Haryana - Amended Rules for Conduct of Business in Assembly

Why in news?

Haryana has amended several provisions under its Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Legislative Assembly of the state.

What are the new Rules in the amended provisions?

- During every sitting of the House, presence of at least two ministers is mandatory.
    - This was not maintained at times during discussion on certain Calling Attention Motions or other Business of the House.
- To maintain decorum of the House, the members "shall not tear off documents in the House in protest".
    - There had been instances where Members occupying opposition benches had torn copies of documents in the House as a mark of protest.
- Another Sub-Rule 46(11) that deals with Questions asked by the Members during the sitting of the House has been substituted.
- Accordingly, the question shall not contain more than 150 words in any case either typed or handwritten on one side of the page.
- This is brought in to have better clarity for the Ministers to give a specific reply to the query raised by the Member.
- Earlier, there were instances where Members used to submit too lengthy questions that did not receive clear replies.
- Likewise, under the amendments, a supplementary question shall be held out of order by the Speaker if, in his/her opinion -
    i. it does not arise from the main Question or its answer
    ii. instead of seeking information, it gives information
    iii. it seeks confirmation or denial of an opinion
    iv. it infringes any of the rule regarding questions
- Also, the Speaker shall allow not more than two supplementary questions to be asked on any question.

What is the new definition of Leader of Opposition?

- As per the new definition, Leader of Opposition means Leader of a

Legislative Party -

i. having the largest number of members other than the party/parties that has formed the government
ii. having the strength at least equal to the strength of the quorum of the House and recognised as such by the Speaker

- If more than one party has got equal number of members competing for such recognition, that which has got more number of votes in the Assembly elections shall be recognised.
- If the total number of votes polled to both the groups is equal, then the Office of the Leader of the Opposition shall be held alternatively.
- The order in which they will hold Office shall be decided by draw of lots.

What are the instructions issued to government departments?

- After Rule 243, Rule 243(A) has been added.
- It ensures timely action on recommendations made by the Committees that comprise Members of the House and are constituted by the Speaker.
- The Department of Government concerned with the recommendations made by Committee shall furnish a Statement of final action taken by the Government on the recommendations.
- It will have to submit this within 30 days to the Haryana Vidhan Sabha Secretariat.
- If the final action is likely to take a long time, the Department shall give an interim reply stating the position at that time, and the approximate time likely to be taken in taking the final action.
- The statement of action taken shall be accompanied by a copy of the order, if any, issued by the Government to implement the recommendations of the Committee.

What is the amended Rule for protocol violation enquiry?

- After the Rule 297 that deals with this subject, the Rule 297-A has been added.
- Any violations shall be taken up by the Committee of Privileges for examination and Report.
- This applies to the -
    - Instructions of the State Government
    - Instructions issued by the Department of Personnel Training
    - Instructions issued by the Central Government adopted by the State
    - Any direction of the Speaker issued from time to time on observance of protocol and courtesies in dealing with the Members of the House

What are the amended Rules pertaining to Ministers?

- Rule 204 (1) deals with members of the Committee of the Assembly.
- Accordingly, the members of a Committee of the Assembly shall be appointed by the Assembly on a motion made, or nominated by the Speaker, as the case may be.
- A Minister shall not be nominated as a member of the Committee except Business Advisory Committee.
- In case a member of the Committee is appointed as a Minister, he/she shall cease to be the member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.

Source: The Indian Express

