

# Questions

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# Department's interface with Parliament

- ★ Rajya Sabha Secretariat & Lok Sabha Secretariat
- ★ Parliament Unit in Department
- ★ Principle of collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers
- ★ Ministers accountable to the Parliament
- ★ Secretary briefs the Minister on matters likely to be taken up in the House



# Duties of all officers

1. Expected to anticipate matters likely to be raised in the House
2. Be ready with information
3. ASOs to maintain folders of replies to questions raised in the previous sessions
4. Update by obtaining inputs from the stakeholders
5. SOs & Branch Officers to guide and oversee 2 to 4



# Functions of Parliament Unit

1. Link between the Department & the Parliament secretariats
2. Coordination of all Parliamentary work
  1. Obtain advance & admitted versions of questions
  2. Mark questions to officers/ sections
  3. Do not frame replies
  4. That's the responsibility of the section concerned
  5. Follow up action



# Functions of Parliament Unit

3. Make copies of the replies
4. Ensure its delivery in Parliament Secretariat
5. Liaise with PS to the Minister to bring matters to Minister's notice
6. Based on inputs from the Sections, prepare 'Note for Pad' for the Minister
7. Arrange for entry passes in Parliament



# Questions

- ★ Members' right
- ★ To elicit information on matters of public importance
- ★ From the ministers concerned



# Types of Questions

Three types

- ★ Starred question
- ★ Unstarred question
- ★ Short notice question



# Starred Question

- ★ A written set of answers to the original questions submitted to the House
- ★ Oral answer from the Minister in the House
- ★ Distinguished with an \* (asterisk) mark
- ★ Answer to such questions followed by supplementary Questions by Members





# Unstarred Question

- ★ Only written answer from the Minister
- ★ Deemed to be laid on the Table of the House by Minister
- ★ Not called for oral answer in the House
- ★ No Supplementary Question



# Notice of Questions

- ★ Not less than 15 clear days [Verify]
- ★ Notice can be given from the day following the day on which summons are issued
- ★ Notice addressed to Secretary General of Rajya Sabha / Lok Sabha



# Ballot of Questions

- ★ Ballot held of all notices received in Rajya Sabha / Lok Sabha Secretariat received up to 1000 hrs 10 days before the respective date of answer
- ★ To determine *inter-se* priority
- ★ Separate ballot for Starred and Unstarred Questions
- ★ Starred / Unstarred Questions numbered separately as per the priority gained



# Short Notice Question

- ★ On a matter of public importance
- ★ 2 conditions of admissibility:
  - Subject matter to be urgent
  - Minister to agree to answer it
- ★ For oral answer
- ★ At a notice of less than 10 days prescribed in ordinary course



# Admissibility of Questions

- ★ Not clearly & precisely expressed and are too general & incapable of specific answer
- ★ Arguments, inferences or defamatory statements or otherwise referring to the character & conduct of any person, except in official or public capacity
- ★ Seeking expression of opinion or solution of an abstract legal question / hypothetical proposition



# Admissibility of Questions...

- ★ In substance repetitions of those answered previously or in regard to which information is available in accessible documents or in ordinary works of reference
- ★ The subject matter pending before any Court of Law or under consideration before a Parliamentary Committee



# Admissibility of Questions...

- ★ Discourteous references to foreign countries with whom India has friendly relations
- ★ Policy matters too large to be dealt with within the limits of answer to question
- ★ Seeking information that are secret in nature (composition of Cabinet Committee, Cabinet discussions, Advice to President, etc)
- ★ If ordinarily exceed 150 words



# Admissibility of Questions...

- ★ A matter of day-to-day administration or which tend to further the interest of an individual or a few individuals
- ★ Petitions & memoranda received by Ministers that are not of public importance
- ★ Subject matters that are primarily within the jurisdiction of Chief Election Commissioner, C&AG, Courts and other functionaries





# Admissibility of Questions...

- ★ Questions that tend to encourage fissiparous & divisive tendencies and weaken the unity & integrity of the country
- ★ Subject that relate to a matter within the jurisdiction of the Speaker
- ★ Detailed information of statistical nature concerning local interest, staff matters – admitted as Unstarred Questions



# Admissibility of Questions...

- ★ Questions relating to statutory corporations & limited companies in which Government has financial or controlling interest – admitted only if the matter relate to policy issues or acts of omission & commission
- ★ Questions relating to State matters, which are not primarily the concern of Government of India



# Admissibility of Questions...

- ★ Questions about implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes like JRY, PM Rozgar Yojana, etc (information at State level) are admitted [block/district-level information are primarily the responsibility of State Governments



# Action by ASO

1. On receipt of questions [Advance or printed version]
  1. Check if related to
    1. You
    2. Section/ Branch/ Division/ Wing/ Department
    3. If not take IMMEDIATE action to transfer
  2. Write to offices concerned to obtain information
  3. Design a format, if need be
  4. Follow up



# Short notice question

- ★ On urgent matter of public importance
- ★ Notice period: shorter than 10 days
- ★ Minister must consent to accept shorter than 10 days' notice for a short notice question to be admitted
- ★ Manner of framing replies same as in the case of starred question



# Half-an-hour discussion

- ★ Presiding Officer may allot half-an-hour for discussion
- ★ On a matter of sufficient public importance
- ★ Which has been the subject of a recent question and
- ★ The answer to which needs elucidation on a matter of fact



# Half-an-hour discussion

- ★ Discussions restricted to:
  - the member who gave notice making a short statement;
  - the Minister making a short reply; and
  - other members, who have previously intimated the Chair in case of the Rajya Sabha/ not exceeding four in the case of the Lok Sabha, may ask supplementary questions



# Motions

1. Adjournment motion
2. Motions on matters of public interest
3. No-day-yet-named Motions
4. Cut-motions





**Thank you**

