

Cabinet Committee

[UPSC Notes]

What is a Cabinet Committee?

Cabinet Committees are formed to relieve cabinet ministers and the union government of their workload.

- Cabinet Committees are not mentioned in the constitution but they are constituted by the governments.
- They are established by the PM as per the needs of the situation. There are two types of Cabinet Committees- Standing and Hoc.
- The standing Cabinet Committees are permanent and ad-hoc is temporary, the ad hoc committees are formed at times to deal with major problems. Ad hoc is disbanded after their job is completed.
- The main role of the Cabinet Committee is to boost the reform schemes and quality launched by the government, thereby increasing the pace of economic development in the country.

Features of Cabinet Committee

The features of the Cabinet Committee include:

- The Cabinet Committees are extra-constitutional bodies, hence they are not mentioned in the constitution of India.
- It has two divisions: standing and ad hoc. Standing committees are permanent committees, whereas ad hoc committees are constituted for a limited period of time and renewed if further requirements arise.
- The Prime Minister set up the Cabinet Committees according to the requirements of the situation. Their number, nomenclature, and composition of members vary from time to time.
- The membership of these Cabinet Committees varies from 3 to 8. Cabinet Committees are mostly made up of cabinet ministers; however, non-minister members are not barred from serving on these committees in exceptional circumstances.
- The committee also involves ministers in charge of the subject along with the senior ministers too.
- The Prime Minister of India chairs and looks after the Cabinet Committees. However, some committees can be governed by the Home Minister and Finance Minister, who can be called the chairperson of the committee.
- They don't only solve the problems and formulate the proposals but also take major decisions. The cabinet is authorized to review the decisions made by the committee.

- Cabinet Committees are the government's tools to reduce the workload of the cabinet by facilitating them with the examination of policies, and they are based on the principles of division of labor and effective delegation of work.

Composition of Cabinet Committee

The composition of the Cabinet Committees is given below.

- The membership of Cabinet Committees varies from three to eight.
- Non-cabinet ministers are also included as members
- Senior ministers can also be included as members apart from the ministers in charge
- Such committees are chaired by the PM, and at times cabinet ministers can also be the chairperson.

List of Cabinet Committees

The Cabinet Committees have been made in three phases. The first phase was in 1994 another phase was in 2013 and the last phase was in 2019 where 13 10 and 8 Cabinet Committees were functional respectively.

List of Cabinet Committees in 1994-

- Cabinet Committee on political affairs
- Cabinet Committee on natural calamities
- Cabinet Committee on parliamentary affairs
- Cabinet Committee on accommodation
- Appointment committee of cabinet
- Cabinet Committee on foreign investment
- Cabinet Committee on drug abuse control
- Cabinet Committee on prices
- Cabinet Committee on Minority Welfare
- Cabinet Committee on Trade and investment
- Cabinet Committee on economic affairs
- Cabinet Committee on expenditure
- Cabinet Committee on infrastructure

List of Cabinet Committees in 2013

- Cabinet Committee on economic affairs
- Cabinet Committee on prices
- Cabinet Committee on political affairs
- Appointment committee of the cabinet
- Cabinet Committee on security
- Cabinet Committee on World Trade Organisation matters
- Cabinet Committee on investment
- Cabinet Committee on Unique Identification Authority of India
- Cabinet Committee on parliamentary affairs
- Cabinet Committee on accommodation

List of Cabinet Committees in 2019

- Cabinet Committees on political affairs
- Cabinet Committees on an economic affair
- Cabinet Committees on security
- Cabinet Committee on parliamentary affairs
- Cabinet Committee on accommodation
- Cabinet Committee of appointment
- Cabinet Committee on investment and growth
- Cabinet Committee on employment and skill development

Functions of Cabinet Committee

There are four major important functions of cabinet comedies. These are:

- The political affairs committee deals with policy-making issues related to foreign and domestic affairs.
- The economic affairs committee guides and coordinates the government's activities taking place in the economic sphere of the world.
- The appointment committees decide all the major and important appointments to important offices like this Secretariat, public enterprises, financial institutions, etc.
- The parliamentary affairs committee takes care of the progress made by the government in action in the parliament.

It should be noted that the political affairs committee, the economic affairs committee, and the appointment committee are chaired by the Prime Minister of India, and the parliamentary affairs committee is governed by the Home Minister of India. The political affairs committee is the most important of all the cabinet comedies in the government system and is often described as the super cabinet.