

3. COMMITTEE SECTION – II (Petitions)

3.1 Main Functions: - This Section broadly deals with the following items of work: -

- (i) Processing of Petitions received for presentation or submission to the Rajya Sabha in accordance with the provisions contained in Chapter X of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States;
- (ii) Provides Secretarial assistance to the Committee on Petitions, General Purposes Committee, and such other ad-hoc Committees as may be assigned to this Section from time to time which involves preparation of agenda papers/memoranda/background notes/questionnaires/draft reports etc. for the respective Committees and issuance of notices for convening their meetings;
- (iii) Dealing with representations received from different quarters.

3.2 Processing of Notices of Petitions: The work of the Section in this respect involved examination of the Petitions in the context of their admissibility under the Rules and obtaining factual information from the concerned Ministries/Departments of the Central Government. During the year 2004, a total number of 60 petitions received from different quarters were examined in terms of the Rules governing the admissibility of petitions.

3.3 Committee on Petitions: -Under Rule 147(1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, nominates this Committee which consists of ten Members and the Committee holds office until a new Committee is nominated. The Committee was re-constituted on the 7th August, 2004. Accordingly, the Chairman and Members of the Committee were intimated about their nomination to the Committee through letters individually addressed to them.

At the time of re-constitution of the Committee on 7th August, 2004, the following petitions were pending for consideration of the Committee. No fresh petition was, however, admitted by the Hon'ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha and presented/reported to the House during the year.

Sl. No.	From Whom Received	Whom	Countersigned by	Subject
1.	Shri H.D. Shourie,		----	Early passage of the

	Director, Common Cause, Delhi.		Delhi Rent (Amendment) Bill, 1997 in Parliament.
2.	Shri S. Balakrishnan, a resident of Bangalore.	----	Lowering the age limit for senior citizens from 65 years to 60 years.
3.	Shri Bibhudhendra Pratap Das, President, Brahmani Anchal Suraksha Parishad, Talcher, Orissa.	Shri Balkavi Bairagi, Member, Rajya Sabha	Pollution of Brahmani river and other water bodies in Orissa.
4.	Shri Pratap Ray of Jajpur, Orissa and eleven others.	Shri C.P. Apok Jamir, Member, Rajya Sabha.	Adulteration of petrol and diesel and other related matters.
5.	Shri Hiralal Sharma, President, INTUC, Delhi Branch and 12 others.	Miss Mabel Rebello, Member, Rajya Sabha	The need for reforms and prevention of malpractices in the Health Sector and other related matters.
6.	Shri S.S. Chouhan, General Secretary, Indian National Building Construction Workers' Federation (INBCWF), New Delhi and two others.	Miss Mabel Rebello, Member, Rajya Sabha	Enactment of special legislation to improve the conditions of construction workers/migrant labourers and to ban use of asbestos and close asbestos mines and factories and destruction of all existing asbestos to get rid of toxin in e-waste.
7.	S/Shri Niranjan Barpanda and Kedar Luha, residents of District Sambalpur in Orissa.	----	Non-implementation of amended pension payment provisions by the State Bank of India.
8.	Shri K. Murali Krishna,	----	Violation of Public

	a resident of Mumbai.		Policy on Employees' Provident Fund by M/S. Fairgrowth Financial Services Limited and the need for amendment in the existing laws to regulate the functioning of the Provident Fund Trusts established by private companies in the country.
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The Committee concluded examination of the petitions mentioned at Sl. No. 1, 2 and 3 and presented its 119th, 120th and 121st Reports thereon to the House on 7th June, 2004.

3.4 Meetings and Study visits of the Committee on Petitions: -The Committee held a total number of Seventeen sittings during the year 2004 and undertook two Study visits as per the details given below: -

(i) Meetings of the Committee on Petitions during the year 2004.

Sl. No.	Date of Meeting	Time Devoted Hrs-Mts.	Main Agenda
1.	5.1.2004	1-30	To have general discussion on the pending matters and to chalk out its future programme.
2.	21.1.2004	5-30	To hear the Secretaries of: - (i) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on the issues raised in the petition seeking the lowering of age limit for senior citizens from 65 years to 60 years; (ii) Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty alleviation, Department of Urban Development, on the issues in the

			petition praying for the early passage of the Delhi Rent (Amendment) Bill, 1997 in Parliament; and (iii) Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on the issues raised in the petition regarding adulteration of petrol and diesel and other related matters.
3.	3.2.2004	1-55	To hear the Secretaries of the: - (i) Ministry of Labour on the issues raised in the petition praying for legislative and other measures to improve the conditions of construction workers/migrant labourers and to ban the use of asbestos and close asbestos mines and factories and destruction of all existing asbestos to get rid of toxins in e-waste; (ii) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (Department of Health) on the issues raised in the petition regarding the need for reforms and prevention of malpractices in the Health Sector and other related matters.
4.	23.2.2004	1-30	To hear the Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests on the issues raised in the petition regarding the unabated pollution of Brahmani river and other water bodies in Orissa.
5.	16.3.2004	1-30	(i) To consider the draft 119 th Report on the petition praying for early passage of the Delhi Rent (Amendment) Bill, 1997 in Parliament. (ii) To hear Shri Niranjana Barpanda of Bhawani Nagar (Dhanupali) in District Sambalpur of Orissa, on the issues raised in the petition submitted by him seeking implementation of the amended pension payment provisions by the State Bank of India.
6.	2.4.2004	1-00	(i) To consider and adopt the draft 119 th Report on the petition praying for early passage of Delhi Rent (Amendment) Bill, 1997 in Parliament; and (ii) To further consider the petition

			praying for lowering of the age limit for senior citizens from 65 years to 60 years.
7.	15.4.2004	-35	To consider and adopt the draft 120 th Report on the petition praying for lowering of the age limit for senior citizens from 65 years to 60 years.
8.	26.4.2004	-30	(i) To consider the ATR received from the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises (Department of Public Enterprises) on the 116 th Report of the Committee on the petition praying for grant of enhanced gratuity to the retired officers of ITI Ltd., Bangalore and other Central Public Sector Undertakings at par with the retired officers of the Central Government and w.e.f. the dates admissible to the latter; and (ii) to consider the petition praying for suitable measures to check pollution of the Brahmani river and other water bodies in Orissa.
9.	11.5.2004	1-00	To consider and adopt the draft 121 st Report on the petition praying for suitable measures to check pollution of the Brahmani river and other water bodies in Orissa.
10.	19.5.2004	-55	To hear the Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises (Department of Public Enterprises) on the Action Taken Report (ATR) received from the Ministry on the 116 th Report of the Committee on the petition praying for grant of enhanced gratuity to the retired officers of ITI Ltd., Bangalore and other Central Public Sector Undertakings at par with the retired officers of the Central Government and w.e.f. the dates admissible to the latter.
11.	25.6.2004	-45	To hear the Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development on the contents of his letter dated April 21, 2004, pursuant to the decision of the Committee taken in its meeting held on 19 th May, 2004.

12.	19.8.2004	-35	To have general discussion on the pending matters and to chalk out its future programme.
13.	2.9.2004	1-00	To take up further consideration of the petition praying for legislative and other measures to check unabated adulteration of petrol & diesel and benami ownership of retail petrol outlets etc.
14.	28.9.2004	1-31	To further consider the petition praying for legislative and other measures to check unabated adulteration of petrol & diesel and benami ownership of retail petrol outlets etc. in the context of the written material adduced/oral evidence on the petition presented before the previous Committee and to further hear the Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in the matter.
15.	14.10.2004	-20	(i) To hear the representatives of the Management of State Bank of India on the issues raised in the petitions signed by S/Shri Niranjan Barpanda and Kedar Luha, residents of District Sambalpur in Orissa regarding non-implementation of amended pension payment provisions by the State Bank of India with respect to the employees opting for retirement on completion of 15 years of service; and (ii) to deliberate on the pending petitions.
16.	29.11.2004	1-08	To hear the representatives of Central Trade Union Organizations on the issues raised in the petition signed by Shri S.S. Chouhan, General Secretary, Indian National Building Construction Workers' Federation (INBCWF), New Delhi and two others praying for enactment of a comprehensive legislation to improve the conditions of construction workers/migrant labourers and to ban use of asbestos.
17.	8.12.2004	-45	To have general discussion on the pending matters and to chalk out its future programme.

(ii) **Study visits of the Committee on Petitions during the year 2004.**

Sl. No.	Dates	Places Visited	Discussions held with	Purpose
1.	8 th to 11 th February, 2004	Bhubaneswar and Talcher (Orissa)	NGOs/Public Representatives, Management of Mahanadi Coal Fields Ltd., Management of National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd., Management of Rourkela Steel Plant, Management of National Aluminium Company Ltd., Management of OCL India Ltd., Management of Larsen & Toubro Ltd., Chairman, Orissa State Pollution Control Board and Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Government of Orissa.	In connection with the examination of the issues raised in the petition praying for suitable measures to check pollution of the Brahmani river and other water bodies in Orissa.
2.	5 th to 8 th November, 2004	Mumbai (Maharashtra)	Health and Labour Secretaries of the Govt. of Maharashtra, Management of State Bank of	In connection with the examination of the issues raised in the petitions regarding the: -

		<p>India, representatives of trade unions, leading manufacturers of medicines, NGOs working in the health sector and Shri K. Murali Krishna, the petitioner in one of the petitions.</p>	<p>(i) need for reforms and prevention of malpractices in the Health Sector and other related matters;</p> <p>(ii) enactment of special legislation to improve the condition of Construction workers/migrant Labourers and to ban use of asbestos and close asbestos mines and factories and destruction of all existing asbestos to get rid of toxins in e-waste;</p> <p>(iii) non-implementation of amended Pension Payment Provisions by the State Bank of India; and</p> <p>(iv) violation of Public policy on Employees' Provident Fund by M/s Fairgrowth Financial Services Limited and the need for amendment in the existing laws to regulate the functioning of the Provident Fund</p>
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				Trusts established by private companies in the country.
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Besides attending to all the work connected with the meetings/study visits of the Committee, the Section also handled all correspondence with the Ministries/Departments concerned on various aspects connected with the implementation of the recommendations/observations of the Committee as contained in its Reports presented to the House from time to time.

3.5 General Purposes Committee:- With the amendment in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business w.e.f. 1st July 2000, this Committee has been included under Chapter XXIII of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States. Under Rule 279(2) it has been provided that the Committee shall hold office until a new Committee is constituted. The functions of the Committee are to consider and advise on such matters concerning the affairs of the House as may be referred to it by the Hon'ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha from time to time. No fixed number has been laid down for its membership and the Deputy Chairman, Members of the Panel of Vice-Chairmen, Chairmen of all Standing Parliamentary Committees of Rajya Sabha, Leaders of recognized Parties/Groups in the House are nominated to this Committee. The Committee was reconstituted on the 29th August, 2004 and all the Members of the Committee was informed about their nomination through letter individually addressed to them. During the year 2004, the General Purposes Committee held one meeting.

3.6 Preparation of Paragraphs for inclusion in the Journal of Parliamentary Information:

Paragraphs for inclusion in the Journal of Parliamentary Information containing information about the work transacted by the two Committees, namely, the Committee on Petitions and the General Purposes Committee, apart from the number of petitions, if any, presented during the year 2004, were prepared and sent from time to time to the Research & Library Section for incorporation in the Journal being issued quarterly.

3.7 Representations received from various Individuals/Organisations: NinetySevenrepresentations on various subjects addressed to the Hon'ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha/Chairman,

Committee on Petitions/Secretary-General, Rajya Sabha, were received from different quarters and were examined in the Section and in appropriate cases they were sent to the concerned Ministries/Departments for necessary action.

3.8 Settlement of Refreshment Bills: Sixty-One bills received from the Assistant Commercial Officer (Catering), Northern Railway, Tea Board, Coffee Board, Parliament House Complex in respect of refreshments served in the meetings of the Committees were processed and sent for payment to the Establishment (Accounts) Section.

3.9 Budget Allocation: This Section was assigned a sum of Rupees Twenty Five Thousand in the Budgetary grant for the Financial Year 2004-2005 under the Head "Other Administrative Expenses (02 00 20) and the same was used for settlement of the bills of refreshments served in the meetings of the Committees being serviced by this Section.

3.10 Status of Computerisation: This Section has been provided with two Pentium 4, one Pentium III and two Celeron based P.Cs. which are being extensively used for disposing of various items of work assigned to the Section.

3.11 Analysis: The details of the activities undertaken by the Section in the year 2004 have been enumerated above. In the context of the goals of this Section, its Action Plan was also prepared and acted upon. These goals were, to a large extent, achieved with success. The Secretary-General reviewed the Action Plan of the Section in a meeting held with the Director/Under Secretary in charge of the Section in his Room in Parliament House on the 1st November, 2004 and was, by and large, satisfied with the progress of its implementation.