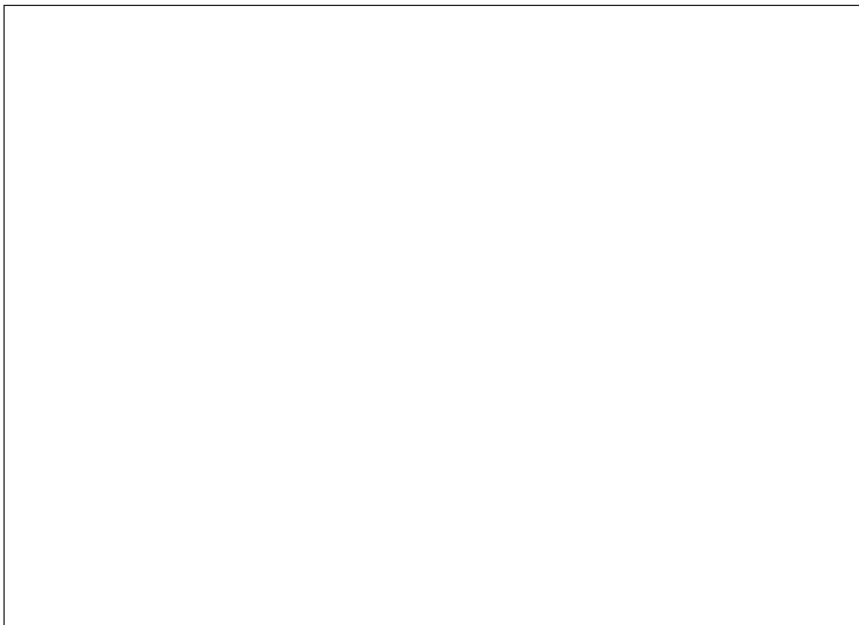




**RAJYA SABHA**  
**PRACTICE & PROCEDURE SERIES**

**9**

**SPECIAL MENTIONS**



## **SPECIAL MENTIONS**

F. No. RS. 17/5/2005-R & L

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E-mail: [rslib@sansad.nic.in](mailto:rslib@sansad.nic.in)



**RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

PUBLISHED BY SECRETARY-GENERAL, RAJYA SABHA AND PRINTED  
BY MANAGER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS,  
MINTO ROAD, NEW DELHI-110002

## **PREFACE**

This booklet is part of the Rajya Sabha Practice and Procedure Series which seeks to describe in brief, the procedure of 'Special Mentions' in Rajya Sabha. It is based on the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Rajya Sabha. Prior to July 2000, the procedure for making a Special Mention was not included in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Rajya Sabha; it was based on the practice obtaining in the House. The booklet is intended to serve only as a handy guide for ready reference and the information contained in it is not exhaustive. For full and authentic information only the original sources may be referred to and relied upon.

New Delhi  
*February, 2005*

DR. YOGENDRA NARAIN  
*Secretary-General*

## **SPECIAL MENTION**

### **Genesis**

Special Mention is yet another device through which a member can raise an issue of public importance in the House. Till 1 July 2000, there was no specific provision in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Rajya Sabha in regard to the mentioning of matters of public importance in the House by members. During the early two decades of Rajya Sabha, it was the practice that ordinarily a member wishing to bring to the notice of the House and the Government a matter of public importance, could approach the Chairman in his Chamber before the commencement of the sitting of the House and seek his prior permission to mention that matter. The member concerned was then called to refer to the matter after the Question Hour. The absence of rules governing the admissibility of and the procedure for making Special Mentions was perceived as hampering the smooth conduct of the business of the House. Therefore, the matter was placed before the General Purposes Committee. The General Purposes Committee at its meeting held on 28 July 1999 endorsed the need for framing rules in this regard and referred the matter to the Committee on Rules. Agreeing with the views of the General Purposes Committee, the Committee on Rules in its Eighth Report proposed new Rules 180A to 180E for regulating the procedure for making Special Mentions in the House.

The Report of the Committee was adopted by the House on 15 May 2000 and the new Rules came into force with effect from 1 July 2000. Accordingly, from the 190th Session, matters of public importance under the procedure of Special Mentions are being raised in Rajya Sabha.

### **Procedure**

The following procedure has now been evolved in regard to Special Mention:

- (i) A member who desires to seek permission of the Chairman for mentioning a matter of public importance in the House should give notice thereof in writing in the form available for the purpose in the Notice Office not later than 5.00 P.M. on the day preceding the day on which he proposes to mention the matter in the House.
- (ii) The notice should be accompanied by a text of the matter to be mentioned not exceeding 250 words.
- (iii) A member should not give more than two such notices for one sitting.
- (iv) Notices received upto 5.00 P.M. the preceding day only will be placed before the Chairman for his consideration for the day on which the next sitting of the House is to be held. Notices received after that will be deemed to have been received for the subsequent sitting of the House.

- (v) The Chairman in his discretion may select seven such matters depending upon their urgency and importance for a day.
- (vi) A member to whom permission is given by the Chairman for mentioning a particular matter in the House on that day will be informed about it in the House during the Question Hour.
- (vii) Only the member to whom permission has been given may mention the matter in the House by reading the text as approved by the Chairman.
- (viii) A member to whom permission has not been granted to mention a matter will not be allowed to mention it in the House.
- (ix) Ordinarily not more than one Special Mention may be permitted on one subject. In case notices are received from more than one member on the same subject at the same time and for the same day, the Chairman in his discretion will decide which member is to be permitted to make the Special Mention irrespective of the order in which the notice is submitted. The others may simply mention that they also associate with it and no further speeches will be allowed.
- (x) A member should not take more than three minutes to make Special Mention.

- (xi) The members so permitted may mention the matter after the disposal of "Questions" and laying of Papers, if any. Normally, Special Mentions are not allowed on a day if Calling Attention notices have been admitted.
- (xii) A member may make only one Special Mention during a week.
- (xiii) Notices on subjects that have not been selected for a particular day are carried forward for consideration of the Chairman for the next day.
- (xiv) Notices which are not selected during the week for which they have been given, lapse at the end of the week and those members who are desirous to revive their notice(s) for the following week may do so by giving a fresh notice.

#### **Follow-up action**

When Special Mentions are made in the House, as a general practice, the Ministers, who may be present in the House, do not react immediately to the matters so mentioned by members. If the concerned Minister is present and wishes to reply, he is permitted to do so but it is not obligatory for him to reply.

Since August 1981, as informally suggested in the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee held on 19 August 1981, after a Special Mention is made, relevant

extract of the proceedings of the House is forwarded to the concerned Ministry/Department of the Government the following day with the request that the same may be placed before the concerned Minister for a reply thereon direct to the member who has made the Special Mention. A copy of the communication is also forwarded to the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs which is the nodal Ministry for ensuring follow-up action by the Ministries on the matters raised through Special Mention. The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs has issued instructions and guidelines to the Ministries/Departments regarding the follow-up action to be taken by them with regard to the matters raised under the Special Mention procedure, including the time-limit for sending replies thereto. Members, are increasingly taking recourse to this procedure to raise matters of public importance.

### **Zero Hour Submissions**

Members usually give expression to their feelings around noon after the Question Hour. This time has been termed as 'Zero Hour'. There is no procedure prescribed in the Rules of Procedure for regulating the Zero Hour submissions. With the formalisation of the procedure governing Special Mention, more thrust has been given for raising matters of public importance in the House through Special Mention. Therefore, the practice of raising matters during Zero Hour has been dispensed with since May, 1998. However, in order to give an

opportunity to the members to raise a matter of public importance which they feel is very urgent, another informal practice has been started by way of "Matter Raised with Permission of the Chair". Such permission is rarely given by the Chairman and as such cannot be termed as a regular device available to members to raise such matters in the House.