

Bill Summary

The Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026

- The Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026 was introduced in Lok Sabha on August 10, 2026. It seeks to repeal the Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021. The 2021 Act provides for appointments and terms and conditions of service for various Tribunals. The Bill seeks to provide for these matters in consonance with the directions of the Supreme Court. Certain provisions of the 2021 Act were struck down by the Supreme Court for contradicting the principles of separation of powers and the independence of judiciary.
- **National Tribunals Commission:** The Bill establishes the National Tribunals Commission. Its functions include: (i) conducting the selection process for filling vacancies in Tribunals, (ii) reviewing performance of Tribunals, (iii) overseeing inquiries into complaints against the conduct of chairpersons or members of the Tribunals, and (iv) developing and maintaining the National Tribunals Data Grid.
- **Composition of the Commission:** The Commission will consist of: (i) a chairperson, who has been a Judge of the Supreme Court or a Chief Justice of a High Court, (ii) two judicial members, who have been a Chief Justice or Judge of a High Court, and (iii) two technical members. The technical members must have at least 25 years of experience in the fields of public administration, finance, law, accountancy, banking, management, or technology. The chairperson and members of the Commission will hold office for a term of five years, or until the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier. Appointments to the Commission will be made by the central government. Appointments of the chairperson and judicial members must be made after consultation with the Chief Justice of India. The Commission will have a secretariat, headed by a secretary of the central government.
- **Selection process for Tribunals:** The Commission will constitute a search-cum-selection committee to recommend appointment to a Tribunal. The Committee will be headed by: (i) the chairperson of the Commission in case of appointment of a chairperson of a Tribunal, (ii) a judicial member of the Commission in case of a member. The chairperson of the Commission will nominate to the Committee a retired: (i) Chief Justice of a High Court in case of appointment of a chairperson of a Tribunal, or (ii) Judge of a High Court in case of a member. Other members of the Committee will include: (i) a technical member of the Commission, (ii) a secretary of the government nominated by the central government, (iii) two expert members, and (iv) the Commission Secretary. Expert members and the Commission Secretary will not have any vote. The chairperson of the Committee will have a casting vote. The Secretariat will empanel experts from relevant fields as per Commission Regulations.
- For each vacancy, the Committee will recommend one name for appointment, and one additional name in the waiting list. The central government must make an appointment within three months from the recommendation.
- **Term of office:** Chairpersons and members of Tribunals will hold office for five years, or until a specified age limit, whichever is earlier. Age limit will be 70 years for chairpersons, and 67 years for members.
- **Re-appointments:** Chairpersons and members of Tribunals may be considered for re-appointment subject to: (i) consideration of previous work performance, and (ii) in case of a member, consultation with the chairperson of the concerned Tribunal.
- **Removal of members:** The central government may remove a chairperson or member of the Commission or a Tribunal from office if the person: (i) is adjudged insolvent, (ii) is convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude, (iii) has become physically or mentally incapable, (iv) has abused his position, or (v) has acquired financial or other interest which is prejudicial to functions. In case of Tribunal chairpersons and members, additional grounds for removal include: (i) found to be incompetent or inefficient, or (ii) engaging in paid assignment.
- **Terms of appointment and service:** The central government will prescribe through Rules: (i) qualifications, (ii) manner of selection, (iii) salaries and allowances, (iv) resignation, removal, and other conditions of service.

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