

Committee on Public Undertakings

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Introduction

- ▶ The Committee on Public Undertakings or 'CoPU' is a parliamentary permanent finance committee to have financial control over PSUs.
- ▶ It came in existence on May 01, 1964 after the recommendations of V.K.Krishan Menon committee. In 1953 an independent M.P. Dr. Lankasundram has raised the voice in Loksabha to constitute a committee for financial control over PSUs.
- ▶ Initially there were 15 members in the committee (10 from Loksabha and 5 from Rajyasabha).
- ▶ In 1974-75 the number of members were raised.

Composition

- ▶ The Committee on Public Undertakings consists of 22 members comprising 15 members elected by Lok Sabha every year from amongst its members according to the principle of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote and 7 members elected by Rajya Sabha in like manner and nominated by that House for being associated with the Committee. The system of election ensures that each party/group is represented on the Committee in proportion to its respective strength in the Houses.

Process of Election

- ▶ Every year, a motion is moved in the House (Lok Sabha) by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs or the Chairperson of the Committee, if in Office, calling upon members of the House to elect from amongst themselves 15 members to the Committee on Public Undertakings. After the motion is adopted, a programme fixing the dates for filing the nominations, withdrawal of candidatures and the election, if necessary, is notified in Lok Sabha Bulletin Part—II. On receipt of nominations, a list of members who have filed the nomination papers is put up on the Notice Board.

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- ▶ Another motion is also moved in Lok Sabha recommending to Rajya Sabha to nominate seven members of that House for being associated with the Committee. After adoption, the motion is transmitted to Rajya Sabha through a message. Rajya Sabha holds election of members to the Committee and communicates to Lok Sabha the names of the elected members. The Chairperson of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker, Lok Sabha from amongst the members of the Committee. Minister can not to be Member of the Committee.

Functions

The functions of the Committee are to examine the reports and accounts of the Public Undertakings specified in the Fourth Schedule of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha and the reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon, if any, and to examine, in the context of the autonomy and efficiency of the public undertakings, whether the affairs of the public undertakings are being managed in accordance with sound business principles and prudent commercial practices. The Committee may also examine such subjects or matters which may be specifically referred to it by the House or by the Speaker. The Committee are, however, barred from examining and investigating matters of major Government policy as distinct from business or commercial functions of public undertakings, matters of day-to-day administration or matters for the consideration of which machinery is established by any special statute under which a particular undertaking is established.

Working

- ▶ The CoPU selects the PSU for examination mainly on the basis of the reports submitted by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India and the Audit reports of PSUs presented in the parliament.
- ▶ The committee may visit the PSU or constitute a study group on any related issue.
- ▶ Oral or written evidences are taken from the PSU.
- ▶ No minister is called by the committee during the examination, however after the deliberations the Chairperson may talk with the Minister informally.
- ▶ Committee submits its report to Lok Sabha and it is sent to the concerned ministry as well and Action Taken Report is also submitted to the Lok Sabha.