

GUJARAT

12. Committee system

The aim of parliamentary democracy is to establish control of legislature over the council of Ministers and the Government. Normally Legislative Assembly meets for about 60 to 70 days in a year. Therefore, it is not possible for the House to review and examine the administrative works of the Government and owing to large number of members, it is not convenient for the House to discuss a technical matter or any other issue in detail. Therefore, in a parliamentary democratic system efforts are made by various committees of the legislature to put restrictions on the Government and to review and evaluate the administrative actions of the Government. A Committee of the Legislative Assembly functions as a representative of the Legislative Assembly, i.e. it acts as a Mini House, and has a right to seek any information and call for any papers from the Government, and to examine them. The committee also enjoys the right to summon an outsider as a witness. The heads of the Department / Secretaries serving at the apex of the government are summoned to remain present before the committee and examined. In some cases, committees also visit the site of the issue for making on the spot inspection. All the Departments of the Government and their subordinate offices always remain in fear that a time will come when they will be required to appear before the committees of the Legislative Assembly and make explanations and clarifications on matters to be examined by the committees and therefore a sort of fear of the committees of the Legislative Assembly prevails on the departments of the Government. In Gujarat Legislative Assembly there are 19 such committees functioning at present. There are three ways of constituting a committee - one is by moving a motion in the House, the other is by election and the third is by making appointments by the Speaker. Members are appointed on these committees according to the proportional representations of different parties in the House. Speaker appoints a Member of the committee as the Chairman of the committee. All these committees function under the overall control of the Speaker. As the committees function as the representative of the House, its report containing recommendations of the committees is to be laid

before the House. The committees also examine the actions taken by the Government on the recommendations / suggestions made in the report and the committee presents its report thereon before the House. Thus, the role of committees is very important in the parliamentary democracy.