

Latest News: Estimates Committee Platinum Jubilee Conference

Inauguration & Venue

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla opened the two-day national conference marking 75 years of the Parliamentary Estimates Committee at Mumbai's Vidhan Bhavan on June 23, 2025.

Key Messages by The Speaker

1. Parliamentary committees don't oppose the government but "supplement, guide and advise" it, drawing on Members' ground-level insights to improve policy planning, fund allocation and governance transparency.
2. Urged greater use of technology, data-driven analysis and citizen engagement to make financial oversight future-ready.

Distinguished Participants

Committee chairpersons and members from Parliament, 30 States and UTs joined:

- Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh
- Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy CMs Eknath Shinde & Ajit Pawar
- Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar;
- Council Chairperson Prof Ram Shankar Shinde; Dr Neelam Gorhe; Anna Bansode.

Highlights from Chairperson Sanjay Jaiswal

- Since 1950, the Committee has produced over 1,000 reports shaping policies on health, education, infrastructure, defence and electric vehicles.
- Underlined its evolving role: from budget scrutiny to tackling climate change, Ganga rejuvenation and institutional reform.

Conference Resolutions

- Standardise the number and format of reports across States/UTs and Parliament.
- Roll out capacity-building workshops and training programmes to deepen Members' expertise in budgetary analysis and financial oversight.
- Forge stronger Parliament–State Assembly linkages via committee-specific exchanges to share best practices and boost suggestion-uptake rates.

About the Estimates Committee

Constitution & Composition

- First set up on April 10, 1950; 30 Members elected annually by Lok Sabha from its Members; Chairperson appointed by the Speaker.
- Term: one year. Ministers are ineligible to serve; if appointed, they cease to be Members from the date of their induction as Ministers.

Core Functions

1. Examine the Union budget estimates.
2. Recommend economies, organisational improvements, or administrative reforms consistent with policy.
3. Suggest alternate policies for efficiency and economy.
4. Check that allocations are “well laid out” within policy limits.
5. Advise on how estimates should be presented to Parliament.
6. May continue examining estimates throughout the financial year; Demands for Grants can be voted even if no report is made.
7. Excludes Public Undertakings under the Public Undertakings Committee’s remit.

Working Methodology

- Selects ministries, departments or statutory bodies for scrutiny.
- Examines special referrals from the House or Speaker.
- Constitutes Sub-Committees/Study Groups for in-depth reviews.
- Presents Reports embedding observations/recommendations; Ministries must respond within six months.
- Reviews replies and tables an Action-Taken Report in Lok Sabha, followed by Government statements on remaining recommendations.

Next Steps & Outlook

1. **Digital Transformation** : Integrate real-time dashboards, data analytics and AI tools for dynamic budget monitoring.
2. **Broader Stakeholder Engagement**: Involve subject-matter experts, civil-society groups and impacted communities in evidence-gathering.
3. **Strengthened Federal Linkages**: Regularise inter-legislature conferences on committees (e.g., Petitions, Government Assurances, Women’s Empowerment).
4. **Skills & Capacity Building**: Roll out certificate courses in public-finance management, audit-techniques and legislative drafting.

India's Parliament relies on a robust network of **parliamentary committees** to ensure detailed scrutiny of legislation, executive accountability, and policy oversight. Here are some of the most important ones:

◆ Financial Committees

These are crucial for budgetary and fiscal oversight:

- **Public Accounts Committee (PAC):** Examines government expenditures and audits conducted by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).
- **Estimates Committee:** Suggests improvements in efficiency and economy in public administration.
- **Committee on Public Undertakings (COPU):** Reviews the performance of Public Sector Enterprises.

◆ Department-Related Standing Committees (DRSCs)

There are 24 DRSCs, each aligned with specific ministries (e.g., Defence, Health, Education). They:

- Examine bills and budgets of ministries.
- Review policy implementation and performance.

◆ Other Key Committees

- **Business Advisory Committee:** Schedules and allocates time for parliamentary business.
- **Committee on Petitions:** Considers petitions from the public and recommends action.
- **Committee on Subordinate Legislation:** Scrutinizes rules and regulations made by the executive.
- **Committee on Government Assurances:** Tracks promises made by ministers on the floor of the House.
- **Committee on Privileges:** Deals with breaches of parliamentary privilege.
- **Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes:** Ensures welfare measures are implemented effectively.
- **Committee on Empowerment of Women:** Focuses on gender equity and women-centric policies.

◆ Ad Hoc Committees

Formed for specific purposes and dissolved after completing their task:

- **Joint Parliamentary Committees (JPCs):** Investigate specific issues (e.g., telecom scams, pesticide residues).
- **Select Committees:** Examine particular bills in detail.