

Parliamentary Control Over Railway Budget

The Parliamentary Control Over Railway Budget is exercised by the following committees either before the submission of demands to parliament for voting or after the expenditure is incurred and annual accounts are closed-

- 1) **Railway Convention Committee**
- 2) **Estimate Committee**
- 3) **Discussion of Railway Budget**
- 4) **National Railway Users Consultative Council**
- 5) **Committee on Subordinate Legislation**
- 6) **Committee on Government Assurance**
- 7) **Public Accounts Committee**
- 8) **References from Member of Parliament**

1)

- 2) **Railway Convention Committee---** This is an adhoc committee of parliament consisting of 18 members(12 LS and 6 RS). It was constituted for reviewing the financial arrangements between Railway Revenues and General Revenues. This is the only committee of parliament to include two union minister-MR and FM.

- ❖ It examines periodically the Railway Finance and Working.
- ❖ It reviews the rate of dividend payable by the railway to General Revenue.
- ❖ This Committee normally meets after every 5 years.
- ❖ It recommends the changes to be made in Railway Finance.

- 2) **Estimate Committee --** This is a Parliamentary Committee to examine such of the estimates as it may deem fit or specially referred to it by Parliament or Speaker.

- ❖ There are 30 members elected by Lok Sabha every year.
- ❖ No minister is elected.

- 3) **Discussion of Railway Budget –** The Railway budget is discussed and debated in parliament by members of both houses. They raise starred question, unstarred questions and short notice questions, the Railway minister replies. Thus parliament exercises control over Railway finance and budget.

Starred: Qns For oral answers; Unstarred: Replies to which are laid on the table of the house. Short Notice: A minimum notice of 10 days is required.

4) **NRUCC** -- To secure better representation of railway users and afford more frequent opportunities for consultation between Railway & Railway Users on matters related to services rendered by railway NRUCC was formed in 1953.

- ❖ Members hold office not more than 2 years.
- ❖ The council consists of 7 persons.
- ❖ They are appointed by MR from various ministries, Rly. Committees, organisation and eminent persons who take interest in Rly. Problems.
- ❖ The council meet at least once a year.
- ❖ MR will preside the meeting of council.

4) **Committee on subordinate legislation** --- It scrutinizes and reports to Parliament that the power to make regulation, rules, subrules, bylaws etc. conferred by constitution or delegated by Parliament are being properly exercised.

5) **Committee on Government Assurances** – It scrutinizes whether Assurances, promises, undertaking given by the Minister from time to time, on the floor of the Lok Sabha and Rajya sabha have been implemented within the minimum time.

6) **Public Accounts Committee**

- It examine the accounts of sum granted by the parliament for expenditure to satisfy :-
 - that the money sanctioned have been utilized legally for the services and purposes to which they have been charged.
 - The expenditure confirms to the authority which governs it.
 - That every Re-appropriation has been made in accordance with the provisions made under rules.
- PAC consists of 22 members from the both houses of parliament every year
- A minister is not elected. If a member is appointed as minister, he will be ceased to be a member of PAC.
- Term of office of member of committee shall not exceed one year.
- Chairman of PAC is appointed by the Speaker.

- If Dy. Speaker is a member of PAC, he will be appointed as Chairman.
- Committee has its own programme and procedure.

8) Reference from Member of Parliament – Any MP may address the Ministry of Railway, or a Railway Administration on any matter concerning railway working. Member may also ask questions in both the houses of Parliament on issue connected with railway working.