

Standing Committee Report Summary

The Indian Maritime University Bill, 2007

- The Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture submitted its 132nd Report on 'The Indian Maritime University Bill, 2007' on April 17, 2008. The Chairperson was Shri Sitaram Yechury.
- The Bill seeks to establish a university at the national level to facilitate and promote maritime studies and research in areas of marine science and technology, marine environment, and other related fields. The Committee recommended that definition of "campus", "college", "institution", etc be amended and made more comprehensive. It also suggested that terms such as "student council", "visitors", "student", "affiliation", and "visiting faculty" be defined.
- The University shall be headquartered in Chennai with campuses in Mumbai, Kolkata, Vishakhapatnam and any other place deemed fit. Keeping in view the shortage of maritime manpower, the Committee recommends that there should be one university each in Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Vishakhapatnam, and Kochi with demarcated geographical jurisdiction. It also states that availability of land should not be the sole criteria for establishing a University. While selecting a place, the existence of other related institutions and infrastructure should be considered.
- The Committee feels that the Bill restricts itself to shipping related issues/institutions as distinct from maritime issues/institutions. It, therefore, recommends that the university should deal with the entire gamut of maritime activities. Also, the scope of maritime studies should be elaborated to include maritime security, law and history, ocean engineering, exploitation of resources, port management, marine insurance, off shore exploration, and ship building.
- The Bill enables the University to approve or withdraw appointment of teachers. The Committee suggests that the approval of teachers and instructors should be restricted to ascertaining that the faculty meets the university's criteria with respect to qualifications, experience and age. These details should be included in the Bill itself.
- The Committee recommends that the university should determine standards of admission for colleges and institutions affiliated with the university. The Bill should also spell out the conditions necessary to declare a college or institution autonomous.
- The Bill states that the authorities of the University shall include the executive council, the academic council and the court. The Committee points out that the Bill does not define the composition or term of office of any of the authorities of the University. It suggests that the composition of the court should be included in the Bill and should incorporate workers, shipping industry, shipyard dredger owner, offshore industry, teachers, etc. The composition of other authorities should also be included in the Bill and a representative of the state government where the University is located may be inducted in the Executive Council.
- The Committee proposes that the conditions necessary for admitting colleges and institutions under the University should be specified.
- The Bill allows an employee or student the right to appeal against the decision of any authority of the University or college to the Executive Council. The Committee recommends that a time frame should be fixed for making an appeal to the Executive Council.
- The Committee recommends that the term of office of the first Chancellor, Vice Chancellor and other officers should be reduced from five and three years to three and two years respectively.
- The Bill states that the Director-General of Shipping, Government of India has the power to regulate norms and standards in maritime education. The Committee feels that such a provision may impede the autonomous functioning of the University and recommends that such powers be given solely to the University.
- Given the specialised scope of the University, the Committee advises that the Chancellor can be chosen from persons of eminence from the shipping business or maritime techno-commercial field.
- Certain details about the minimum qualification and manner of appointment for posts such as the Pro-Vice Chancellor, the Registrar, and the panel for selection of Vice Chancellor are not included in the Bill. The Committee recommends that such details should be mentioned. The Finance Committee should include a representative from the University court.
- The Committee advises that efforts should be made to increase the presence of highly qualified scientists,

technologists and researchers in the management of the University. The Executive Council, Academic Council and Planning Board should include suitably qualified persons from the maritime industry, professional bodies and maritime training institutes.

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