

Introduction:-

While replying to questions in the House or during discussions on Bills, Resolutions, Motions etc., Ministers on several occasions give assurances, undertakings or promises either to consider a matter, take action or furnish information later. The Standard List of forms constituting Assurances, may be seen at Annexure-I.

In order to ensure that these assurances etc., are implemented and in a reasonable time, the Lok Sabha has constituted a Committee on Government Assurances with a view to institutionalizing the procedure to ensure the fulfillment of promises and undertakings given from time to time by the Minister on the floor of the House.

Constitution of the Committee:-

Until 1953, there was no institutional arrangement to pursue the assurances, promises etc., given by the Minister on the floor of the House and it was left to each individual Member to keep watch on the assurances/promises made by the Ministers. On 1 December, 1953 the Speaker nominated the first Committee on Government Assurances with six Members on it. The strength of the Committee was later on increased to fifteen Members on 13 May, 1954 by the Hon'ble Speaker.

The Chairman/Chairperson is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the Members of the Committee. A Minister is not nominated as a Member of the Committee and if a member after his nomination to the Committee is appointed a Minister, he ceases to be a member of the Committee from the date of such

appointment. The term of office of the members of the Committee shall not exceed one year from the date of its constitution. However, members can be renominated. If the Deputy Speaker is a Member of the Committee, he shall be appointed Chairman of the Committee.

Functions of the Committee:-

The functions of the Committee on Government Assurances are to scrutinize the assurances, promises, undertakings etc., given by the Ministers, from time to time on the floor of the House and to report on:-

- (a) the extent to which such assurances, promises, undertakings etc., have been implemented; and
- (b) where implemented, whether such implementation has taken place within the minimum time necessary for the purpose.

Working of the Committee:-

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs initially examines the Lok Sabha Debates and furnish to the Lok Sabha Secretariat Statements of assurances within a week of the dates to which they relate. The Lok Sabha Secretariat also independently examines the Lok Sabha debates to mark the replies/statements of the Ministers which constitute assurances. Both of them are later reconciled and the Ministries/Departments of Government of India are apprised of the assurances so culled out. The Committee has prescribed an outer limit of three months for the implementation of an assurance, to be calculated from the date of its being given in the House. However, if the Government

foresees any genuine difficulty in implementing the assurance within the stipulated period, the Ministry concerned may submit to the Committee a request for extension of time as considered minimum for fulfillment of the assurance. Normally, the Committee accedes to such requests unless it finds the request to be unreasonable. If for any valid reason the Government finds that it is not feasible to implement an assurance given on the floor of the House, the Government have to approach the Committee and place the facts for its consideration. If the Committee agrees that it is not possible to implement the assurance, it may recommend dropping of the assurance in its reports presented to the House.

For fulfillment of assurances, various Ministries furnish implementation reports in the prescribed proforma to the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and endorse a copy thereof to the Lok Sabha Secretariat. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs then lays on the Table of the Lok Sabha from time to time Statements showing action taken by the Government in the implementation of the assurances.

The Statements laid on the Table are examined by the Secretariat. Such of the assurances as do not appear to have been fully or satisfactorily implemented are placed before the Committee for its consideration. If necessary, the Committee may call the officers of the concerned Ministry to give oral evidence before them in regard to the action taken by the Government in the implementation of certain assurances.

During the course of examination, if the Committee feels that it is necessary to undertake an on the spot study tour to have first hand knowledge about the reasons for

delay in the implementation of an assurance, it may do so with the approval of the Speaker.

Thereafter, on the basis of the proceedings of the evidence and material furnished by the concerned Ministry as well as replies to the questionnaire(s) prepared by the Secretariat, the Committee on Government Assurances prepares a report and after approval of the Chairman/Chairperson, the same is circulated to the Members of the Committee and considered at a sitting held for the purpose. After the Report has been adopted by the Committee, the Chairman presents the report to the House.

Status of Assurances after dissolution of the House

The assurance(s) do not lapse either on the dissolution or on the expiry of the term of the Lok Sabha. The assurances are pursued by Lok Sabha Secretariat as well as by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs until the assurance(s) are brought to logical end.

List of Chairman/Chairperson of the Committee on Government Assurances from Ist Lok Sabha to 15th Lok Sabha

<u>Sl. No.</u>	<u>Name of Chairman/Chairperson</u>	<u>Lok Sabha</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
1.	Smt. Sucheta Kripalani	First	1953	1955
2.	Shri K.S. Raghavachari	First	1955	1957
3.	Pandit Thakur Das Bhargav	Second	1957	1962
4.	Shri R.R. Morarka	Third	1962	1964
5.	Shri H. Siddananjappa	Third	1964	1966

6.	Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee	Fourth	1966	1969
7.	Shri K. Anbazhagan	Fourth	1969	1971
8.	Dr. G.S. Melkote	Fifth	1971	1974
9.	Shri B.K. Daschowdhury	Fifth	1974	1976
10.	Shri Virbhadra Singh	Fifth	1976	1977
11.	Shri Yagya Datt Sharma	Sixth	1977	1979
12.	Shri Chandulal Chandrakar	Seventh	1980	1980
13.	Shri Jagannath Rao	Seventh	1980	1983
14.	Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev	Seventh	1983	1985
15.	Shri B.K. Gadhvi	Eighth	1985	1986
16.	Prof. Narain Chand Parashar	Eighth	1986	1990
17.	Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra	Ninth	1990	1991
18.	Dr. Laxminarain Pandey	Tenth	1991	1993
19.	Shri Basudeb Acharia	Tenth	1993	1996
20.	Shri E. Ahmed	Eleventh & Twelfth	1996	1999
21.	Dr. S. Venugopal	Thirteenth	1999	2004
22.	Shri Harin Pathak	Fourteenth	2004	2009
23.	Smt. Maneka Gandhi	Fifteenth	2009	till date

The Lok Sabha-wise break up on the number of Reports presented by the Committee since its inception

<u>Lok Sabha</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Number of Reports</u>
1st Lok Sabha	1953-1957	4
2nd Lok Sabha	1957-1962	2
3rd Lok Sabha	1962-1966	4
4th Lok Sabha	1966-1971	10
5th Lok Sabha	1971-1977	18
6th Lok Sabha	1977-1979	4
7th Lok Sabha	1980-1985	10
8th Lok Sabha	1985-1990	22
9th Lok Sabha	1990-1991	11
10th Lok Sabha	1991-1996	39
11th Lok Sabha	1996-1997	3
12th Lok Sabha	1998-1999	4
13th Lok Sabha	1999-2004	15
14th Lok Sabha	2004-2009	26
15th Lok Sabha	2009- till date	18*

*Upto 8th Session of 15th Lok Sabha.

ANNEXURE-I

STANDARD LIST OF FORMS CONSTITUTING ASSURANCES

(As approved by the Committee on Government Assurances of the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on 9.4.1954 and appended to the First Report of the Committee)

1. The matter is under consideration.
2. I shall look into it.
3. Enquiries are being made.
4. I shall inform the Hon'ble Member.
5. This is primarily the concern of State Government but I shall look into it.
6. I shall write to the State Governments.
7. I assure the House all suggestions by Hon'ble Member will be carefully considered.
8. I shall study the conditions on the spot during my tour.
9. I shall consider the matter.
10. I will consider it.
11. I will suggest to State Governments.
12. We will put the matter in the shape of a resolution.
13. I shall see what can be done about it.
14. I will look into the matter before I can say anything.
15. The suggestion will be taken into consideration.
16. The matter will be considered at the _____ conference to be held on _____ .
17. The matter is still under examination and if anything is required to be done, it will certainly be done.
18. The matter will be taken up with the Government of _____.
19. I have no information; but I am prepared to look into the matter.
20. Efforts are being made to collect the necessary data.
21. The suggestions made will be borne in mind while framing the rules.
22. If the Hon'ble Member so desires, I can issue further instructions.
23. Copy of the report, when finalised, will be placed in the Parliament Library.
24. I shall supply it to Hon'ble Member.
25. I think it can be done.
26. If the Hon'ble Members' allegation is true, I shall certainly have the matter gone into.

27. We shall have to find that out.
28. I will draw the attention of the _____ Government who I hope will take adequate steps in this direction.
29. It is a suggestion for action which will be considered.
30. All the points raised by various Members will be considered and the result will be communicated to each member.
31. Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.
32. I am reviewing the position.
33. Directions by the Speaker, Deputy Speaker or the Chairman involving action on the part of Minister.
34. All specific points on which information is asked for and promised.