

**Citizens' Periodic Reports on the Performance of State Institutions**



**Challenges and Future Vision before  
Parliamentary Study Centres and Institutes**

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## **Challenges and Future Vision before Parliamentary Study Centres and Institutes**

**PILdAT**  
Pakistan Institute of  
Legislative Development  
And Transparency

PILDAT is an independent, non-partisan and not-for-profit indigenous research and training institution with the mission to strengthen democracy and democratic institutions in Pakistan.

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### **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

BPST	Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training
ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation
LD	Legislative Drafting
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PIL DAT	Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency
PIP	Parliamentary Internship Programme
PIPS	Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Studies
SCAAP	Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan
TNA	Training-Needs-Analysis



## PREFACE

As part of its Citizens Periodic Reports on the Performance of State Institutions project, PILDAT has undertaken an assessment of the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Studies (PIPS), a parliamentary institution created to provide support to Parliamentarians in improving their performance. We at PILDAT believe that an assessment of the performance of PIPS can be further strengthened by a separate analysis on the best practices of a similar institution outside Pakistan. As a result, the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training (BPST) in India was selected to better understand the challenges faced by similar parliamentary institutions and how such organizations can improve.

The **Challenges and Future Vision before Parliamentary Study Centres and Institutes** has been written by **Mr. Ratan Lal Shali**, Former Director of the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training (BPST). This paper provides analysis of the BPST, the challenges faced by the institution, its successes, and ways by which Mr. Shali believes such an organization can improve its performance.

This paper discusses the crucial elements needed by an institution charged with supporting parliamentarians, and chalks through the factors that have contributed to the success of the BPST. As a result, we believe that this paper is a useful tool in analysing the performance, the shortcomings, and the strengths of the PIPS, and particularly, in helping policymakers, Parliamentarians, trainers and staff at the PIPS, and citizens in Pakistan, in determining the best way forward for the institution.

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### Disclaimer

The views expressed in the paper belong to the author and do not necessarily represent the views of PILDAT and DANIDA, the Government of Denmark, and the Royal Danish Embassy, Islamabad.

Islamabad  
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## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mr. Ratan Lal Shali is a highly qualified and skilled professional with extensive experience in developing integrated programmes for Parliamentary Officers. He has previously served as the Director, Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training at Lok Sabha Secretariat. He was responsible for organizing capacity building programmes for members of Indian Parliament, Foreign Parliaments, Probationers of All India Central Officers of State Legislatures/Government and Public Sector Officers. Mr. Shali has also served as Deputy Director of Lok Sabha Secretariat's Press and Public Relation Wing for 16 years. His key role was to disseminate information necessary for the proper functioning of Indian Parliament and facilitate media representatives to cover various proceedings of the Parliament.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper on Challenges and Future Vision before Parliamentary Study Centres and Institutes highlights the key elements that make a parliamentary institute of its kind both effective and efficient using the example of the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training (BPST), India. The purpose, which is to support parliamentarians and bureaucrats in improving their performance, must be kept in mind in the operations of such an institution.

Poor training and awareness on the mechanisms and working procedures severely hampers the performance of Parliamentarians. The main challenge faced by the BPST and similar parliamentary institutions is indeed lack of education and training which emerges from a shortfall in institutional capacity, lack of human resources, inadequate funding from the government, lack of institutional independence, and the overall poor motivation within Parliamentarians themselves.

It is recommended for parliamentary institutions to begin by setting high standards and maintaining those standards in the long run. The BPST and similar institutions should aim to both bring about **Change-Agent within Parliament** while also act as the **Parliament's Bridge to Civil Society**. Therefore, a key goal of parliamentary Institutions should be to involve members of Civil Society Organizations in their programmes. Institutions should also study significant issues of the Parliament while also aiming to disseminate the results to the wider public through newsletters. Furthermore, the training that is given to Parliamentarians must also be refined through predetermined modules, as well as through the training of the trainers themselves.

The recommendations for parliamentary institutions can be better understood in light of the work of the BPST. The Bureau, which was setup in 1976, has since then held a series of successful orientation programmes and seminars for member of the Indian Parliament and Indian State Legislatures. The Bureau is both accessible and useful to through increased computerization of programmes and resources, as well as Hindi classes for non-English speaking members. In expanding its outreach, the BPST has involved students, foreign parliamentary officials, and members of Civil Society Organizations in its programmes. The paper argues that the successful planning and implementation of the BPST's programmes can serve as an example to parliamentary institutions in other countries.

## Introduction

Every new member, irrespective of his/her talent, professional and academic background, when he or she enters the portals of the Legislature feels lost in the dense forest of mass communication, traditions, rules, and regulations, of parliamentary practices, procedures and processes. Inadequacy of education and training in the sophisticated mechanics for parliamentary polity and working procedures of modern polity institutions have affected the performance of both legislators and the bureaucracy.

A legislator can play his or her role effectively for the progress and prosperity of the people provided he or she makes use of all available opportunities and for this, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the political process, Constitution, Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, and the customs and conventions of the Legislature, and follow them scrupulously. They, therefore, require professional orientation in Parliamentary Processes and Procedures.

Establishing Parliamentary Training Centres and Institutes are somewhat a new phenomenon and therefore prone to basic challenges that range from infrastructure to human resources and maintaining sustainability.

## Infrastructure Problem

It has been seen that several parliaments lack skills and institutional capacity, which are not properly attended to. Weak accommodation and training room shortages hamper the training programmes. The lecture halls and training classes should have facility for multimedia presentations with simultaneous interpretation facility if it is a multilingual legislature. Each seat in the class should be equipped with microphones. Therefore, the training institute should be fully computerized so that it suits the central requirement of organizing training programmes on an on-going basis.

## Adequate Human Resources

Human resource is the soul and engine to any institution. A committed and dedicated pool of human resource remains one of the most demanding challenges that is faced by parliamentary institutions. The staff of the institute needs to confine to the work relating to the institute itself rather than being deployed to attend work of other departments of the secretariats. The functioning of the institute will suffer if the staff is rotated to work in various divisions concurrently. What

is important is a dedicated staff for the institute that can emerge as its backbone in the years to come.

## Sustainability

Lack of funds is one of the main challenges that any parliamentary institution faces. Many institutes that are funded by donor agencies or the Government cannot sustain themselves for a longer period, especially during an economic slow down. Adequate funding helps effective functioning of an institute and also helps in organizing national and international programmes for all stakeholders of democracy.

## Independence

A Parliamentary Training Institute often faces challenges of political interference, which is against the independence of the institute. The institute should be transparent and provide capacity building to all elected representatives equally, irrespective of their political affiliations. It is, therefore, necessary that a Parliamentary Training Institute should have functional independence.

## Other Challenges

Another challenge parliamentary institutions face is motivating parliamentarians and legislators to attend programmes organized by the institute. Regular reminder through letters, e-mails, text messages, and also personal requests on phone is a must. Ultimately, participation in such programmes will help members to be responsive to the global issues.

Since Parliamentarians have to perform multifarious activities and roles, it is often a challenge to seek their confirmation to address the participants attending various programmes.

A country like India, being the largest democratic country with 29 states, the participation of officials from State Legislatures in the programmes organized by the BPST has been a continuous challenge.

All the participants attending national and international programmes have to be provided study material and background notes pertaining to relevant themes. The Institute must make it a point that the material supplied is revised and updated which inter-alia include all requisite parliamentary information.

To spread the ideas, practices and procedures of the parliamentary system, to inform citizens about the

work done by the Parliament and also to impart democratic values to the common people is also a responsibility of the parliamentary institution. While this may not be the primary responsibility, it certainly enhances the importance of the institute. In this direction, the BPST started the Lok Sabha Internship for young men and women with outstanding academic and extra-curricular achievements to acquaint them with the working of Parliamentary Democracy. The BPST selects five interns every year but it is a great challenge to keep them engaged for one whole year with various services of the Secretariat, meeting with members, dignitaries and monitoring the report that they have to submit on the condition of the internship. Several institutes have started Certificate Course in Parliamentary Practices and Procedures for youths.

The BPST has also started inviting students in batches of 25 to 30 from very remote areas of the country to Delhi for 3 to 4 day's study visit. Their accommodation in Delhi witnessing the proceedings of Parliament, providing them requisite understanding of the parliamentary system, arranging meetings with high dignitaries, visit to historic places and keeping them safe and secure in the city entail a tremendous responsibility.

### Vision for the Future

There is ample scope to accomplish the purpose and position of the BPST as the number one Parliamentary Training Centre in the world. The recommendations for future vision are:

- i. The institute should meet the high expectations of the clients and remain committed to higher standards of training, service and performance.
- ii. Although the BPST is mandated to take up studies in addition to training programmes, there are no studies of significance that the BPST has taken up so far. Such studies could generate informed opinion on the relevance of representative institution in a parliamentary democracy. It is imperative for a Parliamentary Study Centre to facilitate academic research on parliamentary studies, particularly on comparative studies of strengthening parliamentary institutions. Compendium on Programmes and Customized Programmes organized for members and other stakeholders may be brought out from time to time for the benefit of Development Partners.
- iii. Broadening the ambit of programmes conceptualized and conducted by the BPST. The twin, immediate, goals may be of redesigning it as the **“Change-Agent within Parliament”** and building it as **“Parliament's Bridge to Civil Society.”** To illustrate, for the former, Parliament-related “best practices” world-over may be studied for their possible incorporation through improved systems and procedures and appropriate capacity building of Members and personnel, after a thorough Training-Needs-Analysis (TNA). For the latter, Fellowships and Awards in memory of eminent Parliamentarians may be instituted for achievements related to the study and or reporting on Parliament. Further, institutionalized networks with youth, NGOs, professionals, media, Industry Associations, Academia, etc., may be put in place. The BPST may, thereby, function on the lines of a vibrant Think Tank and provide a platform for discourses and debates on vital issues of national importance which are to be taken up by Parliament, e.g. Right to Information, Gender Issues, Millennium Development Goals, etc.
- iv. Modules of training in legislation, representation and oversight, roles and functions should be prepared, keeping in view the exact requirement of the subjects under discussion.
- v. There is a need of imparting training to the trainers to enhance their skills in training to enable them to provide Capacity Building Programmes effectively and efficiently.

## Scope and Work of the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training (BPST)

### Introduction

Parliaments are an important component of national governance system and are the pillars of a democratic government. Viable democracy and open society depend on effective law-making, parliamentary oversight and representation. However, parliaments are often said to be ineffective as legislators pay little time to key roles and mandate with efficiency and effectiveness because they may not be quite well versant with parliamentary rules, skills, etc. Thus, Parliamentary capacity building services have become more important for improving the performance of Parliamentarians in exercising their main functions of oversight, public participation and law making.

Training and capacity building has become essential in any organization to provide an opportunity and broad structure for the development of human resources, technical and behavioural skills. It also helps the staff to achieve the organizational goals as well as their individual goals. It further helps the staff in inculcating a sense of teamwork, team spirit and inter-team collaborations, and also right learning culture within organization. In-house training and deputing employees for training in recognized institutions have become important components of augmentation of professional capabilities of staff. Any organization needs more self-sufficient, resourceful, and creative confident staff to operate at higher strategic level, which makes their organization more productive and competitive. Besides, a well-trained and developed staff will be a valuable asset to any organization and also capable enough to face any challenges.

### Mission and Scope

In the case of Parliamentary institutions, officers and staff working in legislatures require training and exposure in order to acquaint themselves with the latest developments to enable them to assist parliamentarians to perform their roles efficaciously. The pertinence of training and exposure in the context of parliamentary democracy is being increasingly recognized. Parliamentarians have manifold functions to perform, apart from their conventional representation role. Parliamentarians have to be well versed with all the parliamentary practices and procedures, skills and have to gain understanding of functional dynamics of parliamentary system, especially of law making,

oversight and conventions, traditions, etiquette, etc.

To this end, there has been proliferation of parliamentary study centres across a number of democratic countries. In essence, the purpose behind the establishment of parliamentary training institutes is to impart independent and quality research, analytical and capacity building programmes to parliamentarians, and parliamentary officials with the ultimate goal of creating well functional parliaments. The need for such training centres and institutes is to foster democracy by strengthening the institution of legislation through legislators, and officials, and encouraging greater engagement between public and legislatures. Such measures will assist members and staff to maintain highest standards of professional excellence.

Strong Parliaments are essential to democracy. Most parliaments have a number of constitutional roles that no other institution possesses. The quality of democracy in a country is the indication of how parliament successfully performs its role within the constitutional jurisdiction. The need for Parliaments to discharge their constitutional roles in an efficient and effective manner cannot be over emphasized. For this, parliaments would be required to have at their disposal, sound, professional and independent mechanism that increases the capacity of members, parliamentary officials and other stakeholders like civil servants, academicians, media, students and citizens at large who all make parliamentary democracy work successful. In the course of its evolution, parliamentary system has evolved several highly specialized practices as procedures and it is only the institution of parliament or parliament controlled institute, which can provide effective and more relevant training to stakeholders of democracy.

### Evolution of the BPST

The Parliament of India, representing all politically organized shades of public opinion at the national level, occupies pre-eminent and pivotal position in the countries constitutional set-up. It has also, over the years, carved out for itself a unique place in the esteem and affection of the people as the forum through which they articulate and realize their grievances and aspirations and these solutions to their problems. However, to provide necessary support to members and staff by conducting relevant workshops, orientation programmes, training, etc. fell on the Parliament itself.

The Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training (BPST) was set-up on January 01, 1976 as an integral part of Lok Sabha Secretariat to meet the long felt need

to provide institutionalized opportunities for systematic study and training in various disciplines of Parliamentary Institutions, processes and procedures. Since then, the BPST has been organizing number of training programmes in parliamentary and legislative fields and also on specialized subjects with a view to impart professionalism, expertise and orientation to all stakeholders of Parliamentary democracy. The Bureau was set-up in 1976 through an Administrative Order by the Lok Sabha Secretariat and it functions under overall control and supervision of the Secretary -General of Lok Sabha and is accountable to the Speaker of Lok Sabha. Housed in Parliament Complex, the Bureau has state-of-art infrastructure and training facilities.

### **Activities and Indicators**

The activities of the BPST as a premier training body include orientation programmes and seminars for members of Parliament and of State Legislature.

It is likely that members elected to Parliament or State Legislatures for the first time may not be well acquainted with the intricacies of Parliament and of the parliamentary practices and procedures. The Bureau organizes orientation programmes of about a week's duration for the newly elected members to familiarize them with the working of the Parliament and also on parliamentary traditions and etiquette. These programmes apprise the members of the constitutional role and position of Parliament and State Legislatures as representative institutions and also help them in making the best and effective use of the precious time of the house. Eminent parliamentarians, senior parliamentary officials and experts are invited to hold discussions on various themes of parliamentary practices and procedures. Similar orientation programmes for the newly elected members of State Legislatures are also organized by the Bureau either at New Delhi or at the State Capital as per the request of State Legislature concerned. Members of Parliament or State Legislatures freely exchange views with the faculty during such programmes. Scripts on topics under discussion are prepared and distributed to the members. Besides background material, the Bureau makes available the required secretarial, organizational and research assistance for making these programmes more informative and interactive.

### **Seminars and Workshops**

The Bureau, from time to time, organizes Seminars and specialized workshops for members and also for Parliament Officials on various topics of parliamentary

interest. This helps the Parliamentarians and officials in acquiring deeper and broader understanding of such issues.

### **Lectures Series for Members**

Since 2005, the BPST has been organizing a Lecture Series for benefit of members by experts and specialists on subject of topical interest. These lectures help them in gaining valuable information on subject under discussion. Experts, including international bodies, are invited to address the members and share their experiences. These lectures are organized when Parliament is in Session and so far about 34 such Lectures have been organized. These Lectures help members to understand problems in an effective way.

### **Professor Hiren Mukerjee Memorial Annual Parliamentary Lecture**

An annual Parliamentary Lecture in honour of Professor. Hiren Mukerjee, a Parliamentarian par excellence has been instituted in 2008. This annual lecture, the first of its kind in the history of Indian Parliament, is attended by members of Parliament, Governors, Presiding Officers, Chief Ministers, Academicians, Media, Diplomats and Senior Officers of Government of India. This prestigious occasion is attended by, besides the Chief Guest, the Vice President, Prime Minister, and Speaker of Lok Sabha. Eminent personalities, like Noble Laureate, Professor Amartya Sen, Professor Mohammad. Yunus, another Noble Laureate, Professor Jagdish Bhagwati, an eminent Economist and H.E. Prime Minister of Bhutan, have delivered this Lecture since 2008. This lecture is held in the historic Central Hall of Parliament. The Bureau prepares scripts, profiles of the Chief Guest and other relevant material for all the participants who attend this event. A copy of the address delivered by the Chief Guest is distributed to educational institutions.

### **Computer Awareness Programme**

Computer Awareness Programmes for members are being regularly organized by the Bureau in order to assist them in discharging their duties such as parliamentary and constituency management functions, office automation activities, personal information management, communication with State Legislators, etc. Such programmes are also organized for the personal staff of members and also for the officials of the Parliament from time to time. Computer training programme helps them to make optimum use of computer facilities, which are provided to them by



the Secretariat. The Bureau has state-of-art facilities in its computer Laboratory where members and their staff are given hands on-training.

### **Round Table Discussions**

The Bureau has been organizing Round Table discussions on “How to strengthen Parliamentary Democracy.” Members, Legal luminaries, Academicians, media persons, Civil Society leaders and other experts are invited to participate in such discussions. The important points that emerge from the discussions are collected by the Bureau.

### **Hindi Classes for Members from Non-Hindi Speaking States**

The Bureau periodically organizes Hindi Classes by experts for the benefit of members coming from Non-Hindi speaking States to enable them to understand the debates effectively. Such classes have been well received by the members.

### **Programmes for Foreign Parliamentarians/ Officials**

Over the years, the BPST has been receiving a large number of requests from Parliaments across the world for capacity building programme for Presiding Officers, Members of Parliament and other dignitaries and parliamentary officials. To meet such requirements, customized programmes, attachment programmes and study visits for Parliamentarians and Parliamentary Officials from foreign Parliaments are organized by the BPST on request. The programmes of 3 to 5 days duration are tailored-made in such a way that suits the requirements of the participants and enable them to understand the working of Parliamentary System in India. The Bureau also organizes programmes for the parliamentary and government officials from foreign countries on specific requests.

### **International Training Programmes**

The BPST, since 1985, has been organizing every year two International Training Programmes, i.e. the Parliamentary Internship Programme (PIP) for foreign Parliamentary Officials and the International Training Programme in Legislative Drafting (LD) for foreign parliamentary or government officials. Each programme is of 4 weeks' duration. The participants for both these programmes are drawn from countries covered under Indian Technical and Economic

Cooperation (ITEC), Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAAP) and the Colombo Plan. The Government of India funds both these programmes. The aim of these two programmes is to provide the participants an opportunity to exchange the ideas in the context of their own experiences in the Legislature and also of Indian Parliamentary System, cultural heritage and basic skills and techniques required for drafting of legislation.

### **Programmes in Foreign Languages**

Since the above two international programmes have been appreciated by the Parliament and especially by the participants, the Bureau on persistent requests has started organizing programmes for parliamentary officials in foreign languages. The first programme was organized in Arabic for Arab speaking parliamentary officials and another one in Spanish for Spanish speaking parliamentary staff. All research study materials are printed in foreign language as per the requirement. Simultaneous interpretation is also provided.

### **Familiarization Programmes/Seminars for Media Persons**

Since Media is an important component of democracy, the BPST, at regular intervals, organizes familiarization programmes/seminars for media persons, covering the parliamentary proceedings, which provide them opportunity to interact with veteran parliamentarians and senior parliamentary officials on various parliamentary themes. The Bureau is now organizing such programmes and seminars for media persons covering State Legislatures. The programmes for state media are held either at Delhi or the State Capital depending upon the request from the Legislature concerned.

### **Appreciation Courses for Probationers of All India and Central Services and Government Officials**

The civil servants and officials of the Government play an important part in the Parliamentary System in carrying out and implementing various policies and programmes, which are approved by the Parliament and, thus, have to be accountable to the Parliament. At various times, they have to appear before Parliamentary Committees to apprise the members of action taken in respect of Government activities, give evidence, explain omissions and commissions, etc.

Therefore, it becomes necessary for them who are part of the democratic establishment to have a sound understanding of the importance of the parliamentary set-up. In view of this, the BPST regularly organizes Appreciation Courses in Parliamentary Practices and Procedures of 3 to 5 days' duration for probationers of All India and Central Services and middle and senior level officials of the Government of India. These Courses provide them the much-needed exposure to the environment, culture and traditions of the parliamentary institution so that they would be able to see their role and play in the overall context of the parliamentary system. The Bureau prepares scripts on the subjects of Parliamentary Procedures and distributes to all the probationers/officials. Parliamentarians, parliamentary officials and experts are invited to interact with the participants. More than 2000 probationers of Civil & Central Services and officials of the government attend Appreciation Courses every year.

### **Training and Refresher Courses for Officers/Staff of the Secretariats of Parliament and State Legislatures**

The Bureau, every year, organizes about nine programmes for parliamentary and State Legislature officials to sharpen their functional skills. Programmes for these officials seek to provide a thorough grounding to the participants in different fields of parliamentary work in order to sharpen their perspective through discussions and exchange of ideas. Foundation Courses are arranged for new entrants to Parliamentary Services at the union level. Refresher Courses for officers at various levels are also organized at regular intervals. Besides, short duration courses in noting and drafting, office procedures, computer services, etc. are also organized.

### **Appreciation Courses for University/College Professors/Lecturers**

The Bureau organizes every alternate year a weeklong Appreciation Course in Parliamentary Practices and Procedures for professors, readers and lecturers of colleges and universities in India. The basic objective of the course is to enable the teaching community to have an insight into the working of Parliament and to help their students to gain adequate knowledge about Parliament and its functioning.

### **Training, Attachment and Study Tour Opportunities for Parliamentary Officials from India to Foreign Parliaments Institutions**

As part of the capacity building initiatives, the BPST facilitates short duration customized programmes for officers and staff of the Secretariat in various Parliaments and training institutions abroad.

### **Study Visits**

Apart from regular training programme, the Bureau organizes short duration study visits for officers of the Government and State Legislators, scholars, defence officials and students from India and abroad. During such study visits, participants are given the requisite orientation to enable them to understand notable aspects of parliamentary institutions, followed by a show round of Parliament Complex. The BPST also organizes call-on-meetings with the Speaker of Lok Sabha, by various stakeholders, including students.

### **Lok Sabha Internship Programme**

The Lok Sabha Internship Programme was launched in 2008. The objective of this oneyear long Internship Programme is to provide an opportunity to young men and women with outstanding academic and extra-curricular achievements to acquaint themselves with the institution of Parliamentary Democracy. The programme aims at providing requisite skills and knowledge to enable five selected Interns develop a better perspective about the role and functions of the Legislature. During the internship, interns are exposed to all the services of Parliament including the legislative, financial, committee system etc. On completion of the Internship, the Interns are awarded a certificate by the Speaker of Lok Sabha.

### **Performance of the BPST**

Over the years, the performance of the BPST has been phenomenal. The activities of the BPST and its success have been appreciated not only by the stakeholders of the democracy who attended various programs but by several Parliaments and international bodies and agencies. The performance can be assessed from the recent programmes that have been appreciated by the participants:

- i. Orientation Programmes for members of Parliament and State Legislatures:

Immediately after the Constitution of the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha in May 2014, the BPST organized Orientation Programme for the newly elected members. More than 250 members attended the programme. The members were so satisfied with this programme and the study material that they requested the Speaker of Lok Sabha for another such programme and which was subsequently conducted by the Bureau. All the State Legislatures also quite often request the BPST to organize similar programmes for their members immediately after the constitution of the Legislatures.

- ii. Members have shown keen interest in the Lecture Series organized by the BPST as they get valuable information from the experts who address them on various issues. The members often request the BPST to organize more and more such Lectures on various current topics so that they would be able to understand the issues in a better way as it helps them in raising the issues on the floor of the House efficiently.
- iii. As the BPST has been pro-actively engaged in the field of Professional Building Programme, the Bureau has been receiving a large number of requests from various Parliaments, Government Departments for Study Visits and Customized programmes for their members, parliamentary and Government officials. The BPST receives delegations from foreign Parliaments more regularly for training programmes. Programmes that are conducted by the Bureau have been appreciated by all sponsoring institutions.
- iv. The two International Training Programmes for parliamentary and Government officials: Parliamentary Internship Programme and International Training Programme in Legislative Drafting when started in 1985 by the Bureau was attended by 5 to 7 participants only. But since last 5 years, 40-50 participants attend each programme from approximately 30 countries. This underscores the fact that the programmes over the year have been well received by the participants as they are provided an opportunity to gain a thorough knowledge of the parliamentary system in India by way of interactions with parliamentarians and parliamentary officers. The participants attending the Legislative Drafting Programmes are exposed to the functioning of the legal bodies in India. Participants of both the programmes are also given an opportunity to enjoy and experience the unique diversities of India by way of local site seeing and a visit to a State Legislature.
- v. Since the two International Programmes have been appreciated across the globe, several Parliaments requested the Bureau to organize similar programmes in their languages. Accordingly, as mentioned earlier, the BPST organizes two week's programme in Parliamentary Practices and Procedures in Arabic and Spanish. All the material, background notes, and programmes schedule were printed in Arabic and Spanish as per the requirement. Interpreters were made available not only during the training classes but also during their site seeing and visits to historical places.
- vi. The Programme for Media persons has become so popular among the media persons that the BPST has been receiving a large number of requests from the State Legislatures and foreign Parliaments to organize programme for Media persons covering their Legislature and the BPST organizes such programmes on specific requests.
- vii. The BPST has been organizing Study Visits for students of educational institutions from all over the country. The response from the Institutions was so encouraging that the BPST took a new direction in this regard. The BPST has now started Study Visits for students from remote areas of the country who do not have the opportunity even to come out of their villages. The students in 25-30 batches are brought to Delhi for a three days study visit. They are provided accommodation, shown the proceedings of the Parliament, show round of Parliament Complex, visit to historical places, meeting with the Speaker of Lok Sabha and other dignitaries, etc.
- viii. As mentioned earlier, five interns are selected every year for the Lok Sabha Internship. During one year Internship, they have the opportunity to meet Members of Parliament, Ministers and other dignitaries in connection with the Project they have been assigned. After completion of Internship successfully, some of the Interns have been placed in reputed institutions and organization. This programme has become so popular among the youths that the BPST receives a lot of queries from them about the commencement and selection of internship.

### **Reasons for Success**

- i. The Bureau is accountable to the Speaker of Lok Sabha.
- ii. Speaker of Lok Sabha takes keen interest in all the programmes organized by the BPST and regularly advises the BPST.
- iii. Speaker also appoints honorary advisor constantly advises and gives valuable inputs in conducting the programmes.
- iv. The BPST is an integral part of the Lok Sabha Secretariat and is located within the Parliament House Complex and as such Political Faculty could make themselves available to address the participants.
- v. Most importantly, the funding of the BPST comes from the budget of the Lok Sabha Secretariat and there has never been any financial problem with regard to organizing National or International Programmes.
- vi. The BPST does not charge any fee for organizing training programmes. Training is imparted free to all the participants. However, participants from outside Delhi or India have to make their own arrangements for lodging and boarding.

### **Challenges to the BPST**

Although the BPST has over the years made the Bureau an excellent training institution with the entire modern infrastructure but still it has faced some of the challenges, such as:

- i. To provide relevant study and background notes for a particular programme.
- ii. Right faculty for specialized programme, i.e. Role and Function of Comptroller and Auditor General, HIV Aids, Planning Commission, etc. for which specific requests have been received from foreign Parliaments and Governments.
- iii. Maximum participation of members in various programmes and functions organized by the Bureau.
- iv. Printing of Publications in foreign languages for participants of foreign Parliaments.
- v. Drafting of Programme Schedule relevant to the specialized programme.
- vi. Availability of Political Faculty.

## Conclusion

Parliaments all over the world desire to enhance their performance in order to strengthen parliamentary democracy. Parliamentary development in recent times is becoming increasingly professionalized so that it assists parliamentarians to develop full capacity to perform their roles as per the wishes of the citizens.

Support to a parliamentary institution needs to be provided by the beneficiary Parliament or Organization, and not by donors. Lack of adequate funds is major challenge that a parliamentary institution faces. Many institutes are funded by donor agencies/governments but during economic melt down these institutes also suffer threat of sustainability. In view of this, it is generally appreciated that the funding to the institution should come from the internal budget of the Parliament and institute itself. In this way, the institute will be accountable to the parent organization. The institute should preferably be located within or near the Parliament House Complex so that Members could attend the programmes without wasting much time. That way, if need be, members could be requested to address the participants at short notice.

The Parliamentary institutions need to be free of control of the Government and of partisan influence. The institutes should provide authentic sufficient and effective support to all those stakeholders who are responsible for strengthening democracy. It can further be seen as a mechanism of enhancing public consultation and outreach practices. Parliament institutes should besides, members and Parliamentary officials, render Capacity Building Programme to other clients who are involved in the working of Parliamentary System and making it a success.

Relevant study material and literature on all topics should be prepared and distributed among the participants well in advance. Training module should be prepared as per the requirement. Parliamentarians and experts may be engaged as Faculty Members. The institutions should have requisite modern infrastructure to organize various programmes.

The Institutes should have their own computer laboratory for providing computer training to members and officials. This laboratory will also help the participants attending various training programmes to use computer for their reference purposes. The staff working in the institutes should be well oriented and ready to offer their services at any time to make programmes successful.

Parliamentary institutions should aim to deliver support in a predictable and timely manner. Besides, Parliamentary Practices and Procedures, Programmes and Seminars on current issues like – gender issues, farmers' problems, global climate, economic issues, child trafficking, foreign policy, etc. may also be organized. Institutes should also impart training to parliamentary officials on each different matters i.e. noting and drafting, office procedures, research and information service, committee system, management development, power point presentation, and writing scripts.

The purpose of the parliamentary institutions is to provide capacity building of all stakeholders so that parliaments develop to its full capacity and perform their roles and promote citizens' involvement in strengthening parliamentary democracy. Institutes should strive to collaborate and have meetings with sister-institutions and adopt valuable suggestions for their Institutes.



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