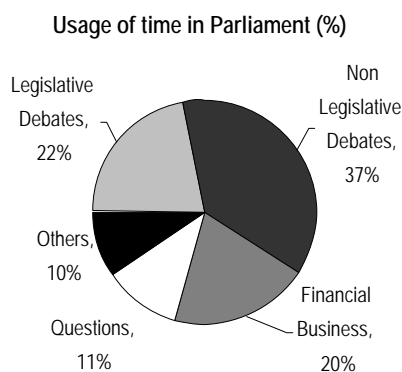


Vital Stats

Parliamentary Debates in Lok Sabha (2004-2008)

Members of Parliament frame legislation, sanction the government budget, examine the functioning of the government and discuss matters of local, national and international importance. These debates provide a forum for MPs to express their opinions and concerns, and contribute towards making policy. In this note, we summarise the activity of MPs during debates in the 14th Lok Sabha, which completes its term in a few months.

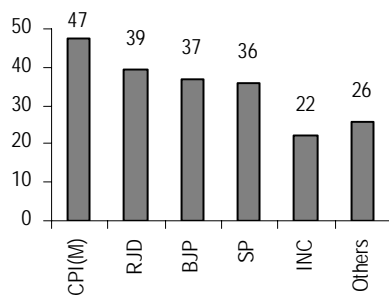
The Lok Sabha has spent over 1,228 hours in various kinds of debates since 2004



- Parliament spent 79% of its time debating bills and other issues over the course of the 14th Lok Sabha. The proportion of time spent on debates varied from 73% in 2004 to 80% in 2005 and 2008.
- Slightly over a fifth of total time is spent discussing legislative business (legislation proposed by the government). Discussions on the government budget (financial business) takes up another 20% of parliament's time.

MPs of the CPI(M) were most involved in proceedings in Parliament...

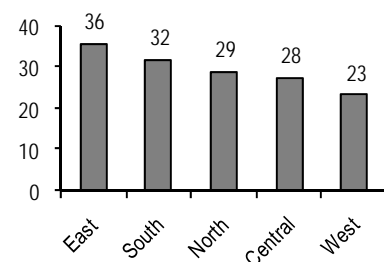
Participation in Debates per MP (Party-wise)



- On average, an MP spoke 30 times in the Lok Sabha.
- Of the major parties, an average Congress MP participated least in the proceedings of Parliament. An average CPI(M) MP participated the most.
- MPs of the BJP accounted for a quarter of all participation in debates (21% of seats). Congress MPs accounted for 20% of all participation in debates (28% of seats) and MPs of the CPI(M) accounted for 12% of all participation in debates (8% of seats).
- MPs of the top five major parties (Congress, BJP, CPI(M), Samajwadi Party and RJD) accounted for over 70% of all debates in parliament.

MPs from Western Indian states tend to participate less...

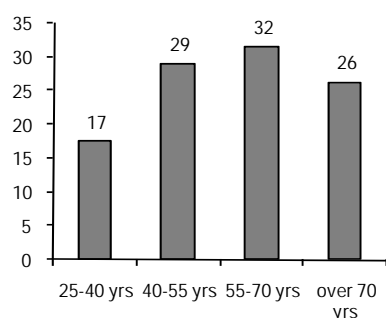
Participation in Debates per MP (Region-wise)



- On average, MPs from the east and the south participated the most in parliamentary debates.
- MPs from eastern states (which include Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal) accounted for almost a third of all debates (26% of all seats).
- MPs from the North and the West together accounted less than 20% of all participation in debates despite holding around 23% of all seats.
- Among large states (20 seats or more), the state with the largest number of debates per seat was Kerala (67). The states with the least number of debates per seat were Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka (20).

Older MPs were far more active in Parliament than ‘Young’ MPs.

Participation in Debates per MP (Age-wise)



- ‘Young’ MPs (those aged less than 40) participated the least in the Lok Sabha proceedings. They accounted for 11% of seats but only around 7% of debates.
- MPs over the age of 70 accounted for 10% of seats and 9% of total debates.
- MPs aged between the ages of 55 and 70 years old accounted for almost 22% of seats and around 43% of all debates.

Notes:

1. All debates data was compiled from the summaries of daily business of the Lok Sabha as contained in Bulletin I and then supplemented where necessary from the actual text of each day’s debate.
2. In our analysis, we do not include proposals and responses by Ministers to various issues.
3. The data for party wise distribution of seats is as of the current position in parliament. In computing the zone-wise distribution of seats, the states were allocated in the following manner: North – Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Punjab and Uttarakhand; Central – Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, UP ; Bengal;; West – Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Gujarat, Maharashtra ; South – Andaman and Nicobar, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu; East – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Sikkim, Tripura.
4. Vacant seats have also been included in the region-wise count.
5. Ages of MPs are as of the mid-point of the 14th Lok Sabha (2006).

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