

Parliamentary panels have big role in holding govt accountable, concerned with decline in House discussion: Speaker Om Birla

Om Birla was speaking at a national conference of chairpersons of Parliamentary and legislature committees on the welfare of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

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Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla addresses the concluding session of the All India Speakers Conference, in the Delhi Legislative Assembly. (Source: @gupta_rekha/X via PTI Photo)

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said Friday that parliamentary and state legislature committees play a major role in holding governments accountable by examining schemes and expenditure.

But as the role of these committees grows, there is a concern over the decline in dialogue, decorum and discussion in Lok Sabha and state legislatures, he said.

Birla was speaking at a national conference of chairpersons of Parliamentary and legislature committees on the welfare of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Union Tribal Affairs minister Jual Oram, Union Education minister [Dharmendra Pradhan](#), [Rajya Sabha](#) Deputy Chairman Harivansh and Faggan Singh Kulaste, chairperson, parliamentary committee on Welfare of SC and ST Chairperson also spoke at the event.

“Parliamentary committees review and scrutinise government functioning and their recommendations and review makes government accountable and ensures transparency,” said Birla.

However, Birla said, there was cause for concern over the decline in debate and dialogue in Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas. “Lok Sabha aur Vidhan Sabha ke andar jis tarah ki charcha, samvaad hona chahiye, uski kami ke baare mai hum sab chintit hai, jo bhasha ka upyog hona chahiye, jo aachran ka upyog hona chahiye, uske liye bhi hum chintit hai (We are worried about the decline in discussion, dialogue and the kind of language and conduct that should be seen in Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas),” he said.

He emphasised that House panels are bipartisan and above party lines.

Birla's comments come in the wake of the recently concluded Monsoon session of Parliament which was marked by near daily disruptions and protests over demands for a discussion on electoral roll revision in Bihar.

The national conference will see around 200 delegates from 19 states, including chairpersons and members of Parliamentary and legislature panels, deliberate on welfare of SCs and STs. Birla said that delegates at the conference should exchange ideas on how to improve recommendations to the government on implementation of schemes for SCs and STs.

Birla said that if India has to move ahead, then SCs and STs cannot be left behind. He exhorted MPs and MLAs to be aware of schemes targeted towards SCs and STs. “These committees can make impactful interventions using their powers. They should also scrutinize on how budgetary allocations are being utilized and whether they are reaching the intended beneficiaries,” he said.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said that education was not all inclusive yet, and that the National Education Policy (NEP) was for all-inclusive education, especially for the deprived SCs and STs. He said since 2014, the number of SC and ST students have grown, especially female students. Jugal Kishore highlighted that the PM-JANMAN and Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh schemes were improving welfare delivery targeted towards the particularly vulnerable tribal groups, and STs at large.

Odisha CM Mahanta said that being from the ST community, he was aware of their hardships and unlike others, he did not need to indulge in “poverty tourism”, in a veiled jibe at opposition leaders.

“I belong to the ST community myself and I do not have to visit the poor to understand the problems of the community. These days, it has become a fashion to visit Adivasi homes and

indulge in poverty tourism prior to elections. We have grown up here and we understand their pain,” he said.

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