



Youth Leadership in Indian National Politics (With Special Reference to the 17th Lok Sabha)

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ABSTRACT: The 17th Lok Sabha was formed by the members elected in the 2019 Indian general election.^[1] Elections, all across India, were conducted in seven phases from 11 April 2019 to 19 May 2019 by the Election Commission of India. Counting started officially on the morning of 23 May 2019 and the results were declared on the same day.

Om Birla was elected as the Speaker of the House. As no party holds 10% of the seats to secure the position of Leader of Opposition, currently, there is no Leader of the Opposition. However, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury is the leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha, which is the second largest party.^{[2][3]}

The 17th Lok Sabha has the most women representatives, at 14 percent. 267 members are first-time MPs. 233 members (43 percent) have had criminal charges against them. 475 members have their declared assets to be more than ₹1 crore (US\$130,000); average assets were ₹20.9 crore (US\$2.6 million). Around 39 percent of members are professionally noted to be politicians or involved in social work.

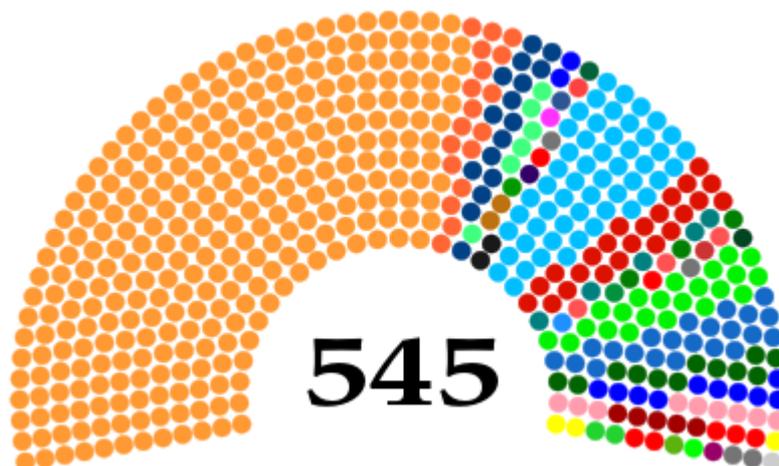
KEYWORDS: 17th Lok-Sabha, Indian, National, Politics, Youth, Leadership, Women, Representatives

I. INTRODUCTION

The 17th Lok Sabha has the highest ever number of women politicians with a total of 78 which is nearly 14%.^[10] The earlier Lok Sabha had 62 women MPs. The average age of 17th Lok Sabha is noted to be 54 years and 12% of MPs are below the age of 40. Chandrani Murmu of BJD from Keonjhar constituency became the youngest member at the age of 25 years, 11 months and nine days and Shafiqur Rahman Barq of SP from Sambhal constituency became the oldest member at the age of 89.^{[11][12]} Education-wise, 43% MPs have graduate-level education, 25% are post-graduates and 4% of members have doctorates in various subjects. Of the total strength, 300 members have been elected as member for the first time and 197 members have been elected second time consecutively i.e. they were a member in the 16th Lok Sabha as well.^[10] BJP members Maneka Gandhi^[1,2] from Sultanpur constituency and Santosh Gangwar from Bareilly constituency has been elected to Lok Sabha for the eighth time.^[13] Religion-wise, 90.4% members are Hindus and 5.2% are Muslims, with the rest, nearly 4%, being Sikhs, Christians and other minorities.^[13] According to the NGO Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), 233 members (i.e. 43%) have criminal charges against them. Of these, nearly 29% of the cases are rape, murder, attempted murder, or crime against women. Congress MP Dean Kuriakose, of the Idukki constituency in Kerala, has 204 criminal cases.^[9] Financially, the number of members who are crorepati (i.e. with declared assets more than ₹1 crore (US\$130,000)) are 475.^[3,5,7] Members with more than ₹5 crore (US\$630,000) assets are 266. The average assets of the whole Lok Sabha was ₹20.9 crore (US\$2.6 million) and Nakul Nath^[8,9,10] of Congress from Chhindwara constituency has the highest declared assets of nearly ₹660 crore (US\$83 million).^[14] Nath is followed by H. Vasanthakumar from Kanyakumari constituency, with ₹417 crore (US\$52 million) and D. K. Suresh from Bangalore Rural constituency with ₹338 crore (US\$42 million); both being of Congress party.^[15] Professionally, around 39% noted to be politicians or involved in social work. This is followed by 38% of members declaring as agriculturists and 23% as businessmen.^[16] As of November 2021, during the tenure of the 17th Lok Sabha, 12% of bills were referred to Parliamentary committees for examination.^[11,12]

II. DISCUSSION

List of members of the 17th Lok Sabha



Party-wise seat distribution in the 17th Lok Sabha

- Speaker: Om Birla, BJP^[4]
- Deputy Speaker: Vacant^[5]
- Leader of the House: Narendra Modi, BJP^[6]
- Leader of Opposition: Vacant
- Secretary General: Utpal Kumar Singh^[7]

Party-wise distribution of seat

Party wise distribution as of 15 July 2021		
Party	Seats	Leader in Lok Sabha
BJP	301	Narendra Modi
INC	49	Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury
DMK	24	T. R. Baalu
TMC	23	Sudip Bandyopadhyay
YSRCP	22	Midhun Reddy
JD(U)	16	Rajiv Ranjan
SHS	13	Rahul Shewale
BJD	12	Pinaki Misra
BSP	9	Girish Chandra
BRS	9	Nageswara Rao
SS(UBT)	6	Vinayak Raut
RLJP	5	Pashupati Kumar Paras
NCP	4	Supriya Sule
TDP	3	K Ram Mohan Naidu
IUML	3	E. T. Mohammed Basheer
JKNC	3	Farooq Abdullah
CPI(M)	3	P R Natarajan
SP	3	S. T. Hasan
CPI	2	K. Subbarayan



Party wise distribution as of 15 July 2021		
Party	Seats	Leader in Lok Sabha
AD(S)	2	Anupriya Patel
SAD	2	Harsimrat Kaur Badal
AIMIM	2	A. Owaisi
AIUDF	1	Badruddin Ajmal
SAD(A)	1	Simranjit Singh Mann
KC(M)	1	T. Chazhikadan
JD(S)	1	Prajwal Revanna
RLP	1	H. Beniwal
NCP	1	Sunil Tatkare
LJP(RV)	1	Chirag Paswan
JMM	1	Vijay Hansdak
AAP	1	Sushil Kumar Rinku
VCK	1	T.Thirumavalan
RSP	1	Premchandran
NDPP	1	T.Yepthomi
AJSU	1	CP Choudhary
NPF	1	Kuzholuzo Nienu
NPEP	1	Agatha Sangma
MNF	1	C. Lalrosanga
SKM	1	I.H Subba
Independent	4 ^[8]	Sumalatha Navneet Kaur Rana Preneet Kaur Heera Saraniya
Vacant	6	Ghazipur Pune Wayanad Ambala Chandrapur Theni

III. RESULTS

The final results for 542 constituencies have just been declared. Elections to one constituency – Vellore in Tamil Nadu, were postponed. BJP with 303 seats has retained its position as the single largest party. In this document, we analyse the profile of the newly elected Members of Parliament of the 17th Lok Sabha.[13,1,15]

BJP has the highest representation

- 397 MPs were elected from national parties. Of these 303 MPs were from BJP, 52 from Congress, and 22 from TMC.

- Among the state parties DMK (23) and YSRCP (22) won the most seats.

267 first-term MPs in the 17th Lok Sabha[*]

- 267 MPs will be in Lok Sabha for their first –term. From the outgoing Lok Sabha, 230 MPs were re-elected. Further, 45 have been members of earlier Lok Sabhas.*
- The number of MPs re-elected is significantly higher than in the last general election.*

Fewer MPs over 70 years, more MPs under 40 years

- The average age of an MP is 54 years.
- The 17th Lok Sabha has 12% of MPs below the age 40 years. This is more than that of the 16th Lok Sabha which had 8% of MPs below the age of 40 years.
- This bucks the longer term trend of Lok Sabha getting older. The proportion of MPs below 40 years of age has steadily declined from 26% in the first Lok Sabha.
- On average, women MPs are 6 years younger compared to male MPs in the 17th Lok Sabha

394 MPs have at least Graduate level education

- In the 17th Lok Sabha, 27% of MPs have studied till 12th class. In comparison, 16th Lok Sabha had 20% MPs who had studied till 12th class.
- Since 1996, at least 75% of representatives of each Lok Sabha have been graduates.

78 women MPs in the 17th Lok Sabha

Most MPs have declared political and social work as their occupation[1,17,18]

- 39% of MPs have listed their occupation as political and social work.
- 38% are engaged in agricultural activities. 23% MPs are businessmen.



- Only 4% of MPs are lawyers.
- Note: Several MPs have declared more than one occupation.

The 17th Lok Sabha is set to complete its five-year term in 2024. However, with only 230 sitting days so far, it is unlikely to surpass the 331 days of the shortest full-term Lok Sabha since 1952. The latest session, the Budget session, was marked by minimal legislative activity and continuous disruptions, with only one item, the Motion of Thanks on the President’s Address, being discussed.[18,19]

- The Lok Sabha has functioned for only 33% of its scheduled time (46 hours) during the Budget session, with the Rajya Sabha working for 24% (32 hours).
- The second part of the session was even more unproductive, with the Lok Sabha working for only 5% and the Rajya Sabha for 6% of their scheduled time.
- The number of Bills introduced and passed has also declined significantly since the first session, with fewer than 10 Bills being introduced or passed in each of the last four sessions.
- The latest Budget session was also one of the shortest since 1952, with the Lok Sabha spending only 18 hours on financial business, compared to an average of 55 hours in previous Budget sessions of the 17th Lok Sabha.

Lok Sabha	Term	Total Sitting Days	Bills Introduced	Bills Passed	Average Sitting Days per Year
15th	2009-2014	357	244	181	71
16th	2014-2019	331	247	156	66
17th	2019-2024	Less than 331 (projected)	150 (as of April 2021)	131 (as of April 2021)	58 (projected)

Lack of Debates and Discussions[20,21,22]

- Short-duration discussions: The Rules of Procedure of both Houses of Parliament provide for various devices that can be used to draw attention to matters of public importance and hold the government accountable. However, 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: This is despite the fact that the latest session saw the least amount of time spent on questions in the current Lok Sabha. Question Hour functioned for only 19% of the scheduled time in the Lok Sabha and 9% of the scheduled time in the Rajya Sabha.

Why the Lok Sabha’s productivity has been low?

- Disruptions and Protests: The 17th Lok Sabha witnessed frequent disruptions and protests from opposition parties, leading to a significant loss of time and decreased productivity. Some of the major issues that led to disruptions include the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Register of Citizens (NRC), and farm laws.
- Lack of Consensus: The ruling party enjoyed a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, but there was still a lack of consensus on many key issues, resulting in a delay in passing important bills and legislation.[23]
- COVID-19 Pandemic: The COVID-19 pandemic also contributed to the low productivity of the Lok Sabha as many sessions were delayed or cancelled due to safety concerns.
- Speaker’s Decision: The decision of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha to disallow opposition MPs from raising certain issues also resulted in protests and disruptions, further reducing the productivity of the house.
- Shorter Sessions: The 17th Lok Sabha had shorter sessions compared to previous Lok Sabhas, which also contributed to lower productivity. Many important bills and issues were left pending as there was not enough time to discuss and debate them thoroughly.



Implications of low productivity of the Lok Sabha

- Delay in passing important bills: When the Lok Sabha is unable to function effectively, it can lead to a delay in passing important bills, which may have an adverse impact on the economy and governance. For example, crucial bills related to taxation, infrastructure, and social welfare may get delayed, affecting the overall progress of the country.
- Poor quality of legislation: When the Lok Sabha is unable to function effectively, it may lead to poor quality of legislation. There may be a lack of debate and discussion, leading to hasty decision-making and poor-quality laws that may have unintended consequences.
- Damage to democratic institutions: When the Lok Sabha is unable to function effectively, it can damage the democratic institutions of the country. It can erode the trust of citizens in the democratic process and lead to a feeling of disenchantment and disengagement among the people.
- Wastage of taxpayers' money: When the Lok Sabha is unable to function effectively, it leads to wastage of taxpayers' money. The salaries and allowances of Members of Parliament are paid from the public exchequer, and if they are not able to discharge their duties effectively, it amounts to a waste of taxpayers' money.
- Negative impact on investor confidence: When the Lok Sabha is unable to function effectively, it can have a negative impact on investor confidence. Investors may be hesitant to invest in the country, leading to a slowdown in economic growth and development.
- Lack of accountability: When the Lok Sabha is unable to function effectively, it may lead to a lack of accountability. Members of Parliament may not be held accountable for their actions, and the executive may be able to push through decisions without proper scrutiny or oversight.[25,27]

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The 17th Lok Sabha has been marked by low productivity and a lack of debates and discussions, despite the availability of mechanisms to hold the government accountable. The upcoming year is unlikely to see a significant increase in the number of sitting days. This lack of productivity and accountability could undermine the role of Parliament in a democracy and the ability of the government to pass important legislation.[28]

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