperson* until 14.8.1947.

\*\*\* Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty became *Chairperson* with effect from 15.8.1947.



5. Mr. Tamizuddin Khan
6. Srijut B. S. Hiray
7. Pandit Sri Krishna Datta Paliwal
8. Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi
9. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang
10. Sir Cowasjee Jehangir
11. Rai Bahadur Devendra Mohan Bhattacharyya
12. Raja Sir Saiyid Ahmad Ali Khan Alvi

### 1948

1. Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty\*\*—*Chairperson*  
Dr. John Matthai§—*Chairperson*
2. Shri B. Das
3. Kazi Syed Karimuddin
4. Shri Mohan Lal Saxena†
5. Shri Krishna Chandra Sharma
6. Dr. Bakhshi Tek Chand
7. Shri Deshbandhu Gupta
8. Shri Upendra Nath Barman
9. Shri K. Santhanam
10. Shri R. K. Sidhva
11. Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya
12. Shri R. R. Diwakar

### 1949

1. Dr. John Matthai—*Chairperson*
2. Mr. B. Das
3. Kazi Syed Karimuddin
4. Shri Krishna Chandra Sharma
5. Shri Upendranath Barman
6. Shri Mahavir Tyagi
7. Prof. Sibban Lal Saksena

\*\* Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty was *Chairperson* upto 17.8.1948.

§ Dr. John Matthai become *Chairperson* with effect from 22.9.1948.

† Shri Acharya Jugal Kishore was elected in place of Shri Mohan Lal Saxena who resigned his seat on the Committee.

8. Shri L. Krishnaswami Bharathi
9. Prof. Nibaran Chandra Laskar
10. Shri R. Sankar
11. Shri Raj Bahadur
12. Prof. K. T. Shah

**1950-51**

1. Shri B. Das—*Chairperson*
2. Srijut Kuladhar Chaliha
3. Prof. K. T. Shah
4. Shri M. L. Dwivedi
5. Shri Hucheshwar Gurusidha Mudgal
6. Pandit Krishna Chandra Sharma
7. Pandit Munishwar Datt Upadhyay
8. Shri Tribhuan Narayan Singh
9. Shri H. S. Rudrappa
10. Shri S. N. Das
11. Shri Bali Ram Bhagat
12. Shri B. N. Munavalli
13. Shri T. H. Sonavane
14. Shri K. A. Damodara Menon
15. Shri Bhaurao Sakharam Hiray

**1951-52**

1. Shri B. Das—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Bhaurao Sakharam Hiray
3. Prof. K. T. Shah
4. Shri M. L. Dwivedi
5. Pandit Krishna Chandra Sharma
6. Pandit Munishwar Datt Upadhyay
7. Shri Tribhuan Narayan Singh
8. Shri H. S. Rudrappa
9. Shri S. N. Das
10. Shri B. N. Munavalli
11. Shri T. H. Sonavane
12. Shri Ram Chandra Upadhyay

13. Dr. Mono Mohon Das
14. Shri Gokul Lal Asawa
15. Shri Murlidhar Vishvanath Ghule

**1952-53**

1. Shri B. Das—*Chairperson*
2. Pandit Munishwar Datt Upadhyay
3. Shri M. L. Dwivedi
4. Shri Shree Narayan Das
5. Shri Tribhuan Narayan Singh
6. Shri H. V. Pataskar\*
7. Shri Ranbir Singh Chaudhari
8. Acharya Shriman Narayan Agarwal
9. Dr. Mono Mohon Das
10. Pandit Krishna Chandra Sharma
11. Shri Uma Charan Patnaik
12. Shri V. P. Nayar
13. Shri B. Ramachandra Reddi
14. Shri G.D. Somani
15. Shri K. M. Vallatharas

**1953-54**

1. Shri B. Das—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Ranbir Singh Chaudhari
3. Shri Hari Vinayak Pataskar
4. Dr. Mono Mohon Das\*\*
5. Shri Tribhuan Narayan Singh
6. Shri M. L. Dwivedi
7. Pandit Munishwar Datt Upadhyay
8. Prof. Shriman Narayan Agarwal
9. Shri Shree Narayan Das
10. Shri B. Ramachandra Reddi
11. Shri Uma Charan Patnaik
12. Pandit Krishna Chandra Sharma
13. Shri K. M. Vallatharas

\* Elected on 11th Dec., 1952 *vice* Shri Balwant Nagesh Datar resigned.

\*\* Resigned on 24th December, 1953.

14. Shri V.P. Nayar
15. Shri G.D. Somani

**1954-55**

1. Shri B. Das—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Tribhuan Narayan Singh
3. Shri Ramananda Das
4. Shri Shriman Narayan
5. Shri Shree Narayan Das
6. Shri Batwant Singh Mehta
7. Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan
8. Shri R. Venkataraman†
9. Shri Amarnath Vidyalkar
10. Shri S.V. Ramaswamy
11. Shri Uma Charan Patnaik
12. Shri Choithram Partabrai Gidwani
13. Shri V.P. Nayar
14. Dr. Indubhai B. Amin
15. Shri U.M. Trivedi
16. Shrimati Violet Alva
17. Diwan Chaman Lal
18. Shri K.S. Hegde
19. Shri P.S. Rajagopal Naidu
20. Shri Ram Prasad Tamta
21. Shri Mohamed Valiulla
22. Shri J.V.K. Vallabharao

**1955-56**

1. Shri V. B. Gandhi—*Chairperson*
2. Shri U. Srinivasa Malliah
3. Shri Kamal Kumar Basu
4. Shri Ramananda Das
5. Shri Awadeswar Prasad Sinha
6. Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan

†Elected on 29th September, 1954 *vice* Shri Khandubhai K. Desai resigned.

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7. Shri S.V. Ramaswamy
  8. Shri K.G. Deshmukh
  9. Shri Balwant Singh Mehta
  10. Shri C.D. Pande
  11. Shri Diwan Chand Sharma
  12. Shri Y. Gadilingana Gowd
  13. Shri Uma Charan Patnaik
  14. Shri V. Boovaraghasamy
  15. Dr. Indubhai B. Amin
  16. Shrimati Violet Alva
  17. Shri Diwan Chaman Lal
  18. Shri Ram Prasad Tamta
  19. Shri P.S. Rajagopal Naidu
  20. Shri Mohammad Valiulla
  21. Shri V.K. Dhage
  22. Shri B.C. Ghose

### 1956-57

1. Shri V.B. Gandhi—*Chairperson*
2. Shri K.G. Deshmukh
3. Shri U. Srinivasa Malliah
4. Shri Diwan Chand Sharma
5. Shri C.D. Pande
6. Shri Kamal Kumar Basu
7. Shri V. Boovaraghasamy
8. Shri Jaipal Singh\*
9. Shri Nibaran Chandra Laskar
10. Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha
11. Shri Tribhuan Narayan Singh
12. Shri Radhelal Vyas
13. Shri C.P. Matthen
14. Shri J.B. Kripalani

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\* Elected on 5th September, 1956 *vice* Dr. Indubhai B. Amin resigned from Lok Sabha.

15. Shrimati Shakuntala Nayar
16. Shri G. Ranga
17. Shri R. M. Deshmukh
18. Shrimati Pushpalata Das
19. Shri Shyam Dhar Misra
20. Shri P.T. Leuva
21. Shri B.C. Ghose
22. Shri J.V.K. Vallabharao

**1957-58**

1. Shri T. N. Singh—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Ram Subhag Singh
3. Shri N.C. Laskar
4. Shri N.G. Ranga
5. Shri Radhelal Vyas
6. Shri A.C. Guha
7. Shri N.R.M. Swamy
8. Shri Upendranath Barman
9. Shri J.M. Mohamed Imam
10. Shri H.C. Dasappa
11. Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha\*\*
12. Shri Prabhat Kar
13. Shri Jaipal Singh
14. Shri N. Siva Raj
15. Shri Vijayarama Raju
16. Shrimati Pushpalata Das
17. Shri P.T. Leuva
18. Shri Shyam Dhar Misra†
19. Shri R.M. Deshmukh†
20. Shri M. Govinda Reddy
21. Shri Jaswant Singh
22. Shri J.V. K. Vallabharao

\*\*Ceased to be member of the Committee on appointment as Deputy Minister with effect from 2nd April, 1958.

† Ceased to be member of the Committee with effect from 3rd April, 1958 consequent on retirement from the Rajya Sabha.

## 1958-59

1. Shri T.N. Singh—*Chairperson*  
Prof. N.G. Ranga\*\*—*Chairperson*
2. Dr. Ram Subhag Singh
3. Shri Arunchandra Guha
4. Shri N.R.M. Swamy
5. Pandit Jwala Prasad Jyotishi
6. Shri Rameshwar Sahu
7. Shri T. Sanganna
8. Shri Upendranath Barman
9. Shri Prabhat Kar
10. Shri Raghubar Dayal Misra†
11. Shri H.C. Dasappa
12. Shri Khushwaqt Rai
13. Shri N. Siva Raj
14. Shri Aurobindo Ghosal
15. Shri Jaipal Singh
16. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
17. Shri Amolakh Chand
18. Shri T.R. Deogirikar
19. Shri S. Venkataraman
20. Shri M. Govinda Reddy
21. Shri Rohit Manushankar Dave
22. Shri M. Basavapunnaiiah

## 1959-60

1. Dr. P. Subbarayan\*—*Chairperson*  
Shri Upendranath Barman\*—*Chairperson*

\*\* Prof. N.G. Ranga was appointed as *Chairman* of the Committee on 11th September, 1958 for the unexpired portion of the term of the Committee ending on 30th April, 1959 *vice* Shri T.N. Singh resigned from Lok Sabha.

† Elected on 23rd September, 1958 *vice* Shri T.N. Singh resigned from Lok Sabha.

\* Shri Upendranath Barman was elected to serve as a Member of the P.A.C. on 10th Sep. 1959 (*vice* Dr. P. Subbarayan, who ceased to be a Member of the Committee on his appointment as a Minister) and was appointed as the *Chairman* of the Committee on the 12th September, 1959.

2. Shri T. Manaen
3. Shri Maneklal Maganlal Gandhi
4. Pandit Jwala Prasad Jyotishi
5. Shri Shamrao Vishnu Parulekar
6. Shri Radha Raman
7. Shri Rameshwar Sahu
8. Shri T.R. Neswi
9. Shri Raghubar Dayal Misra
10. Shri T. Sanganna
11. Shri Vinayak Rao K. Koratkar
12. Shri Jaipal Singh
13. Shri Aurobindo Ghosal
14. Shri Yadav Narayan Jadhav
15. Shri Shraddhakar Supakar
16. Shri Amolakh Chand\*\*
17. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
18. Shri Rohit Manushankar Dave
19. Shri T.R. Deogirikar
20. Shri Surendra Mohan Ghose
21. Shri Jaswant Singh
22. Shri S. Venkataraman

### **1960-61**

1. Shri Upendranath Barman—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Rohan Lal Chaturvedi\*
3. Shri Maneklal Maganlal Gandhi
4. Shri R.S. Kiledar
5. Shri Vinayak Rao K. Koratkar
6. Shri T. Manaen
7. Shri G.K. Manay
8. Shri S.A. Matin
9. Shri Baishnab Charan Mullick

\*\* Ceased to be a Member of the Committee *w.e.f.* 3rd April, 1960 consequent on retirement from the Rajya Sabha.

\* Elected on 25th November, 1960 *vice* Shri Feroze Gandhi died.



10. Shri T.R. Neswi
11. Shri Shamrao Vishnu Parulekar
12. Shri Purushottamdas R. Patel
13. Shri Radha Raman
14. Dr. N.C. Samantsinhar
15. Pandit Dwarka Nath Tiwary
16. Shrimati Sharda Bhargava
17. Shri Jashaud Singh Bisht
18. Shri Surendra Mohan Ghose
19. Dr. Shrimati Seeta Parmanand
20. Shri V.C. Kesava Rao
21. Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy
22. Shri Jaswant Singh

#### 1961-62

1. Shri C.R. Pattabhi Raman—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Rohan Lal Chaturvedi
3. Shri Aurobindo Ghosal
4. Shri Hem Raj
5. Shri R.S. Kiledar
6. Shri G.K. Manay
7. Dr. Pashupati Mandal
8. Shri S.A. Matin
9. Dr. G.S. Melkote
10. Shri Purushottamdas R. Patel
11. Dr. N.C. Samantsinhar
12. Pandit Dwarka Nath Tiwary
13. Kumari Mothey Vedakumari
14. Shri Ramji Verma
15. Shri K.K. Warior
16. Dr. Shrimati Seeta Parmanand
17. Shri Lalji Pendse

18. Shri V.C. Kesava Rao
19. Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy
20. Shrimati Savitry Devi Nigam\*\*
21. Shri Rajeshwar Prasad Narain Sinha
22. Shri Jai Narain Vyas

**1962-63**

1. Shri Mahavir Tyagi—*Chairperson*
2. Shri S.C. Balakrishnan
3. Shri Bhakt Darshan
4. Shri Gajraj Singh Rao
5. Shri Hem Raj
6. Shri Jaipal Singh
7. Sardar Kapur Singh
8. Shri R.K. Khadilkar
9. Shrimati Maimoona Sultan
10. Dr. P. Mandal
11. Dr. G.S. Melkote
12. Shri Mathura Prasad Mishra
13. Shri Mohan Swarup
14. Shri Ravi Narayan Reddi
15. Shri Prakash Vir Shastri
16. Shrimati K. Bharathi
17. Shri Nawab Singh Chauhan
18. Shri Dahyabhai V. Patel
19. Shri Sonusing Dhansing Patil
20. Shri Lalji Pendse
21. Shri Rajeshwar Prasad Narain Sinha
22. Shri Jai Narain Vyas\*

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\*\* Ceased to be a member of the Committee on the vacation of her seat in Rajya Sabha consequent on her election to the Third Lok Sabha on 28-2-1962.

\* Expired on 14th March, 1963.

**1963-64**

1. Shri Mahavir Tyagi\*\*—*Chairperson*  
Shri R.K. Khadilkar\*\*—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Ramachandra Vithal Bade
3. Shri S.C. Balakrishnan
4. Shri J.B.S. Bist\*\*\*
5. Shri F.P. Gaekwad
6. Shri Gajraj Singh Rao
7. Sardar Kapur Singh
8. Shri R.K. Khadilkar\*\*
9. Shrimati Maimoona Sultan
10. Shri Mathura Prasad Mishra
11. Dr. Ranen Sen
12. Shri Prakash Vir Shastri
13. Shri Ravindra Verma
14. Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah
15. Shri Vishram Prasad
16. Shrimati K. Bharati†
17. Shrimati Maya Devi Chettry†
18. Shri B.D. Khobaragade†
19. Shri Dahyabhai V. Patel†
20. Shri S.D. Patil†
21. Shri Sadiq Ali†
22. Pandit S.S.N. Tankha\*\*\*\*†

**1964-65**

1. Shri R.R. Morarka—*Chairperson*
2. Shrimati Akkamma Devi

\*\* Shri Mahavir Tyagi ceased to be a member of the Committee consequent on his appointment as a Minister on 16-4-64; Shri R.K. Khadilkar was appointed as *Chairman* on 17-4-64.

\*\*\* Declared elected on 29th November, 1963 *vice* Shri Bhakt Darshan ceased to be a member of the Committee on his appointment as Deputy Minister.

† Ceased to be Members of the Committee consequent on their retirement from Rajya Sabha on 2-4-64 under Article 83(1) of the Constitution.

† Declared elected on 29th August, 1963 *vice* Shri Nawab Singh Chauhan.

3. Shri Ramchandra Vithal Bade
4. Shri J.B.S. Bist
5. Shri N.T. Das
6. Shri Gulabrao Keshavrao Jedhe
7. Shri R. Keishing
8. Shri V.C. Parashar
9. Shri Nanubhai N. Patel
10. Shri C.L. Narasimha Reddy
11. Dr. Ranen Sen
12. Shri Ravindra Verma
13. Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah
14. Shri Vishram Prasad
15. Shri Ram Sewak Yadav
16. Shri M.P. Bhargava
17. Shri Chandra Shekhar
18. Shri S.C. Deb
19. Shri R.S. Panjhazari
20. Shri Ram Sahai
21. Shri S.S.N. Tankha
22. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee

**1965-66**

1. Shri R.R. Morarka—*Chairperson*
2. Shrimati Akkamma Devi
3. Shri Ram Dhani Das
4. Shri Gulabrao Keshavrao Jedhe
5. Shri Cherian J. Kappen
6. Shri R. Keishing
7. Shri M.R. Krishna
8. Shri B.P. Maurya
9. Shri V.C. Parashar
10. Shri Nanubhai N. Patel
11. Shri C.L. Narasimha Reddy
12. Shri G. Yallamanda Reddy
13. Shri Prakash Vir Shastri

14. Shri Surendra Pal Singh
15. Shri U.M. Trivedi
16. Shri M.P. Bhargava
17. Shri Chandra Shekhar
18. Shri S.C. Deb
19. Shri R.S. Panjhazari
20. Shri Ram Sahai
21. Shri Niranjana Singh
22. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee

**1966-67**

1. Shri R. R. Morarka—*Chairperson*
2. Sardar Buta Singh
3. Shri B.L. Chandak
4. Shri Ram Dhani Das
5. Shri Shivajirao S. Deshmukh
6. Shri Cherian J. Kappen
7. Shri M.R. Krishna
8. Shri B.P. Maurya
9. Shri Man Singh P. Patel
10. Shri G. Yallamanda Reddy\*
11. Shri Prakash Vir Shastri
12. Shri Sheo Narain
13. Shri S.T. Singh
14. Shri Ku. Sivapraghassan
15. Shri U.M. Trivedi
16. Shrimati Devaki Gopidas
17. Shri P.K. Kumaran
18. Shri Om Mehta
19. Shri Gaure Murahari
20. Shri M.C. Shah
21. Shri B.K.P. Sinha
22. Col. B.H. Zaidi

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\* Ceased to be a member of P.A.C. from the afternoon of 29th November, 1966 consequent on his resigning the seat of Lok Sabha.

**1967-68**

1. Shri M.R. Masani—*Chairperson*
2. Shri C.K. Bhattacharyya
3. Sardar Buta Singh
4. Shri Shivajirao S. Deshmukh
5. Shri R. Muthu Gounder
6. Shri D. K. Kunte
7. Shri N.R. Laskar
8. Shri V. Viswanatha Menon
9. Shri K.K. Nayar
10. Shri Syed Ahmed Aga\*
11. Shri Narendra Kumar Salve
12. Shri Yogendra Sharma
13. Shri Sheo Narain
14. Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha
15. Shri P. Viswambharan
16. Shrimati Devaki Gopidas\*\*
17. Shri P.K. Kumaran\*\*
18. Shri Om Mehta
19. Shri Gaure Murahari\*\*
20. Shri M.C. Shah\*\*
21. Dr. M.M. S. Siddhu\*\*
22. Shri B.K.P. Sinha

**1968-69**

1. Shri M.R. Masani—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Syed Ahmed Aga
3. Shri K. Anirudhan
4. Shri S. M. Banerjee
5. Shri C. K. Bhattacharyya
6. Shri K. G. Deshmukh

\* Declared elected *vice* Shri Mohammad Yunus Saleem *w.e.f.* 30th November, 1967.

\*\* Ceased to be a Member of the Committee *w.e.f.* 1.4.1968 on the completion of term of Membership of Rajya Sabha.

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7. Shri V. Krishnamoorthi
  8. Shri D. K. Kunte
  9. Shri N. R. Laskar
  10. Shri K. K. Nayar
  11. Shrimati Sushila Rohatgi
  12. Shri Narendra Kumar Salve
  13. Shri Ram Awtar Sharma
  14. Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha
  15. Shri Tayappa Hari Sonavane
  16. Shri A.P. Chatterjee
  17. Shri K. Damodaran
  18. Shri Shanti Kothari
  19. Shri S. S. Mariswamy
  20. Shri G.H.V. Momin\*\*\*
  21. Shri N.R.M. Swamy
  22. Shri Tarkeshwar Pandey

### 1969-70

1. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Syed Ahmed Aga
3. Shri Bhagaban Das
4. Shri C. Chittibabu
5. Shri K. G. Deshmukh
6. Shri Bimalkanti Ghosh
7. Shri K. M. Koushik
8. Shri Mohan Swarup
9. Shri H.N. Mukerjee
10. Chaudhary Nitiraj Singh
11. Shrimati Sushila Rohatgi
12. Shri Ram Awtar Sharma
13. Shri Ramshekhar Prasad Singh
14. Shri Tayappa Hari Sonavane
15. Shri Balgovind Verma

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\*\*\* Declared elected on the 19th August, 1968 *vice* Shri M.M Dharia who resigned from the Committee.

16. Dr. Z. A. Ahmad
17. Shri A.P. Chatterjee
18. Prof. Shanti Kothari\*
19. Shri S.S. Mariswamy\*
20. Shri G.H.V. Momin\*
21. Shri N.R.M. Swamy
22. Shri Tarkeshwar Pandey\*

**1970-71**

1. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee—*Chairperson*
2. Shri J.M. Biswas
3. Shri Narendra Ramchandraj Deoghare
4. Shri C.T. Dhandapani
5. Shri Bimalkanti Ghosh
6. Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani
7. Shri Bhola Nath Master
8. Shri Raja Venkatappa Naik
9. Shri J. H. Patel
10. Shrimati Savitri Shyam
11. Shri Babunath Singh\*\*
12. Shri Ram Shekhar Prasad Singh
13. Shri Balgovind Verma
14. Shri G. Venkataswamy
15. Shri P. Viswambharan
16. Shri S.B. Bobdey
17. Shri Banka Behary Das
18. Shri P.C. Mitra
19. Shri Niranjan Verma
20. Shrimati Vidyawati Chaturvedi
21. Shri Thillai Villalan
22. Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee

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\* Ceased to be a Member of the Committee *w.e.f.* 3.4.1970.

\*\* Declared elected on 3rd August, 1970 *vice* Chaudhary Nitiraj Singh ceased to be a Member of the Committee on his appointment as a Minister of State.



**1971-72**

1. Shri Era Sezhiyan — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad
3. Shrimati Mukul Banerji
4. Shri C.C. Desai
5. Shri K.G. Deshmukh
6. Chaudhari Tayyab Hussain Khan
7. Shri Debendra Nath Mahata
8. Shri Mohammad Yusuf
9. Shri B.S. Murthy
10. Dr. Laxminarain Pandey
11. Shri Ramsahai Pandey
12. Shrimati Savitri Shyam
13. Shri Vijay Pal Singh
14. Shri G. Venkataswamy
15. Shri Ram Chandra Vikal
16. Shri S.B. Bobdey
17. Shri B.K. Kaul
18. Shrimati Vidyawati Chaturvedi
19. Shri Jagdish Prasad Mathur\*
20. Shri Thillai Villalan
21. Shri Shyam Lal Yadav
22. Shri Sheel BhadraYajee

**1972-73**

1. Shri Era Sezhiyan — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad
3. Shri R.V. Bade
4. Shrimati Mukul Banerji
5. Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu
6. Shri K. G. Deshmukh
7. Chaudhari Tayyab Husain Khan

\* Declared elected on 4th August, 1971 *vice* Shri Niranjana Verma resigned from the Committee w.e.f. 17.6.1971.

8. Shri Debendra Nath Mahata
9. Shri Mohammad Yusuf
10. Shri B. S. Murthy
11. Shri S.A. Muruganantham
12. Shri Ramsahai Pandey
13. Shri H.M. Patel
14. Shrimati Savitri Shyam
15. Shri Ram Chandra Vikal
16. Shri M. Anandam
17. Shri Golap Barbora
18. Shri Bipinpal Das
19. Shri P.S. Patil
20. Shri Kalyan Roy
21. Shri Sawal Singh Sisodia
22. Shri Shyam Lal Yadav

**1973-74**

1. Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Virendra Agarwala
3. Shri S.C. Besra
4. Shri M. Deiveekan
5. Shri C.D. Gautam
6. Shri Pampan Gowda\*
7. Shri Y.S. Mahajan
8. Shri Bibhuti Mishra
9. Shri H.N. Mukerjee
10. Shri Paripoornanand Painuli
11. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
12. Shri H.M. Patel
13. Shri P. Antony Reddi
14. Shri Biswanarayan Shastri
15. Shri Sunder Lal

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\* Elected on 29.11.1973 *vice* Shri D.S. Afzalpurkar died.

16. Shri M. Anandam\*\*
17. Shri Golap Barbora\*\*
18. Shri Bipinpal Das
19. Shri Nawal Kishore
20. Shri P.S. Patil\*\*
21. Shri Sasankasekhar Sanyal
22. Shri Sawai Singh Sisodia

### 1974-75

1. Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu — *Chairperson*
2. Shri S.C. Besra
3. Shri C.D. Gautam
4. Shri Pampan Gowda
5. Shri Jagannathrao Joshi
6. Shrimati Parvathi Krishnan
7. Shri Y.S. Mahajan
8. Shri Bibhuti Mishra
9. Shri Paripoornanand Painuli
10. Shri Narain Chand Parashar
11. Shri H.M. Patel
12. Shri P. Antony Reddi
13. Shri Shibban Lal Saksena
14. Shri Viswanarayan Shastri
15. Shri Sunder Lal
16. Shrimati Pratibha Singh
17. Shri G.R. Patil
18. Shri V.B. Raju
19. Shri Mohammed Usman Arif
20. Shri T.N. Singh
21. Shri Sasankasekhar Sanyal
22. Shri A.K.A. Abdul Samad

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\*\* Ceased to be members of the Committee consequent on retirement from Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 2.4.1974.

**1975-76**

1. Shri H. N. Mukerjee — *Chairperson*
2. Shri T. Balakrishniah
3. Shri Chandula Chandrakar
4. Shri Chandrika Prasad
5. Shri Darbara Singh
6. Shri C.C. Gohain
7. Shri Pampan Gowda
8. Shri Raja Kulkarni
9. Shri Shyam Sunder Mohapatra
10. Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munshi
11. Shri Narendra Singh
12. Shri Noorul Huda
13. Shri Shibban Lal Saksena
14. Shri N.K. Sanghi
15. Shri Somchand Solanki
16. Shri Mohammed Usman Arif\*
17. Shrimati Pratibha Singh\*
18. Shri V.B. Raju\*
19. Shri Gulabrao Patil
20. Shri T.K. Srinivasan\*
21. Dr. K. Mathew Kurian\*
22. Shri Rabi Ray

**1976-77**

1. Shri H. N. Mukerjee — *Chairperson*
2. Shri T. Balakrishniah
3. Shri Dinen Bhattacharya
4. Shri Chandula Chandrakar
5. Shri Chandrika Prasad
6. Shri S.R. Damani
7. Shri C.C. Gohain

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\* Ceased to be Members of the Committee consequent on retirement from Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 2.4.1976.

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8. Shri Ramachandran Kadannappalli
  9. Shri Raja Kulkarni
  10. Shri K. Mayathevar
  11. Shri V. Mayavan
  12. Shri Shyam Sunder Mohapatra
  13. Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munshi
  14. Shri Bhaljibhai Ravjibhai Parmar
  15. Shri N.K. Sanghi
  16. Smt. Sushila Sankar Adivarekar
  17. Shri Sardar Amjad Ali
  18. Shri Piare Lall Kurel *alias* Piare Lall Talib
  19. Shri H.S. Narasiah
  20. Shri Indradeep Sinha
  21. Shri Omprakash Tyagi
  22. Shri Zavar Hussain

#### 1977-78

1. Shri C.M. Stephen — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Halimuddin Ahmed\*
3. Shri Balak Ram
4. Shri Brij Raj Singh
5. Shri Tulsidas Dasappa
6. Shri Asoke Krishna Dutt
7. Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta
8. Shri P.K. Kodyan
9. Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra\*
10. Shri B.P. Mandal
11. Shri R.K. Mhalgi
12. Dr. Laxminarayan Pandeya
13. Shri Gauri Shankar Rai
14. Shri M. Satyanarayan Rao
15. Shri Vasant Sathe

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\* Elected with effect from 23rd November, 1977 *vice* Sarvashri Sheo Narain and Jagdambi Prasad ceased to be Members of the Committee on their appointment as Ministers of State.

16. Smt. Sushila Shanker Adivarekar\*\*
17. Shri Sardar Amjad Ali\*\*
18. Shri M. Kadershah
19. Shri Piare Lall Kureel *alias* Piare Lall Talib
20. Shri S.A. Khaja Mohiddeen
21. Shri Bezawada Papireddi†
22. Shri Zawar Hussain†

**1978-79**

1. Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Halimuddin Ahmed
3. Shri Balak Ram
4. Shri Brij Raj Singh
5. Shri C.K. Chandrappan
6. Shri Asoke Krishna Dutt
7. Shri K. Gopal
8. Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta
9. Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra
10. Shri B.P. Mandal
11. Shri R.K. Mhalgi
12. Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey
13. Shri Gauri Shankar Rai
14. Shri M. Satyanarayan Rao
15. Shri Vasant Sathe
16. Shri Devendra Nath Dwivedi
17. Shri M. Kadershah
18. Shri Sitaram Kesri
19. Dr. Bhai Mahavir
20. Smt. Leela Damodara Menon
21. Shri B. Satyanarayan Reddy
22. Shri Gian Chand Totu

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\*\*Ceased to be Members of the Committee consequent on retirement from Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 2.4.1978.

† Ceased to be Members of the Committee consequent on retirement from Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 9.4.1978.

**1979-80**

1. Shri T.A. Pai\*\* — *Chairperson*
2. Shri R.D. Gattani
3. Shri V.G. Hande
4. Shri Dinesh Joarder
5. Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra
6. Shri Bapusaheb Parulekar
7. Shri Ratansinh Rajda
8. Shri Ramapati Singh
9. Shri Ramjiwan Singh
10. Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao\*
11. Shri Sougata Roy†
12. Shri Daulat Ram Saran
13. Shri Ramanand Tiwari
14. Shri Ugrasen
15. Shri R. Venkataraman††
16. Shri M. Anandam
17. Shri Sitaram Kesri
18. Dr. Bhai Mahavir
19. Smt. Purabi Mukhopadhyay
20. Shri Kalp Nath Rai
21. Shri B. Satyanarayan Reddy
22. Shri Gian Chand Totu

**1980-81**

1. Shri Chandrajit Yadav — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Satish Agarwal
3. Shri Subhash Chandra Bose Alluri
4. Shri Tridib Chaudhuri
5. Shri K.P. Singh Deo

\*\* Ceased to be Member of the Committee on his appointment as Minister *w.e.f.* 30.7.1979.

\* Resigned *w.e.f.* 19.5.1979.

† Ceased to be Member of the Committee on his appointment as Minister of State *w.e.f.* 4.8 1979.

†† Appointment as *chairman w.e.f.* 2.8.1979 *vice* Shri T.A. Pai ceased to be a Member consequent on his appointment as Minister.

6. Shri V.N. Gadgil
7. Shri Ashok Gehlot
8. Shri Sunil Maitra
9. Shri Gargi Shankar Mishra
10. Shri M.V. Chandrashekara Murthy
11. Shri Ahmed Mohammed Patel
12. Shri Hari Krishna Shastri
13. Shri Satish Prasad Singh
14. Shri Jagdish Tytler
15. Shri K. P. Unnikrishnan
16. Smt. Purabi Mukhopadhyay
17. Shri N.K.P. Salve
18. Shri Tirath Ram Amla
19. Smt. Maimoona Sultan
20. Shri Patitpaban Pradhan
21. Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan
22. Shri Indradeep Sinha

**1981-82**

1. Shri Satish Agarwal — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Subhash Chandra Bose Alluri
3. Shri Tridib Chaudhuri
4. Shri K.P. Singh Deo\*
5. Shri George Fernandes
6. Shri Mahavir Prasad
7. Shri Ashok Gehlot
8. Shri Sunil Maitra
9. Shri Gargi Shankar Mishra\*
10. Shri M.Y. Chandrasekara Murthy
11. Shri Ahmed Mohammed Patel
12. Shri Hari Krishan Shastri
13. Shri Satish Prasad Singh
14. Shri Jagdish Tytler

\* Ceased to be Member of the Committee consequent on their appointment as Deputy Minister/ Minister of State *w.e.f.* 15.1.1982.



15. Shri K.P. Unnikrishnan
16. Smt. Purabi Mukhopadhyay\*\*
17. Shri N.K.P. Salve
18. Shri Tirath Ram Amla\*\*
19. Smt. Maimoona Sultan
20. Shri Patitpaban Pradhan\*\*
21. Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan\*\*
22. Shri Indradeep Singh

### 1982-83

1. Shri Satish Agarwal — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Chitta Basu
3. Smt. Vidyavati Chaturvedi
4. Shri C.T. Dhandapani
5. Shri G.L. Dogra
6. Shri Bhiku Ram Jain
7. Shri K. Lakkappa
8. Shri Mahavir Prasad
9. Shri Sunil Maitra
10. Shri Dhanik Lal Mandal
11. Shri Jamilur Rahman
12. Shri Uttam Rathod
13. Shri Harish Rawat
14. Shri G. Narsimha Reddy
15. Shri Ram Singh Yadav
16. Dr. Sankata Prasad
17. Smt. Pratibha Singh
18. Shri Syed Rahmat Ali
19. Shri B. Satyanarayan Reddy
20. Shri Kalyan Roy
21. Shri Nirmal Chatterjee
22. Shri A.P. Janardhanam

\*\*Ceased to be Members of the Committee consequent on their retirement from Rajya Sabha on 2.4.1982.

**1983-84**

1. Shri Sunil Maitra — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Chitta Basu
3. Smt. Vidyavati Chaturvedi
4. Shri C.T. Dhandapani
5. Shri G.L. Dogra
6. Shri Bhiku Ram Jain
7. Shri Satyanarayan Jatiya
8. Shri K. Lakkappa
9. Shri Mahavir Prasad
10. Shri Dhanik Lal Mandal
11. Shri Jamilur Rahman
12. Shri Uttam Rathod
13. Shri Harish Rawat
14. Shri G. Narsimha Reddy
15. Shri Ram Singh Yadav
16. Dr. Sankata Prasad
17. Shri Syed Rahmat Ali
18. Smt. Pratibha Singh
19. Dr. (Smt.) Sathiavani Mathu
20. Dr. Harekrushna Mallick
21. Shri Nirmal Chatterjee
22. Shri Kalyan Roy

**1984-85\***

1. Shri Sunil Maitra— *Chairperson*
2. Shri Chitta Basu
3. Smt. Vidyavati Chaturvedi
4. Shri Digambar Singh
5. Shri G. L. Dogra
6. Shri Bhiku Ram Jain
7. Shri K. Lakkappa
8. Shri Mahavir Prasad
9. Shri Jamilur Rahman
10. Shri Ratansinh Rajda

\*Till dissolution of Lok Sabha on 31.12.1984.

11. Shri Uttam Rathod
12. Shri Harish Rawat
13. Shri G. Narsimha Reddy
14. Shri Suraj Bhan
15. Shri Ram Singh Yadav
16. Smt. Amarjit Kaur
17. Shri Bhim Raj
18. Shri Nirmal Chatterjee
19. Dr. (Smt.) Najma Heptulla
20. Miss Jayalalitha
21. Shri Chaturanan Mishra
22. Shri Ramanand Yadav

#### 1985-86

1. Shri E. Ayyapu Reddy — *Chairperson*
2. Shri J. Chokka Rao
3. Shri Amal Datta
4. Shri Ranjit Singh Gaekwad
5. Shrimati Prabhawati Gupta
6. Shri Harpal Singh
7. Shri Vilas Muttemwar
8. Shri G. Devaraya Naik
9. Shri Rameshwar Neekhra
10. Shri Rajmangal Pande
11. Shri H.M. Patel
12. Shrimati Jayanti Patnaik
13. Shri S. Singaravadivel
14. Shri Simon Tigga
15. Shri Girdhari Lal Vyas
16. Shrimati Amarjit Kaur
17. Shri Nirmal Chatterjee
18. Miss Jayalalitha
19. Shri Ghulam Rasool Kar
20. Shri Chaturanan Mishra
21. Shri K.L.N. Prasad
22. Shri Ramanand Yadav

**1986-87**

1. Shri E. Ayyapu Reddy — *Chairperson*
2. Shri J. Chokka Rao
3. Shri Amal Datta
4. Shri Ranjit Singh Gaekwad
5. Shrimati Prabhawati Gupta
6. Shri G.S. Mishra
7. Shri Vilas Muttemwar
8. Shri G. Devaraya Naik
9. Shri Rameshwar Neekhra
10. Shri Rajmangal Pande
11. Shri H.M. Patel
12. Shrimati Jayanti Patnaik
13. Shri S. Singaravadivel
14. Shri Simon Tigga
15. Shri Girdhari Lal Vyas
16. Shri Bhuvnesh Chaturvedi
17. Shri K.L.N. Prasad
18. Shri Gulam Rasool Kar
19. Shri A.K. Antony
20. Shri Nirmal Chatterjee
21. Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy
22. Shri Virendra Verma

**1987-88**

1. Shri Amal Datta — *Chairperson*
2. Shri S.M. Bhattam
3. Shri Mohd. Ayub Khan
4. Shri Y.S. Mahajan
5. Shri Ajay Mushran
6. Shri K. Ramamurthy
7. Shri Balwant Singh Ramoowalia
8. Shri Navinchandra Ravani
9. Shri S. Jaipal Reddy
10. Shri Chiranji Lal Sharma
11. Shri Pratap Bhanu Sharma

12. Maj. Gen. R.S. Sparrow
13. Dr. Chandra Shekhar Tripathi
14. Shri Vir Sen
15. Shri Yogeshwar Prasad Yogesh
16. Shri A.K. Antony
17. Shri Nirmal Chatterjee\*
18. Shri Bhuvnesh Chaturvedi\*
19. Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy
20. Smt. Manorama Pandey
21. Shri B. Satyanarayan Reddy
22. Shri T. Chandrasekhar Reddy

### 1988-89

1. Shri Amal Datta\*\*—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Abdul Hannan Ansari
3. Shri Chhitubhai Gamit
4. Shri M.Y. Ghorpade
5. Shri Dinesh Goswami
6. Shri Mohd. Ayub Khan
7. Shri Y.S. Mahajan
8. Shri C. Madhav Reddy
9. Shri S. Jaipal Reddy
10. Shri Pratap Bhanu Sharma
11. Maj. Gen. R.S. Sparrow
12. Smt. Usha Rani Tomar
13. Dr. Chandra Shekhar Tripathi
14. Shri Vir Sen
15. Shri Yogeshwar Prasad Yogesh
16. Shri Jagesh Desai@
17. Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy

\* Ceased to be a member of the Committee consequent on his retirement from Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 1.4.1988

\*\* Appointed as Chairman *w.e.f.* 5.9.1988 *vice* Shri C. Madhav Reddy resigned from Chairmanship of the Committee.

@ Nominated *w.e.f.* 7.12.1988 *vice* Shri Kalpnath Rai ceased to be member of the Committee on his appointment as a Minister of State.

18. Shri Kailash Pati Mishra
19. Shrimati Manorama Pandey
20. Shri Yalla Sesi Bhushana Rao
21. Shri T. Chandrasekhar Reddy
22. Shri Surender Singh

**1989-90**

1. Shri P. Kolandaivelu — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Abdul Hannan Ansari
3. Shri Chhitubhai Gamit
4. Shri M.Y. Ghorpade
5. Shri Mohd. Ayub Khan
6. Shri Y.S. Mahajan
7. Shri M. Mahalingam\*
8. Shri Vijay N. Patil\*
9. Dr. G.S. Rajhans\*
10. Shri Pratap Bhanu Sharma
11. Maj. Gen. R.S. Sparrow
12. Shrimati Usha Rani Tomar
13. Dr. Chandra Shekhar Tripathi
14. Shri Vir Sen
15. Shri Yogeshwar Prasad Yogesh
16. Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal\*\*
17. Shri Jagesh Desai
18. Shri R.T. Gopalan\*\*
19. Shri Ghulam Rasool Matto\*\*
20. Shri Surender Singh
21. Shri P.N. Sukul
22. Shri Rameshwar Thakur

\* Elected *w.e.f.* 3.8.1989 *vice* Sarvashri Bh. Vijaykumar Raju, S. Jaipal Reddy and Saifuddin Chowdhary resigned from the Committee *w.e.f.* 10.5.1989, 12.5.1989 and 5.6.1989, respectively.

\*\* Nominated *w.e.f.* 18.8.1989 *vice* Shri Parvathaneni Upendra resigned *w.e.f.* 12.5.1989 and S/Shri Virendra Verma and Jaswant Singh resigned *w.e.f.* (15.5.1989) from the Committee.

**1990-91**

1. Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Ramesh Bais
3. Shri G.M. Banatwalla
4. Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee
5. Shri P. Chidambaram
6. Shri A.N. Singh Deo\*
7. Shri Bhabani Shankar Hota
8. Shri Mallikarjun
9. Shri Manjay Lal
10. Prof. Gopalrao Mayekar
11. Shri Kailash Meghwal
12. Shri M.S. Pal
13. Shri Ajit Kumar Panja
14. Shri Janardhana Poojary
15. Shri Amar Roypradhan
16. Shri T.R. Balu
17. Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy\*\*
18. Shri H. Hanumanthappa
19. Shri Sunil Basu Ray
20. Dr. Nagen Saikia
21. Shri Vishvjit P. Singh
22. Shri Rameshwar Thakur

**1991-92**

1. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava
3. Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee
4. Shri Z.M. Kahandole
5. Shri Vilas Muttemwar
6. Shri D.K. Naikar

\* Appointed *w.e.f.* 4.1.1991 *vice* Shri Shantilal Purushottamdas Patel ceased to be member of the Committee on his appointment as Deputy Minister.

\*\* Appointed *w.e.f.* 10.1.1991 *vice* Shri Kamal Morarka ceased to be member of the Committee on his appointment as a Minister of State.

7. Shri Arvind Netam
8. Shri Kashiram Rana
9. Shri R. Surender Reddy
10. Shri Amar Roypradhan
11. Shrimati Krishna Sahi
12. Shri Pratap Singh
13. Shri N. Sundararaj
14. Kumari Uma Bharati
15. Prof. (Dr.) S.P. Yadav
16. Shri R.K. Dhawan
17. Shri Dipen Ghosh
18. Shri H. Hanumanthappa
19. Shri J.P. Javali
20. Shri Murasoli Maran
21. Shri Vishvjit P. Singh
22. Shri Ish Dutt Yadav

**1992-93**

1. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava
3. Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee
4. Shri Z.M. Kahandole
5. Shri Vilas Muttemwar
6. Shri D.K. Naikar
7. Shri Arvind Netam\*
8. Shri Kashiram Rana
9. Shri R. Surender Reddy
10. Shri Pratap Singh
11. Shri Ramashray Prasad Singh
12. Shri N. Sundararaj
13. Shri K.V. Thangka Balu\*\*

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\* Elected *w.e.f.* 23 July, 1992 *vice* Shrimati Krishna Sahi ceased to be a member of the Committee on her appointment as a Minister.

\*\* Ceased to be members of the Committee consequent upon their appointment as Ministers *w.e.f.* 18 January, 1993.



14. Kumari Uma Bharati
15. Prof. (Dr.) Sripal Singh Yadav
16. Dr. Abrar Ahmed\*\*\*
17. Shri R.K. Dhawan
18. Shri J.P. Javali
19. Shri Murasoli Maran
20. Shri Viren J. Shah
21. Shri Ish Dutt Yadav
22. Shri Ram Naresh Yadav

#### 1993-94

1. Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee
3. Dr. K.V.R. Chowdary
4. Shri Bandaru Dattatraya
5. Shri Sharad Dighe
6. Shri Jagat Veer Singh Drona
7. Shri Srikanta Jena
8. Smt. Krishnendra Kaur
9. Shri Rama Krishna Konathala
10. Smt. Geeta Mukherjee
11. Shri D.K. Naikar
12. Shri Mrutyunjaya Nayak
13. Shri Motilal Singh
14. Shri S.B. Thorat
15. Shri Satya Pal Singh Yadav
16. Shri S.S. Ahluwalia
17. Shri Somappa R. Bommai
18. Shri Anant Ram Jaiswal
19. Miss Saroj Khaparde\*

\*\*\* Ceased to be member of the Committee consequent upon his appointment as Minister *w.e.f.* 19 January, 1993.

\* Ceased to be a Member of the Committee on completion of her tenure in Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 2 April, 1994.

20. Shri Murasoli Maran
21. Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan
22. Shri Viren J. Shah

**1994-95**

1. Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Bandaru Dattatraya
3. Shri Anil Basu
4. Shri Dileep Singh Bhuria
5. Sqn. Ldr. Kamal Chaudhry
6. Dr. K.V.R. Chowdary
7. Shri Sharad Dighe
8. Shri Jagat Veer Singh Drona
9. Smt. Krishnendra Kaur (Deepa)
10. Smt. Geeta Mukherjee
11. Shri Mrutyunjaya Nayak
12. Shri V. Krishna Rao
13. Shri Magunta Subbarama Reddy
14. Shri Mohan Singh
15. Shri S. B. Thorat
16. Shri S.S. Ahluwalia
17. Shri Somappa R. Bommai
18. Shri Triloki Nath Chaturvedi
19. Miss Saroj Khaparde
20. Shri Murasoli Maran
21. Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan
22. Shri G.G. Swell

**1995-96**

1. Shri Ram Naik—*Chairperson*
2. Dr. F. Azam
3. Kumari Mamata Banerjee
4. Shri Anil Basu
5. Shri Dileep Singh Bhuria
6. Shrimati Maragatham Chandrasekhar
7. Shri Gopi Nath Gajapathi

8. Dr. K.D. Jeswani
9. Maj. Gen. (Retired) Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri
10. Shri Peter G. Marbaniang
11. Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee
12. Shri Shravan Kumar Patel
13. Shrimati Vasundhara Raje
14. Shri V. Krishna Rao
15. \*Shri Magunta Subbarama Reddy
16. Shri Rahasbihari Barik
17. Shri Triloki Nath Chaturvedi
18. Shri Misa R. Ganesan
19. Shrimati Chandrika Abhinandan Jain
20. Shri Ajit P.K. Jogi
21. Shri Rajubhai A. Parmar
22. Shri G.G. Swell

#### 1996-97

1. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul
3. Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee
4. Shri Ramesh Chennithala
5. Shri Prithviraj D. Chavan
6. Smt. Meira Kumar
7. Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
8. Prof. Ajit Kumar Mehta
9. Shri Suresh Prabhu
10. Shri P.V. Rajendran
11. Shri Ganga Charan Rajput
12. Shri V.V. Raghavan
13. Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy
14. Shri B.L. Shankar
15. Shri Ishwar Dayal Swami
16. Shri Ramdas Agarwal

\* Expired on 1 December, 1995.

17. Smt. Margaret Alva
18. Shri Rahasbihari Barik
19. Shri Ajit P.K. Jogi
20. Shri R.K. Kumar
21. Shri N. Giri Prasad
22. Shri Rajubhai A. Parmar

**1997-98**

1. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul
3. Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee
4. Shri Ramesh Chennithala
5. Shri Prithviraj D. Chavan
6. Shri N.S.V. Chitthan
7. Smt. Meira Kumar
8. Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
9. Prof. Ajit Kumar Mehta
10. Shri Suresh Prabhu
11. Shri Ganga Charan Rajput
12. Shri V.V. Raghavan
13. Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy
14. Shri B.L. Shankar
15. Shri Ishwar Dayal Swami
16. Shri Ramdas Agarwal
17. Shri R.K. Kumar
18. Shri N. Giri Prasad\*
19. Smt. Kamla Sinha\*\*
20. Smt. Margaret Alva
21. Shri Surinder Kumar Singla
22. Shri Vayalar Ravi

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\* Expired on 24 May, 1997.

\*\* Ceased to be a Member of the Committee on her appointment as Minister of State *w.e.f.* 3.6.1997.

**1998-99**

1. Shri Manoranjan Bhakta — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Prithviraj D. Chavan
3. Shri Ram Tahal Chaudhary
4. Smt. Bhavna Chikhaliya
5. Shri C. Gopal
6. Shri Vijay Kumar Khandelwal
7. Maj. Gen. B.C. Khanduri
8. Prof. Ajit Kumar Mehta
9. Shri Rupchand Pal
10. Shri M. Rajaiah
11. Shri Ch. Vidyasagar Rao
12. Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy
13. Shri Prabhat Kumar Samantaray
14. Shri K. Natwar Singh
15. Prof. Saifuddin Soz
16. Shri Md. Salim
17. Shri K.R. Malkani
18. Shri Satishchandra Sitaram Pradhan
19. Shri J. Chitharanjan
20. Shri Jayant Kumar Malhoutra
21. Shri Vayalar Ravi
22. Shri K. Rahman Khan

**1999-2000**

1. Shri Narayan Dutt Tiwari—*Chairperson*
2. Smt. Bhavna Chikhaliya
3. Shri Vijay Goel
4. Dr. Madan Prasad Jaiswal
5. Shri C. Kuppusami
6. Shri S. Murugesan
7. Shri Rupchand Pal
8. Shri Prakash Paranjpe
9. Shri Chandresh Patel
10. Shri Annasaheb M.K. Patil

11. Shri Rajesh Pilot
12. Shri N. Janardhana Reddy
13. Shri Chattrapal Singh
14. Shri Prabhunath Singh
15. Shri K. Yerrannaaidu
16. Shri Vayalar Ravi
17. Shri K. Rahman Khan
18. Shri K.R. Malkani
19. Shri Satishchandra Sitaram Pradhan
20. Shri Md. Salim
21. Shri J. Chitharanjan
22. Shri Jayant Kumar Malhotra

**2000-2001**

1. Shri Narayan Datt Tiwari—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Vijay Goel
3. Dr. Madan Prasad Jaiswal
4. Shri C. Kuppusami
5. Shri M.V.V.S. Murthy
6. Shri S. Murugesan
7. Shri Rupchand Pal
8. Shri Prakash Paranjpe
9. Shri Chandresh Patel
10. Shri Annasaheb M.K. Patil
11. Shri M.O.H. Farook\*
12. Shri N. Janardhana Reddy
13. Shri Chattrapal Singh
14. Shri Prabhunath Singh
15. Shri Balram Singh Yadav
16. Shri P.N. Siva
17. Dr. Y. Radhakrishna Murty
18. Shri K. Rahman Khan
19. Shri Onward L. Nongtdu\*\*

\* Elected *w.e.f.* 2 August, 2000 *vice* Shri Rajesh Pilot death.

\*\* Elected *w.e.f.* 25 August, 2000 *vice* Shri Vayalar Ravi ceased to be a Member of Committee consequent upon his retirement from Rajya Sabha on 1 July, 2000.

20. Prof. Ramgopal Yadav
21. Shri Anantray Devshanker Dave
22. Shri S.R. Bommai

### 2001-2002

1. Shri Narayan Datt Tiwari—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Adhi Sankar
3. Shri M.O.H. Farooq
4. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab\*
5. Dr. Madan P. Jaiswal
6. Shri M.V.V.S. Murthi
7. Shri Rupchand Pal
8. Shri Prakash Paranjpe
9. Shri Chandresh Patel
10. Dr. Sahib Singh Verma\*\*
11. Shri N. Janardhana Reddy<sup>§</sup>
12. Shri C. Sreenivaasan
13. Kunwar Akhilesh Singh
14. Shri Chhatrapal Singh
15. Shri Prabhunath Singh
16. Shri S.R. Bommai
17. Shri Anantray Devshanker Dave<sup>#</sup>
18. Shri K. Rehman Khan
19. Dr. Y. Radhakrishna Murty<sup>#</sup>
20. Shri Onward L. Nongtdu<sup>@</sup>
21. Shri Satish Pradhan
22. Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav

§ Appointed Chairman of the Committee on 16 March, 2002 consequent upon the appointment of Shri Narayan Datt Tiwari as Chief Minister of Uttaranchal.

\* Elected *w.e.f.* 29 November, 2001 *vice* Shri Vijay Goel ceased to be member on his appointment as a Minister.

\*\* Elected *w.e.f.* 29 November, 2001 *vice* Shri Annasaheb M.K. Patil ceased to be member on his appointment as a Minister.

# Ceased to be Members of the Committee consequent upon their retirement from Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 9 April, 2002.

@ Ceased to be a Member of the Committee consequent upon his retirement from Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 12 April, 2002.

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**2002-2003**

1. Sardar Buta Singh — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Haribhai Chaudhary
3. Shri M.O.H. Farook
4. Dr. Madan Prasad Jaiswal
5. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
6. Dr. K. Malaisamy
7. Dr. M.V.V.S. Murthi
8. Shri Rupchand Pal
9. Shri Prakash Paranjpe
10. Shri Ramsagar Rawat
11. Shri N. Janardhana Reddy
12. Vacant\*
13. Shri Kirit Somaiya
14. Shri Chinmayanand Swami
15. Shri Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh\*\*
16. Shri S. Agniraj
17. Shri Santosh Bagrodia
18. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
19. Shri K. Rahman Khan
20. Shri Bachani Lekhraj
21. Dr. Alladi P. Rajkumar
22. Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav

**2003-2004**

1. Sardar Buta Singh — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Haribhai Chaudhary@
3. Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi

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\* Shri Chhatrapal Singh ceased to be Member of the Committee consequent upon his appointment as Minister on 29th January, 2003.

\*\* Elected on 7th August, 2002 *vice* Dr. Sahib Singh Verma ceased to be Member of the Committee consequent upon his appointment as Minister on 1st July, 2002.

@ Sh. Haribhai Chaudhary, MP resigned *w.e.f.* 9th May, 2003 and re-elected *w.e.f.* 30th July, 2003.



4. Shri M.O.H. Farook
5. Dr. Madan Prasad Jaiswal
6. Shri Raghunath Jha
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab\*
8. Dr. K. Malaisamy
9. Dr. M.V.V.S. Murthi
10. Shri Rupchand Pal
11. Shri Mohan Rawale
12. Dr. Nitish Sengupta
13. Shri Raghuraj Singh Shakya
14. Shri Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh
15. Shri Kirit Somaiya
16. Shri Santosh Bagrodia
17. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
18. Shri K. Rahman Khan
19. Shri Bachani Lekhraj
20. Dr. Alladi P. Rajkumar
21. Shri S. Viduthalai Virumbi\*\*
22. Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav

### 2004-2005

1. Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Ramesh Bais
3. Shri Khagen Das
4. Dr. M. Jagannath
5. Shri Raghunath Jha
6. Shri Naveen Jindal@
7. Shri Ashok Kumar Rawat

\* Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab, MP elected *w.e.f.* 30th July, 2003 vice Sh. Chinmayanand Swami ceased to be a Member on his appointment as Union Minister *w.e.f.* 24th May, 2003.

\*\* Shri S. Viduthalai Virumbi, MP nominated on 15th December, 2003 vice Shri C.P. Thirunavukkarasu, MP retired *w.e.f.* 6th October, 2003.

@ Shri Naveen Jindal, MP elected as a Member to the Committee on 16th December, 2004 vice Shri A.R. Antulay, MP who resigned from the membership of the Committee *w.e.f.* 27th August, 2004.

8. Shri Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy
9. Dr. R. Senthil
10. Shri Madan Lal Sharma
11. Shri Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh
12. Dr. Ram Lakhan Singh
13. Kunwar Revati Raman Singh
14. Shri K.V. Thangka Balu
15. Shri Tarit Baran Topdar
16. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
17. Shri R.K. Dhawan
18. Dr. K. Malaisamy
19. Shri V. Narayanasamy
20. Shri C. Ramachandraiah
21. Shri Jairam Ramesh
22. Prof. R.B.S. Varma

**2005-2006**

1. Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Ramesh Bais
3. Shri Khagen Das
4. Dr. M. Jagannath
5. Shri R.L. Jalappa
6. Shri Raghunath Jha
7. Shri Brajesh Pathak
8. Shri Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy
9. Dr. R. Senthil
10. Shri Madan Lal Sharma
11. Shri Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh
12. Dr. Ram Lakhan Singh
15. Kunwar Revati Raman Singh
14. Shri K.V. Thangka Balu
15. Shri Tarit Baran Topdar
16. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
17. Shri R.K. Dhawan
18. Dr. K. Malaisamy

19. Shri V. Narayanasamy
20. Shri C. Ramachandraiah
21. Vacant\*
22. Vacant#

### 2006-2007

1. Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Khagen Das
3. Shri P.S. Gadhavi
4. Shri R.L. Jalappa
5. Shri Raghunath Jha
6. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
7. Shri Brajesh Pathak
8. Prof. M. Ramadass
9. Shri Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy
10. Shri Madan Lal Sharma
11. Shri Mohan Singh
12. Shri Rajiv Ranjan 'Lalan' Singh
13. Shri Kharabela Swain
14. Shri K.V. Thangkabalu
15. Shri Tarit Baran Topdar
16. Shri V. Narayanasamy
17. Shri R.K. Dhawan
18. Shri Janardhana Poojary
19. Shri Suresh Bhardwaj
20. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
21. Dr. K. Malaisamy
22. Shri Ravula Chandra Sekar Reddy

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\* Shri Jairam Ramesh, MP ceased to be Member *w.e.f.* 29th January, 2006 on his appointment as Minister in the Union Government.

# Prof. R.B.S. Varma, M.P. ceased to be Member on his retirement on 2.4.2006.

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**2007-2008**

1. Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Kirip Chaliha
3. Shri Khagen Das
4. Shri P.S. Gadhavi
5. Shri R.L. Jalappa
6. Shri Raghunath Jha<sup>#</sup>
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
8. Dr. Rajesh Mishra
9. Shri Brajesh Pathak
10. Prof. M. Ramadass
11. Shri K.S. Rao
12. Shri Mohan Singh
13. Shri Rajiv Ranjan 'Lalan' Singh
14. Shri Kharabela Swain
15. Shri Tarit Baran Topdar
16. Shri V. Narayanasamy<sup>#</sup>
17. Prof. P.J. Kurien
18. Shri Janardhana Poojary<sup>@</sup>
19. Shri Suresh Bhardwaj<sup>\*</sup>
20. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee<sup>†</sup>
21. Dr. K. Malaisamy
22. Shri Ravula Chandra Sekar Reddy<sup>@</sup>

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<sup>#</sup> Ceased to be Members of the Committee on Public Accounts *w.e.f.* 6th April, 2008 on their appointment as Ministers.

<sup>\*</sup> Ceased to be a Member of the Committee on Public Accounts *w.e.f.* 9th January, 2008 on his resignation from Rajya Sabha.

<sup>†</sup> Ceased to be a Member of the Committee on Public Accounts *w.e.f.* 2nd April, 2008 consequent to expiry of his term of Rajya Sabha.

<sup>@</sup> Ceased to be Members of the Committee on Public Accounts *w.e.f.* 9th April, 2008 consequent to expiry of their term of Rajya Sabha.

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**2008-2009**

Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra\*\*\* — *Chairperson*  
(1.05.2008 to 8.12.2008)

1. Shri Santosh Gangwar\*# — *Chairperson*  
(23.12.2008 to 30.04.2009)
2. Shri Furkan Ansari
3. Shri Vijay Bahuguna
4. Shri Khagen Das
5. Shri Sandeep Dikshit
6. Shri P.S. Gadhavi
7. Shri Shailendra Kumar
8. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
9. Vacant
10. Prof. M. Ramadass
11. Shri K.S. Rao\*\*
12. Shri Sita Ram Singh
13. Shri Kharabella Swain
14. Shri Tarit Baran Topdar
15. Shri Arun Yadav
16. Shri Raashid Alvi
17. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
18. Shri B.K. Hariprasad
19. Shri Shanta Kumar
20. Prof. P. J. Kurien
21. Dr. K. Malaisamy
22. Sardar Tarlochan Singh

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\* Elected *w.e.f.* 17th December, 2008 *vice* Shri Brajesh Pathak ceased to be a Member of Committee consequent upon his election to Rajya Sabha.

\*\* Elected *w.e.f.* 17th December, 2008 *vice* Shri Rajiv Ranjan 'Lalan' Singh resigned his seat in Lok Sabha on 11th November, 2008.

\*\*\* Resigned his seat in Lok Sabha *w.e.f.* 18th December, 2008.

# Consequent upon the resignation of Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, MP, *Chairperson*, PAC, from Lok Sabha appointed as *Chairperson* by the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha on 23rd December, 2008 for the remaining term of PAC (2008-09).

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**2009-2010**

1. Shri Jaswant Singh\* — *Chairperson*  
(07.08.2009-31.12.2009)
2. Shri Gopinath Munde# — *Chairperson*  
(06.01.2010-30.04.2010)
3. Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul
4. Dr. Bali Ram
5. Shri Khagen Das
6. Shri Naveen Jindal
7. Shri Satpal Maharaj
8. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
9. Dr. K. Samba Siva Rao
10. Shri Jitendra Singh (Alwar)
11. Kunwar Rewati Raman Singh
12. Shri Yashwant Sinha
13. Shri K. Sudhakaran
14. Dr. M. Thambi Durai
15. Shri Aruna Kumar Vundavalli
16. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
17. Shri Sharad Anantrao Joshi
18. Shri Ashwani Kumar@
19. Shri Shanta Kumar
20. Dr. K. Malaisamy
21. Shri N.K. Singh
22. Prof. Saif-ud-Din Soz

**2010-2011**

1. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul
3. Dr. Bali Ram
4. Shri Ramen Deka

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# Appointed as the Chairman of the Committee *w.e.f.* 6th January, 2010 vice Shri Jaswant Singh resigned from the Chairmanship of the Committee.

\* Resigned from the Chairmanship *w.e.f.* 31.12.2009 but continued to be the Member of the Committee.

@ Ceased to be a Member of the PAC *w.e.f.* 9th April, 2010 on expiry of the term from Rajya Sabha.

5. Shri Naveen Jindal
6. Shri Satpal Maharaj
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
8. Dr. K. Samba Siva Rao
9. Shri Yashwant Sinha
10. Shri Jitendra Singh (Alwar)
11. Kunwar Rewati Raman Singh
12. Shri K. Sudhakaran
13. Dr. M. Thambi Durai
14. Shri D. Venugopal
15. Shri Aruna Kumar Vundavalli
16. Vacant\*
17. Shri N. Balaganga
18. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
19. Shri Kalraj Mishra
20. Shri N.K. Singh
21. Shri Tiruchi Siva
22. Prof. Saif-ud-Din Soz

### 2011-2012

1. Dr. Murlī Manohar Joshi— *Chairperson*
2. Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul
3. Dr. Bali Ram
4. Shri Sandeep Dikshit
5. Shri Anant Kumar Hegde
6. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
7. Shri Shripad Yesso Naik
8. Shri Sanjay Nirupam
9. Shri Jagdambika Pal
10. Dr. Kavuru Sambasiva Rao
11. Shri Adhi Sankar
12. Kunwar Rewati Raman Singh
13. Shri K. Sudhakaran

\* Vacancy occurred *vice* Shri Ashwani Kumar had been appointed as Minister of State *w.e.f.* 19th January, 2011.

14. Dr. M. Thambi Durai
15. Dr. Girija Vyas
16. Shri Tariq Anwar
17. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
18. Shri Naresh Gujral
19. Shri Prakash Javadekar
20. Shri Satish Chandra Misra
21. Shri J.D. Seelam\*
22. Prof. Saif-ud-Din Soz

**2012-2013**

1. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul
3. Dr. Bali Ram
4. Shri Sandeep Dikshit
5. Dr. M. Thambi Durai
6. Shri T.K.S. Elangovan
7. Shri Anant Kumar Hegde
8. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
9. Shri Sanjay Nirupam
10. Shri Shripad Yesso Naik
11. Shri Abhijit Mukherjee\*\*
12. Shri Ashok Tanwar
13. Shri Takam Sanjoy^
14. Dr. Girija Vyas
15. Shri Dharmendra Yadav
16. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
17. Shri Prakash Javadekar
18. Shri Satish Chandra Misra

\* Elected *w.e.f.* 29th August, 2011 *vide* the vacancy occurred *vice* Smt. Jayanti Natarajan appointed as Minister *w.e.f.* 12th July, 2011.

\*\* Elected *w.e.f.* 6th December, 2012 *vice* Shri Sarvey Sathyanarayana appointed as Minister on 28th October, 2012.

^ Elected *w.e.f.* 6th December, 2012 *vice* Dr. Shashi Tharoor appointed as Minister on 28th October, 2012.



19. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Roy
20. Shri J.D. Seelam
21. Shri N.K. Singh
22. Prof. Saif-ud-Din Soz

### 2013-2014

1. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Anandrao Adsul
3. Dr. Bali Ram
4. Shri Ramen Deka
5. Shri Sandeep Dikshit
6. Dr. M. Thambi Durai
7. Shri T.K.S. Elangovan
8. Shri Jayaprakash Hegde
9. Dr. Sanjay Jaiswal
10. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
11. Shri Abhijit Mukherjee
12. Shri Sanjay Brijkishorlal Nirupam
13. Shri Ashok Tanwar
14. Shri Ajay Maken<sup>1</sup>
15. Shri Dharmendra Yadav
16. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
17. Shri Prakash Javadekar
18. Shri Ashwani Kumar<sup>2</sup>
19. Shri Satish Chandra Misra
20. Dr. V. Maitreyan<sup>3</sup>
21. Shri N.K. Singh
22. Smt. Ambika Soni

1 Elected *w.e.f.* 14th August, 2003 *vice* Dr. Girija Vyas appointed as Minister of Housing, Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation *w.e.f.* 17th June, 2013.

2 Elected *w.e.f.* 3rd September, 2013 *vice* Dr. V. Maitreyan ceased to be a Member upon his retirement as a Member of Rajya Sabha *w.e.f.* 24th July, 2013.

3 Elected *w.e.f.* 3rd September, 2013 *vice* Dr. E.M. Sudarsana Natchiappan appointed as Minister of State for Commerce and Industry *w.e.f.* 17th June, 2013.

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**2014-2015**

1. Prof. K.V.Thomas — *Chairperson*
2. Shri S.S. Ahluwalia
3. Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay
4. Shri Ranjit Singh Brahmpura
5. Shri Nishikant Dubey
6. Shri Gajanan Kirtikar
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
8. Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank"
9. Shri Neiphiu Rio
10. Shri Dushyant Singh<sup>1</sup>
11. Shri Janardan Singh Sigriwal
12. Shri Shiv Kumar Udasi<sup>2</sup>
13. Dr. Kirit Somaiya
14. Shri Anurag Thakur
15. Dr. P. Venugopal<sup>3</sup>
16. Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi
17. Shri Vijay Goel
18. Dr. Satyanarayan Jatiya
19. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita
20. Shri Shantaram Naik
21. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Ray
22. Shri Ramchandra Prasad Singh

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1 Elected *w.e.f.* 3rd December, 2014 *vice* Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy who has been appointed as Minister *w.e.f.* 9th November, 2014

2 Elected *w.e.f.* 3rd December, 2014 *vice* Shri Jayant Sinha who has been appointed as Minister *w.e.f.* 9th November, 2014.

3 Elected *w.e.f.* 3rd December, 2014 *vice* Dr. M. Thambidurai who has been chosen as Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha and has since resigned from the membership of the Committee.

**2015-2016**

1. Prof. K.V. Thomas — *Chairperson*
2. Shri S.S. Ahluwalia
3. Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay
4. Shri Ranjit Singh Brahmputra
5. Shri Nishikant Dubey
6. Shri Gajanan Kirtikar
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
8. Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank"
9. Shri Neiphiu Rio
10. Shri Dushyant Singh
11. Shri Janardan Singh Sigriwal
12. Shri Shiv Kumar Udasi
13. Dr. Kirit Somaiya
14. Shri Anurag Thakur
15. Dr. P. Venugopal
16. Shri Naresh Agrawal
17. Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi
18. Shri Anil Madhav Dave
19. Shri Vijay Goel
20. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita
21. Shri Shantaram Naik
22. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Ray

**2016-2017**

1. Prof. K.V. Thomas — *Chairperson*
2. Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay
3. Shri Prem Singh Chandumajra
4. Shri Nishikant Dubey
5. Prof. Richard Hay
6. Shri Gajanan Chandrakant Kirtikar
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
8. Smt. Riti Pathak
9. Shri Neiphiu Rio

10. Shri Janardan Singh Sigriwa
11. Shri Abhishek Singh
12. Dr. Kirit Somaiya
13. Shri Anurag Singh Thakur
14. Shri Shivkumar C. Udasi
15. Dr. P. Venugopal
16. Shri Naresh Agrawal
17. Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi
18. Shri Vijay Goel
19. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita
20. Shri Shantaram Naik
21. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Ray
22. Shri Ajay Sancheti

**2017-2018**

1. Shri Mallikarjun Kharge— *Chairperson*
2. Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay
3. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
4. Shri Prem Singh Chandumajra
5. Shri Nishikant Dubey
6. Shri Gajanan Chandrakant Kirtikar
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
8. Smt. Riti Pathak
9. Shri Neiphiu Rio<sup>1</sup>
10. Shri Abhishek Singh
11. Prof. Dr. Ram Shanker
12. Dr. Kirit Somaiya
13. Shri Anurag Singh Thakur
14. Shri Shivkumar C. Udasi
15. Dr. P. Venugopal
16. Shri Naresh Agrawal
17. Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi

<sup>1</sup> Ceased to be a Member of Committee consequent upon acceptance of his resignation from Lok Sabha *w.e.f.* 22 February, 2018.

18. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita
19. Shri Mohd. Ali Khan<sup>1</sup>
20. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Ray<sup>2</sup>
21. Shri Ajay Sancheti
22. Shri Bhupender Yadav

### 2018-2019

1. Shri Mallikarjun Kharge—*Chairperson*
2. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
3. Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay
4. Shri Prem Singh Chandumajra
5. Shri Gajanan Chandrakant Kirtikar
6. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
7. Smt. Riti Pathak
8. Shri Ramesh Pokhriyai "Nishank"
9. Shri Janardan Singh Sigriwal
10. Shri Abhishek Singh
11. Shri Gopal Shetty
12. Dr. Kirit Somaiya
13. Shri Anurag Singh Thakur
14. Shri Shivkumar C. Udasi
15. Dr. P. Venugopal
16. Prof. M.V. Rajeev Gowda
17. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita
18. Shri Shwait Malik
19. Shri Narayan Lal Panchariya
20. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Ray
21. Shri C.M. Ramesh\*
22. Shri Bhupender Yadav\*

1 Elected *w.e.f.* 29 December, 2017 in lieu of vacancy caused due to retirement of Shri Shantaram Naik.

2 Ceased to be a Member of Committee consequent upon his retirement from Rajya Sabha on 18 August, 2017 and re-elected *w.e.f.* 29 December, 2017.

\* Elected *w.e.f.* 6 August, 2018.

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**2019-2020**

1. Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury – *Chairperson*
2. Shri T. R. Baalu
3. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
4. Shri Sudheer Gupta
5. Smt. Darshana Vikram Jardosh
6. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
7. Shri Ajay (Teni) Misra
8. Shri Jagdambika Pal
9. Shri Vishnu Dayal Ram
10. Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale
11. Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh *alias* Lalan Singh
12. Dr. Satya Pal Singh
13. Shri Jayant Sinha
14. Shri Balashowry Vallabhaneni
15. Shri Ram Kripal Yadav
16. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar
17. Prof. M. V. Rajeev Gowda
18. Shri Naresh Gujral
19. Shri P. Bhattacharyai\*
20. Shri C. M. Ramesh
21. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Ray
22. Shri Bhupender Yadav

**2020-2021**

1. Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury — *Chairperson*
2. Shri T. R. Baalu
3. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
4. Shri Sudheer Gupta
5. Smt. Darshana Vikram Jardosh
6. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
7. Shri Ajay (Teni) Misra
8. Shri Jagdambika Pal

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\* Elected *w.e.f.* 10 February, 2020 in lieu of vacancy caused due to resignation of Shri Bhubaneswar kalita from Rajya Sabha on 05 August, 2019.

9. Shri Vishnu Dayal Ram
10. Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale
11. Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh *alias* Lalan Singh
12. Dr. Satya Pal Singh
13. Shri Jayant Sinha
14. Shri Balashowry Vallabhaneni
15. Shri Ram Kripal Yadav
16. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar
17. Shri Naresh Gujral
18. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita\*
19. Shri Mallikarjun Kharge\*
20. Shri C. M. Ramesh
21. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Ray
22. Shri Bhupender Yadav

### 2021-2022

1. Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury — *Chairperson*
2. Shri T. R. Baalu
3. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
4. Shri Vallabhaneni Balashowry
5. Shri Sudheer Gupta
6. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
7. Shri Jagdambika Pal
8. Shri Vishnu Dayal Ram
9. Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale
10. Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh *alias* Lalan Singh
11. Dr. Satya Pal Singh
12. Shri Jayant Sinha
13. Shri Ram Kripal Yadav
14. Shri Pratap Chandra Sarangit†
15. Shri Gowdar Mallikarjunappa Siddeshwara#

\* Elected *w.e.f.* 11th February, 2021.

† Elected *w.e.f.* 29.07.2021 *vice* Smt. Darshana Jardosh, MP appointed as Minister of State *w.e.f.* 07.07.2021.

# Elected *w.e.f.* 29.07.2021 *vice* Shri Ajay Kumar Mishra, MP appointed as Minister of State *w.e.f.* 07.07.2021.

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16. Shri Shaktisinh Gohil
  17. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita
  18. Dr. C.M. Ramesh
  19. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Ray
  20. Dr. M. Thambidurai
  21. Shri V. Vijayasai Reddy\*
  22. Dr. Sudhanshu Trivedi§

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\* Elected *w.e.f.* 09.08.2021 *vice* Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, MP appointed as Minister of State *w.e.f.* 07.07.2021.

§ Elected *w.e.f.* 09.08.2021 *vice* Shri Bhupender Yadav, MP appointed as Union Minister *w.e.f.* 07.07.2021.





Number of Reports presented and  
Recommendations made by the PAC to  
Parliament of India (Year-wise) 1921 to 2021

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**Number of Reports Presented and Recommendations made by  
the PAC to Parliament**

**(Year-wise) 1921-2021**

Year	No. of Reports presented	No. of Recommendations made
1921-22 . . . . .	Nil	-
1922-23 . . . . .	Nil	-
1923-24 . . . . .	2	12
1924-25 . . . . .	2	16
1925-26 . . . . .	1	28
1926-27 . . . . .	1	24
1927-28 . . . . .	1	20
1928-29 . . . . .	1	24
1929-30 . . . . .	1	28
1930-31 . . . . .	1	26
1931-32 . . . . .	1	20
1932-33 . . . . .	2	24
1933-34 . . . . .	2	15
1934-35 . . . . .	2	14
1935-36 . . . . .	2	23

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Year	No. of Reports presented	No. of Recommendations made
1936-37 . . . . .	2	20
1937-38 . . . . .	2	38
1938-39 . . . . .	2	25
1939-40 . . . . .	2	24
1940-41 . . . . .	1	20
1941-42 . . . . .	1	25
1942-43 . . . . .	1	25
1943-44 . . . . .	1	15
1944-45 . . . . .	1	24
1945-46 . . . . .	1	30
1946-47 . . . . .	1	28
1947-48 . . . . .	Nil	-
1948-49 . . . . .	Nil	-
1949-50 . . . . .	3	40
1950-51 . . . . .	1	50
1951-52 . . . . .	2	100
1952-53 . . . . .	5	103
1953-54 . . . . .	5	121
1954-55 . . . . .	3	159
1955-56 . . . . .	5	175
1956-57 . . . . .	5	103

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Year	No. of Reports presented	No. of Recommendations made
1957-58 . . . . .	8	300
1958-59 . . . . .	12	427
1959-60 . . . . .	10	309
1960-61 . . . . .	7	228
1961-62 . . . . .	6	260
1962-63 . . . . .	12	472
1963-64 . . . . .	14	682
1964-65 . . . . .	13	805
1965-66 . . . . .	14	1250
1966-67 . . . . .	18	793
1967-68 . . . . .	29	880
1968-69 . . . . .	53	809
1969-70 . . . . .	40	1202
1970-71 . . . . .	3	62
1971-72 . . . . .	48	919
1972-73 . . . . .	46	856
1973-74 . . . . .	38	555
1974-75 . . . . .	42	739
1975-76 . . . . .	48	934
1976-77 . . . . .	16	269
1977-78 . . . . .	80	2050
1978-79 . . . . .	69	591

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Year	No. of Reports presented	No. of Recommendations made
1979-80 . . . . .	00	00
1980-81 . . . . .	51	862
1981-82 . . . . .	59	812
1982-83 . . . . .	50	619
1983-84 . . . . .	57	515
1984-85 . . . . .	14	107
1985-86 . . . . .	48	234
1986-87 . . . . .	57	648
1987-88 . . . . .	33	223
1988-89 . . . . .	30	448
1989-90 . . . . .	19	51
1990-91 . . . . .	22	27
1991-92 . . . . .	17	165
1992-93 . . . . .	22	169
1993-94 . . . . .	23	198
1994-95 . . . . .	28	198
1995-96 . . . . .	16	165
1996-97 . . . . .	14	92
1997-98 . . . . .	10	104
1998-99 . . . . .	11	58
1999-2000 . . . . .	06	44
2000-2001 . . . . .	15	79

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Year	No. of Reports presented	No. of Recommendations made
2001-2002 . . . . .	16	125
2002-2003 . . . . .	11	50
2003-2004 . . . . .	15	89
2004-2005 . . . . .	13	51
2005-2006 . . . . .	14	158
2006-2007 . . . . .	20	147
2007-2008 . . . . .	27	174
2008-2009 . . . . .	10	71
2009-2010 . . . . .	21	187
2010-2011 . . . . .	13	136
2011-2012 . . . . .	25	198
2012-2013 . . . . .	27	148
2013-2014 . . . . .	14	154
2014-2015 . . . . .	20	238
2015-2016 . . . . .	30	329
2016-2017 . . . . .	24	202
2017-2018 . . . . .	28	144
2018-2019 . . . . .	35	183
2019-2020 . . . . .	13	57
2020-2021 . . . . .	24	66
2021-2022 . . . . .	03	22
(upto August 2021)		
<hr/> Total	1699	25538

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Number of Grants/charged Appropriations  
under which excess occurred and recommended  
to Parliament for regularisation

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**\*Number of Grants/Charged Appropriations under which excess occurred and recommended to Parliament for regularisation**

Year of Accounts	Total Number of Grants/Charged Appropriations under which excess occurred	Total amount involved
(1)	(2)	(3)
1921-22 . . . . .	26	4,93,33,195
1922-23 . . . . .	23	19,09,207
1923-24 . . . . .	7	67,37,911
1924-25 . . . . .	11	22,84,821
1925-26 . . . . .	18	66,38,614
1926-27 . . . . .	15	44,55,185
1927-28 . . . . .	13	3,13,06,420
1928-29 . . . . .	11	59,61,509
1929-30 . . . . .	16	2,74,80,237
1930-31 . . . . .	13	5,25,32,117
1931-32 . . . . .	8	25,36,096
1932-33 . . . . .	15	193,77,484
1933-34 . . . . .	11	1,70,96,199
1934-35 . . . . .	31	2,07,04,020

(1)	(2)	(3)
1935-36 . . . . .	18	22,67,719
1936-37 . . . . .	28	2,93,46,725
1937-38 . . . . .	25	1,90,73,615
1938-39 . . . . .	4	3,15,494
1939-40 . . . . .	9	6,86,52,437
1940-41 . . . . .	10	8,80,707
1941-42 . . . . .	11	10,98,135
1942-43 . . . . .	19	1,56,20,494
1943-44 . . . . .	15	3,62,64,208
1944-45 . . . . .	23	11,96,91,286
1945-46 . . . . .	21	7,02,64,612
<b>First Lok Sabha</b>		
1948-49 . . . . .	32	18,86,30,666
1949-50 . . . . .	27	21,11,34,743
1950-51 . . . . .	23	8,60,85,781
1951-52 . . . . .	24	11,22,50,672
1952-53 . . . . .	19	7,68,49,294
1953-54 . . . . .	25	6,04,91,137
<b>Second Lok Sabha</b>		
1954-55 . . . . .	20	11,95,98,374
1955-56 . . . . .	22	4,76,75,826
1956-57 . . . . .	18	8,31,81,321
1957-58 . . . . .	17	4,11,56,491
1958-59 . . . . .	15	44,11,937
1959-60 . . . . .	21	5,35,97,048

(1)	(2)	(3)
<b>Third Lok Sabha</b>		
1960-61 . . . . .	13	6,17,60,058
1961-62 . . . . .	18	8,55,82,200
1962-63 . . . . .	24	38,94,59,697
1963-64 . . . . .	20	3,52,81,647
1964-65 . . . . .	39	12,56,50,807
<b>Fourth Lok Sabha</b>		
1965-66 . . . . .	27	4,72,11,410
1966-67 . . . . .	31	11,60,43,857
1967-68 . . . . .	25	22,77,03,030
1968-69 . . . . .	30	3,77,58,815
<b>Fifth Lok Sabha</b>		
1969-70 . . . . .	23	17,10,60,901
1970-71 . . . . .	37	11,65,19,479
1971-72 . . . . .	37	2,23,81,43,129
1972-73 . . . . .	36	1,26,32,53,798
1973-74 . . . . .	27	11,05,65,905
1974-75 . . . . .	23	9,97,22,580
<b>Sixth Lok Sabha</b>		
1975-76 . . . . .	52	220,09,36,038
1976-77 . . . . .	27	111,18,08,071
<b>Seventh Lok Sabha</b>		
1977-78 . . . . .	17	82,41,79,044
1978-79 . . . . .	11	42,27,63,214
1979-80 . . . . .	19	1,40,85,83,078

(1)	(2)	(3)
1980-81 . . . . .	27	349,14,96,018
1981-82 . . . . .	18	462,67,53,240
1982-83 . . . . .	27	364,94,44,508
<b>Eighth Lok Sabha</b>		
1983-84 . . . . .	12	115,61,56,675
1984-85 . . . . .	9	64,87,28,968
1985-86 . . . . .	29	438,53,27,719
1986-87 . . . . .	25	384,39,57,812
<b>Ninth Lok Sabha</b>		
1987-88 . . . . .	21	304,15,37,951
<b>Tenth Lok Sabha</b>		
1988-89 . . . . .	26	367,97,98,761
1989-90 . . . . .	20	978,15,97,757
1990-91 . . . . .	19	900,80,31,682
1991-92 . . . . .	16	399,44,93,065
1992-93 . . . . .	13	689,06,04,604
1993-94 . . . . .	16	1240,34,71,402
<b>Eleventh Lok Sabha</b>		
1994-95 . . . . .	15	481,09,47,577
1995-96 . . . . .	9	745,80,02,642
<b>Twelfth Lok Sabha</b>		
1996-97 . . . . .	21	706,72,42,812
<b>Thirteenth Lok Sabha</b>		
1997-98 . . . . .	10	530,40,86,800
1998-99 . . . . .	69	12758,63,32,792

(1)	(2)	(3)
1999-2000 . . . . .	11	57,35,75,993
2000-2001 . . . . .	7	230,44,36,058
2001-2002 . . . . .	17	1089,53,82,503
<b>Fourteenth Lok Sabha</b>		
2002-2003 . . . . .	20	2188,11,53,702
2003-2004 . . . . .	21	43364,62,38,876
2004-2005 . . . . .	21	35978,55,59,249
2005-2006 . . . . .	26	99527,64,42,720
2006-2007 . . . . .	18	37471,40,15,383
2007-2008 . . . . .	16	222,56,88,912
<b>Fifteenth Lok Sabha</b>		
2008-2009 . . . . .	15	1544,94,04,705
2009-2010 . . . . .	18	14575,07,93,910
2010-2011 . . . . .	29	11046,93,92,850
2011-2012 . . . . .	14	8563,13,91,608
<b>Sixteenth Lok Sabha</b>		
2012-2013 . . . . .	19	6597,01,89,809
2013-2014 . . . . .	26	3508,21,69,233
2014-2015 . . . . .	13	16207,95,19,246
2015-2016 . . . . .	8	286,44,20,255
<b>Seventeenth Lok Sabha</b>		
2016-2017 . . . . .	11	190270,26,06,087
2017-2018 . . . . .	5	99610,31,00,900

\*Taken from Published sources.



