



Productivity of Lok Sabha and Implications

For Prelims: Productivity of Lok Sabha, [Parliament](#), [Lok Sabha](#), [Rajya Sabha](#), [Budget Session](#).

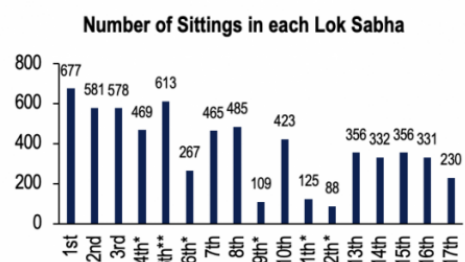
For Mains: Productivity of Lok Sabha and Implications.

Why in News?

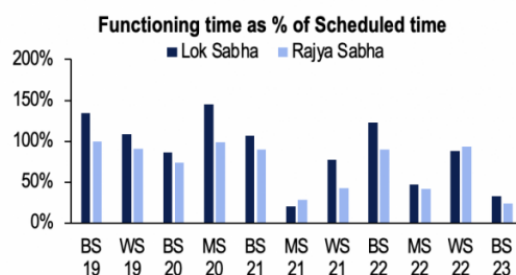
The 17th [Lok Sabha](#), which is entering its final year, has functioned for **230 sitting days so far**.

- Of all the Lok Sabhas that completed the full five-year term, the 16th Lok Sabha had the lowest number of sitting days (331). With one more year remaining, and 58 average sitting days a year, the **17th Lok Sabha is unlikely to sit for more than 331 days**.
- This could make it the shortest full-term Lok Sabha since 1952.

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Note: *Term less than 5 years; **6 year term. Figures for the 17th Lok Sabha are till the Budget Session 2023.



Note: BS – Budget Session; MS – Monsoon Session; WS – Winter Session.

How has the Lok Sabha Functioned So far?

- Productivity of Budget Session 2023:**
 - The latest session (Budget session) held from January 2023 to April 2023, saw **limited legislative activity and minimal discussion** on the [Budget](#) amidst continuous disruptions.
 - In this session, the Lok Sabha functioned for 33% of its scheduled time (46 hours) and the Rajya Sabha functioned for 24% (32 hours).
 - This has been the **sixth shortest budget session since 1952**. Lok Sabha spent 18 hours on financial business, of which 16 hours were spent on the general discussion of the budget.
- Past Eleven Sessions:**
 - From the 2019 Budget Session to the 2023 Budget Session, 150 Bills have been introduced and 131 Bills have been passed.
 - In the first session, **38 Bills were introduced and 28 were passed**. Since then, the number of Bills introduced and passed has declined.
 - Fewer than 10 Bills have been introduced or passed in each of the last four consecutive sessions.

- **House Productivity:**
 - In 2022, the functioning of the Lok Sabha was **at 177 hours** and in the Rajya Sabha it was 127.6 hours.
 - In 2021, it was 131.8 hours in the Lok Sabha and 104 hours in the Rajya Sabha.
 - Similarly, in 2020, **productivity hours for the Lower House were 111.2** and 93.8 hours for the Upper House.
 - During the first half of this year's Budget Session, the Lok Sabha devoted a total of 14 hours and 45 minutes to discussing **it against the allotted time of 12 hours.**
- **Debates in Parliament Reducing:**
 - In the 17th Lok Sabha, only 11 short-duration discussions and **one half-an-hour discussion have been** held so far, and none were held during the latest session.
 - Question Hour functioned for only **19% of the scheduled time** in the Lok Sabha and 9% of the scheduled time in the Rajya Sabha.
 - No Private Member Bills were introduced or discussed. Each House discussed one Private Member Resolution.
- **Lower Examination under Parliamentary Committee:**
 - During the course of the 17th Lok Sabha, only 14 Bills have been referred for further examination under [Parliamentary Committee](#) so far.
 - As little as 25% of the Bills introduced **were referred to committees in the 16th Lok Sabha**, as compared to 71% and 60% in the 15th and 14th Lok Sabha respectively. This represents a declining trend of national legislation being subjected to expert scrutiny.
- **Delayed Election of Deputy Speaker:**
 - Article 93 of the Constitution states that **Lok Sabha will choose two Members of the House to be Speaker and Deputy Speaker**, as soon as possible. The 17th Lok Sabha has not elected a Deputy Speaker even **as it enters the final year of its five-year term.**

What are the Reasons for the Lower Productivity of Lok Sabha?

- **Frequent Disruptions:**
 - The 17th Lok Sabha experienced frequent **disruptions and protests by opposition parties**. These disruptions resulted in a **significant loss of time and decreased productivity**.
 - Several major issues led to these disruptions, including the [Citizenship Amendment Act \(CAA\)](#), [National Register of Citizens \(NRC\)](#), and farm laws.
- **Lack of Agreement:**
 - Despite the ruling party having a clear majority, there **was a lack of consensus on crucial matters**. This lack of agreement among the members of parliament caused delays in passing important bills and legislation.
- **Shorter Sessions:**
 - The 17th Lok Sabha had **shorter sessions compared** to previous ones. This limited time for thorough discussions and debates on essential bills and issues. Consequently, many important matters were left pending without sufficient attention.

What are the Implications of Lower Productivity of Lok Sabha?

- **Delayed Legislation:**
 - The primary implication is the **delay in passing important bills and legislation**.
 - When the Lok Sabha is unable to function effectively, bills related to crucial issues such as taxation, infrastructure, and social welfare **may get postponed**.
 - This delay hampers the progress of the country as it impedes the implementation of necessary policies and reforms.
- **Lack of Accountability and Oversight:**
 - When the Lok Sabha is not productive, **it hinders the process of holding members of parliament accountable** for their actions. Inadequate debate and scrutiny **result in a lack of thorough examination of proposed laws** and decisions.
 - This undermines the **democratic principle of checks and balances**, allowing the executive to push through decisions without sufficient oversight.

- **Diminished Public Trust:**
 - It can damage the **trust of citizens in democratic institutions**. When elected representatives are unable to fulfill their responsibilities effectively, it creates a sense of disillusionment and disengagement among the public.
 - This can **lead to a decline in citizen participation**, eroding the foundations of a healthy democracy.
- **Wasted Resources:**
 - The lower productivity of the Lok Sabha **translates into wasted resources, specifically taxpayers' money**.
 - The salaries and allowances of Members of Parliament are funded by the public exchequer. If these resources are not utilized effectively due to disruptions or lack of productivity, it results in a waste of public funds that could have been utilized for other developmental purposes.
- **Economic Impact:**
 - A less productive Lok Sabha can have a negative impact on the economy. Delayed or inadequate legislation on crucial economic issues **can hamper growth, investment, and development**.
 - The lack of certainty and efficient decision-making can undermine investor confidence, leading to a slowdown in economic progress.

Way Forward

- There is a need to reinvigorate the culture of parliamentary democracy in India. This involves **fostering a sense of respect, decorum, and professionalism** among parliamentarians. Members should be encouraged to **prioritize their role as representatives of the people** and actively participate in debates and discussions.
- It is crucial to promote a **culture of constructive dialogue and debate** within Parliament. Political leaders **should be encouraged to engage in substantive discussions** on policy matters, rather than resorting to disruptive tactics or personal attacks.
- Efforts should be made to strengthen the oversight function of Parliament through rigorous questioning, **scrutiny of government actions, and thorough debates on important policy decisions**. This requires ensuring that relevant information is provided to parliamentarians in a timely and transparent manner.

[Source: TH](#)

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