



Functioning of Financial Committees of Jharkhand Legislative Assembly

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Abstract

Financial committees are the standing committees of the Legislative Assembly of Jharkhand. These financial standing committees are constituted under the rule of procedure and conduct of business in the legislative assembly. Main objectives of these committees are to ensure accountability and transparency in the administration. This study examines structure, function and composition of the financial standing committees. Public Account Committee (PAC), Estimates Committee and Committee on Public Undertakings (COPU) are the three financial standing committees of Jharkhand Legislative Assembly which ensure transparency in the public finance management in the state. These are the tools through which legislature control the functioning of the administration.

Key Words: Legislative Assembly, Committee, Audit, Vidhansabha , Financial Committees, Public Account Committee, Estimates Committee, Committee on Undertakings.

Introduction

Jharkhand is the 28th state of Indian Union came into existence on 15 November, 2000 . This state was carved out from Bihar , earlier Jharkhand was part of unified Bihar.'This tribal dominated area is land of 32 different tribal communities . Natural resources rich Jharkhand starts its journey in 2000 and trying to fulfil the aspirations of the people.



Jharkhand has unicameral legislature called Jharkhand Vidhansabha. Jharkhand legislative assembly consists of 81 members directly elected from the people and ²one nominated from Anglo- Indian community, later abolished by 104th constitutional amendment act 2020. At present 81 members are there in the Jharkhand legislative assembly. State legislatures in India are independent in formulating rules to regulate the house. ³Article 208(1) of the Indian constitution clearly states that a house of the state legislature may make rule for regulating subject to the provisions it's procedure and conduct of its business. State legislature is not subsidiary of the parliament of India. Article 208(2) states that rules of procedure and conduct of business made by the house and sub clause (3) states that direction issued by the speaker from time to time under these rules and finally sub clause (4) states that convention, tradition and past practices of the house. From the above stated constitutional provisions state legislature are independent in formulating the rule of procedure and conduct of business. State legislature are autonomous institutions. But state's legislature of India follow similar procedure as adopted by the parliament.

In case of financial committees, all states including Jharkhand follow similar procedure as follows by the parliament of India. But there is no departmentally related standing committees in Jharkhand. In the legislative assembly of Jharkhand three standing committees namely Public Account Committee (PAC), Estimates Committee and Committee on public Undertakings (COPU) are the financial standing committees. These standing committees are constituted under the rule of procedure and conduct of business in the Jharkhand Legislative Assembly on the basis of proportional representation by the single transferable voting system.⁴Rule 237(1) of Rule of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Jharkhand Vidhansabha, states that public account committee will be constituted to examine the appropriation accounts, finance account of the government and reports of comptroller and auditor general (C&AG) of India. Public account committee will be constituted for one year term and number of members will not exceed than seven and elected on the basis of proportional representation by the single transferable voting system, no any minister will be elected as member in the committee.⁵The Public Accounts Committee is the only committee which has the power to regularize excess expenditure of the government. Similarly Estimate Committee is constituted under the rule of ⁶239(1) of the rule of procedure and conduct of business in Jharkhand Vidhansabha. Number of the members of the committee will not exceed more



than seven and no any minister will be elected as member of estimates committee. If any member will be appointed as minister , that member will not continue as member of the committee from the date of such appointment as minister. Functions of the committee will be to examine the policy related to the estimates and recommends the improvement in the organization and efficiency.⁷There are no Departmentally Related Standing Committees (DRCs) in Jharkhand, hence the burden of all such works also falls on the Estimates Committee.⁸Rule 240(2) of the rule of procedure and conduct of business of Jharkhand Vidhansabha says that it is not mandatory to examine all estimates of the a year. Third financial standing Committee is the Committee on Public Undertakings (COPU). This committee is constituted under the rule⁹241(1) of the rule of procedure and conduct of business of Jharkhand Vidhansabha with the purpose of examining the functioning of public sector undertakings of the Jharkhand Government. Membership of this committee will not exceed more than seven members and no minister will be elected as member of this committee.

These financial standing committees of Jharkhand legislative assembly are the arms of the legislature which assist the legislature to discharge the duty. Committees in the legislative assembly function throughout the year and holds meeting as required. Financial standing committees have become more relevant today due to complexity in the development process. Committee may take help from the expert while discussing on any matter. Financial committees of Jharkhand legislative assembly examine the reports of comptroller and auditor general (CAG) and report to the speaker of the house . In the era of complexities of developmental process and populist politics role of committees became more important. Financial committees are main standing committees of the house which keep vigil on the functioning of the administration. More importantly in the meeting of committee members are free from party whip and express their views freely . Committee may called experts and officers to be satisfied on any matter .

Conclusion

Financial standing committees of the Jharkhand Legislative Assembly are the instrument of keeping close eye on the functioning of the administration. Through this Committees assembly ensures legislative control over the executive. In the democratic governance system legislature is supreme body which legislate and ensures the implementation of policies. Committees in the legislature in modern times are essential part of the

legislature which assist in the efficient discharge of the duty. Assembly does not hold meetings throughout the year but committee holds its meeting according to the requirement.

These committees provide a forum for in-depth scrutiny of public funds management system. Members of the committees express their views freely without fear of party whip. Committee system play crucial role in fostering good governance and fiscal discipline.

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