

Estimates Committee

The Estimates Committee is a Committee of the Lok Sabha. On April 3, 1950, the Provisional Parliament approved the resolution to elect the first Estimates Committee, and on April 10, 1950, the Committee was chosen. The Committee comprises no more than 30 Lok Sabha members chosen by the House each year using a single transferable vote and the principle of promotional representation. The Chairman of the Committee may be chosen by the Speaker from among its members.

Aspirants will find the topic of the Estimates Committee helpful for the upcoming IAS Exam. The article covers all the important aspects of the topic, such as the member composition of the committee, its functions, and the name of the chairman of the Estimates Committee.

Estimates Committee: Background

The Estimates Committee has its roots in the pre-independence era, establishing a standing finance committee in 1921. Later, finance minister John Mathai recommended the committee's foundation during the post-independence period. In 1950, the committee was ultimately created. It is always important for a country to scrutinize its monetary flow to achieve a sustainable development goal. The Estimates Committee is a governmental approach to monitoring the funds' flow in different ministries and departments to achieve economic betterment.

- This committee is appointed by the Indian parliament, and the members of the Parliament elect the candidates to represent it.
- There are 30 parliamentarians in the committee appointed for one year to perform their duties as a part of the Estimates Committee.
- The decision to establish the Estimates Committee to promote better scrutiny of fund flow within different ministries was taken under finance minister John Mathai's recommendation in 1950.

Functions of the Estimates Committee

The Estimates Committee has brought numerous beneficial aspects to the Indian economic system, ensuring scrutinized financial flow. This governmental approach is bound to inspect the effects of budget estimates on economic growth. For this reason, the Estimates Committee is also called the Continuous Economy Committee.

There should be a Committee on Estimates for the study of such estimates as may seem appropriate to the Committee or are specifically referred to by the House or the Speaker, according to Rule 310 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha.

The Committee's duties include:

- reporting on potential savings, organizational enhancements, efficiency gains, or administrative reform consistent with the policy implied by the estimates;
- recommending alternative policies to achieve efficiency and economy in administration, and assessing whether the money is effectively allocated within the parameters of the policy implied by the estimates.
- offer suggestions for the format in which the estimates will be delivered to Parliament;

However, the Committee will not exercise its authority over any public undertakings assigned to the Committee on Public Undertakings by these rules or the Speaker. Throughout the fiscal year, the Committee periodically continues to examine the estimates. It may report to the House on the status of its review or when it is finished.

Estimates Committee Members

The Estimates Committee began with 25 Lok Sabha parliamentarians and was expanded to 30 members in 1956. No Rajyasabha member is eligible to be a member of this committee. The members of the Estimates Committee are elected on an annual basis. However, no representative of any government ministry can be a part of it.

Chairman of Estimates Committee

The Chairman of the Estimates Committee is Shri Girish Bhalchandra Bapat.

The Speaker of the Lok Sabha designates the Chairman of the Estimates Committee from among its members. The chosen chairman is always a member of the ruling party.

Estimates Committee: Challenges

The Estimates Committee also examines the administrative structure of different ministries, emphasizing the process of fund usage.

- If the monetary flow violates the governmental policies, the Estimates Committee takes action to improve the administrative structure, thus improving the efficiency of the governmental sectors. Despite having numerous advantageous factors, the Estimates Committee also possesses some limitations that can hinder its efficiency in achieving the optimum goal of economic growth.
- The Estimates Committee has been given the power to analyze the budget estimates. But this power is applicable only after the budget is attained.
- The parliament of India has no power in the committee to ask counter-questions about the policies taken by the government. It means the committee gets to take action within the territory of governmental autocracy.

Estimates Committee: Measures to Overcome the Challenges

Since the estimates committee is one of the most significant finance committees, it should be given more current duties rather than post-mortem work. The estimates committee can keep a better eye on the public coffers and make the government more responsible and transparent about the people's money by carefully examining the government expenditures proposed in the budget.

- If the government's proposed investments are evaluated before voting, the expenditures will be reduced to some amount.
- The committee's recommendations and judgments should be binding as it assesses whether the money is fairly distributed.
- Forming subcommittees under the supervision of the estimate committee's governing body may be a better way to keep track of the enormous monetary components of several ministries.
- A professional person should be hired to assist the Estimates Committee in evaluating the budget.

It can be concluded that the Estimates Committee plays an important role in economic growth by ensuring effective scrutiny of the budget estimates.