

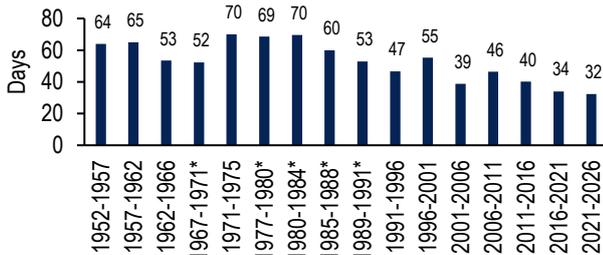
Vital Stats

Functioning of the 16th Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly

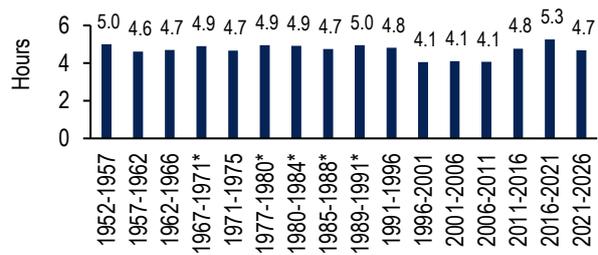
The elections to the 17th Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly are scheduled to be held on April 23, 2026. This note reviews the functioning of the 16th Assembly during its term from May 2021 to March 2026.

The 16th Assembly met for 155 sittings, and functioned for more than 725 hours

Average annual sittings have reduced by half between the first and the current Assemblies

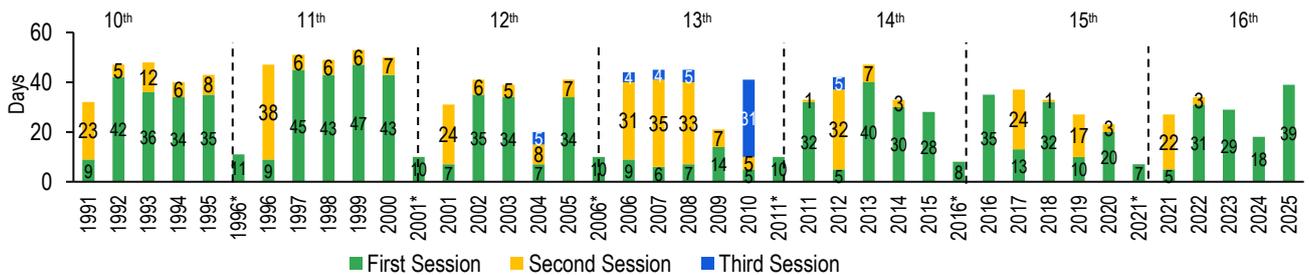


However, the average duration of a sitting has remained unchanged, about five hours



Note: * denotes term less than five years

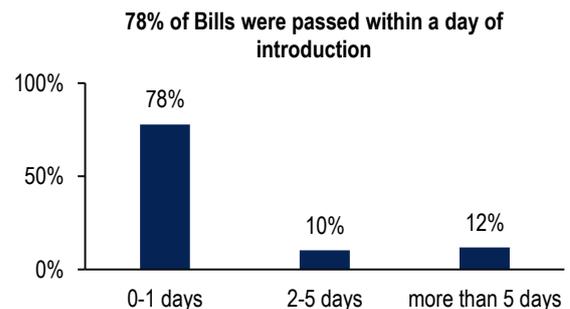
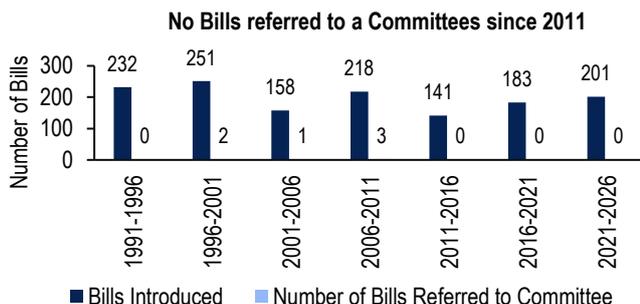
Since 2023, sessions have lasted for an entire year



Note: * denotes the interim session conducted in the election year. Data for the latest assembly is till 2025.

- Between 2021 and 2026, the 16th Assembly met for 155 days, the lowest for a full term assembly since 1952. It met for 32 days a year on average.
- Assembly sittings have lasted five hours per day on average. The Tamil Nadu Assembly Rules prescribe sittings for four hours (unless otherwise decided by the Speaker). This figure has not changed significantly over time.
- The Assembly typically holds two to three sessions each year, beginning with the Budget Session, followed by one or two additional sessions. As per the Constitution, Governor summons and prorogues sessions of the Assembly. Since 2023, sessions have been adjourned but not prorogued, resulting in a single session effectively continuing for an entire year. In the absence of prorogation, the session remains in progress and pending business such as notices, bills, motions and resolutions do not lapse. The Speaker may reconvene the House for sittings, without a fresh summons issued by the Governor.

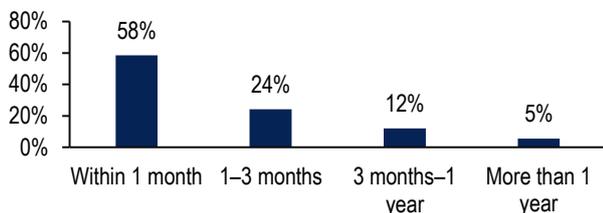
201 Bills introduced, 194 passed, none referred to Committees



Note: This excludes Finance and Appropriation Bills. Seven Bills with unconfirmed dates of passing have been excluded from the calculation.

- In this term, there were several instances when more than ten Bills were passed on the same day. For example, 19 Bills were passed on September 13, 2021. Five of these had been introduced the day before, and 13 in the previous week. Similarly, 17 Bills were passed on May 10, 2022, and 18 on December 10, 2024. On April 29, 2025, 14 Bills were passed. Of these, 12 were introduced within the three days prior to passing.

The Governor granted assent to 58% Bills within a month



- A Bill becomes an Act once it is passed by the Assembly and receives assent from the Governor. There is no constitutionally mandated deadline for Governors to decide on a Bill’s assent.
- During the term of the 16th Assembly, 82% of Bills received assent within three months of passing. Nine Bills received assent more than a year after passing. These include six Bills which are deemed to have received assent after a 2025 judgement of the Supreme Court.

12 Bills remained pending with the Governor, Tamil Nadu Government approached the Supreme Court

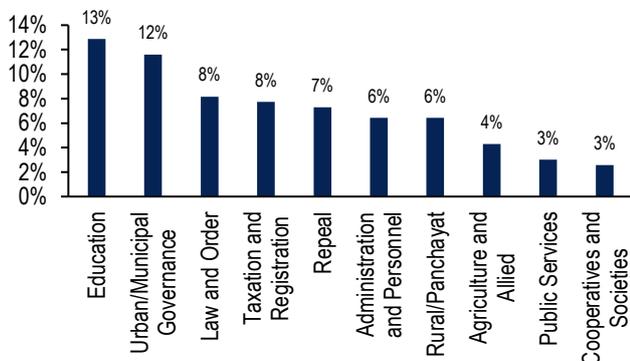
Between January 2020 and April 2023, no action was taken by the Governor on 12 Bills passed by the Assembly and sent for assent. These Bills amended several laws related to Universities in the state. Changes brought about by these Bills included shifting the power to appoint Vice-Chancellors from the Governor (as Chancellor) to the State Government.

The Tamil Nadu Government approached the Supreme Court regarding the Governor’s delay in granting assent to Bills. In November 2023, the Governor withheld assent to ten Bills and reserved two for the President’s consideration. The Assembly passed the ten Bills again on 18 November 2023, following which they were also reserved for Presidential consideration.

In April 2025, the Supreme Court ruled that the ten re-passed Bills would be treated as having received assent. It also stated that indefinite inaction under Article 200 is unconstitutional. In November 2025, a Constitution Bench clarified that Governors exercise discretion under Article 200. It added that courts cannot prescribe timelines or deem assent by judicial order, and assent decisions are generally beyond judicial review, except in cases of prolonged inaction. However, this order did not change the status of the ten Bills that were deemed to have received assent.

Urban Governance, education, and public services were key legislative themes

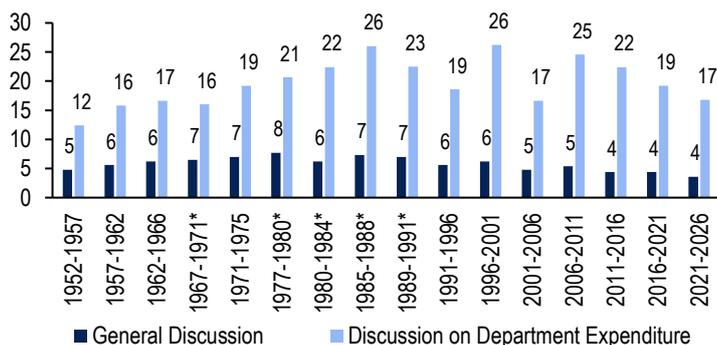
Most Bills introduced were related to education and urban governance



- Education, urban governance, and law and order accounted for about a third of all introduced Bills.
- Bills passed include those for the conversion of municipalities into municipal corporations; introduction of a preferential quota for government school students in professional courses; reforms on slum development and apartment ownership; regulation of online gaming; and prohibition of hookah bars.

Budget discussed for an average of four days; among the lowest since the Third Assembly

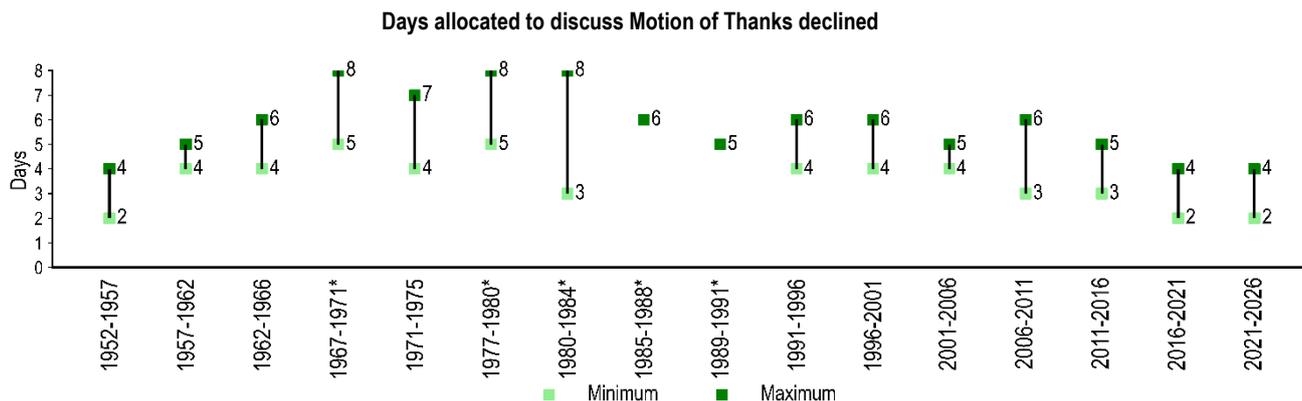
Budget discussed for fewer days in recent years



- The general discussion on the budget lasted for four days on average during the 16th Assembly. Department-wise budgets were discussed for an average of 17 days, which is lower than the long-term average across Assemblies.
- Since the 13th Assembly, all Department-wise budgets have been discussed, and none have been guillotined.
- In 2021-22, a separate Agriculture budget was presented for the first time. This practice has since continued.

Note: * denotes term less than five years

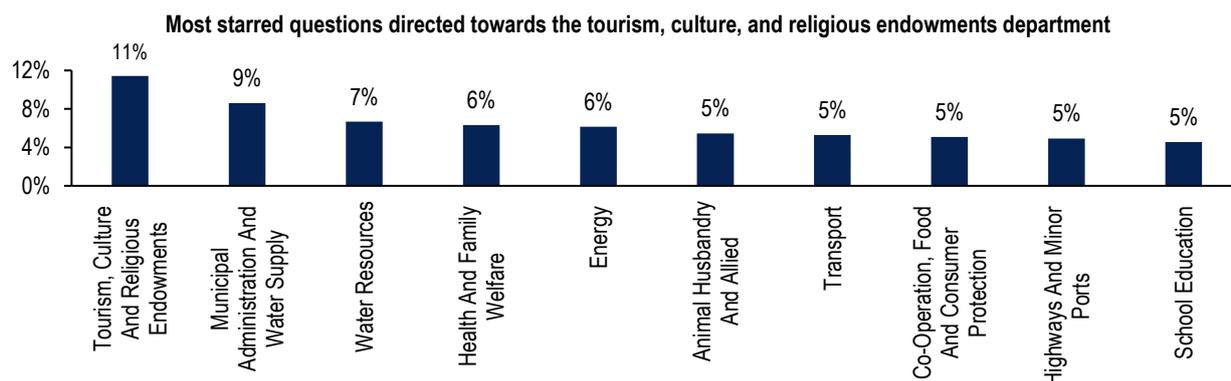
On average, three days were allocated to discuss Motion of Thanks



Note: * denotes term less than five years

- The Governor’s Address, delivered at the commencement of the first session each year, is discussed in the House through a Motion of Thanks. The number of days for which the Motion of Thanks was discussed has reduced from 4-6 days in earlier Assemblies to 2-4 days more recently.
- During the 16th Assembly, the Governor’s Address in 2023 was marked by disruptions, and the Motion of Thanks raised concerns regarding the same.¹ In 2024, 2025 and 2026, the Governor did not deliver the full Address in the House, and walked out.²

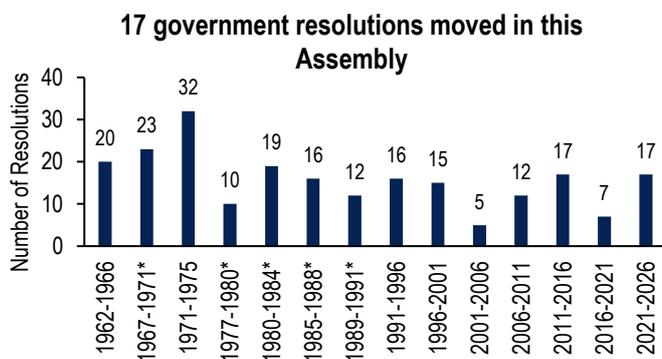
Four departments account for a third of starred questions



Note: Includes starred questions from April 2023 to October 2025.

- Starred Questions are answered orally on the floor of the House and allow Members to ask supplementary questions.
- On average, MLAs asked three starred questions. There was no significant difference between the average questions asked by male and female MLAs.

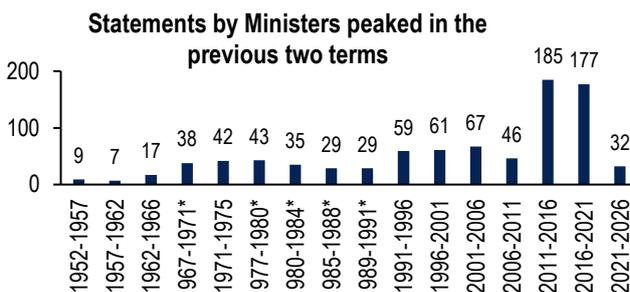
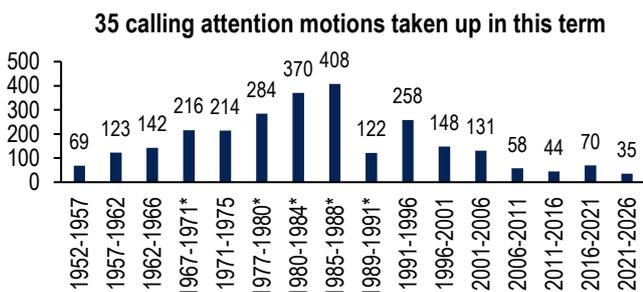
Unanimous Resolutions passed on Union Policies and pending Bills



- The 16th Assembly unanimously passed resolutions opposing certain Union initiatives, including the 2020 Farmer’s Acts, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, examinations such as CUET and NEET, and the "One Nation, One Election" framework.
- The Assembly also discussed the Governor’s withholding of Bills passed by the House by adopting a unanimous resolution.
- Members also adopted resolutions related to inter-state water disputes, conducting a caste-based census, and providing humanitarian aid to Sri Lanka.

Note: Data for the latest assembly is till 2024. * denotes term less than five years

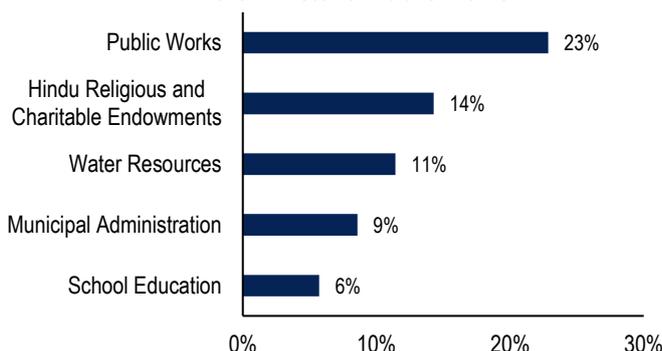
Fewer calling attention motions and statements by Ministers in this term



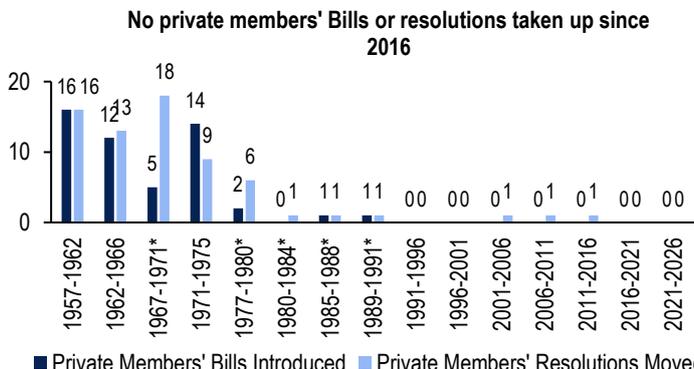
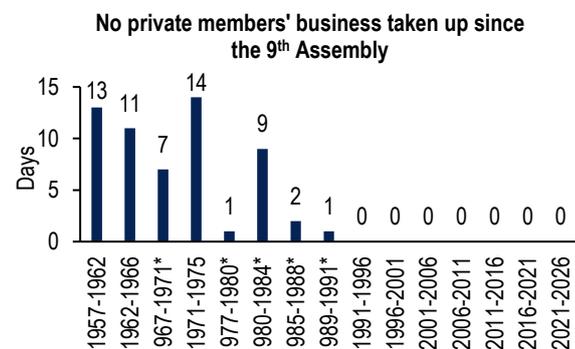
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- Calling Attention Motions enable members to seek responses from Ministers on matters of urgent public importance. From 2021-24, the motions discussed largely pertained to public works, water resources, and municipal administration. Issues related to temples, and distribution of laptops to students, and the regularisation of employment for college staff were also discussed.
- Additionally, Ministers may make statements in the House on matters of public importance. Between 2021 and 2024, statements have been made related to welfare measures for various sections, loan waivers, and government schemes. All but one of these statements was made by the Chief Minister.

Most calling attention motions were addressed to the Minister of Public Works



No Private Members' Business discussed



Note: * denotes term less than five years

- The Assembly Rules reserve Thursdays for private members' business, allowing non-minister MLAs to introduce Bills and move resolutions. Since the 9th Assembly (1989-1991), no time has been set aside for private members' business.
- No Bills have been introduced by private members since 1991. Only three private members' Bills have been passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly, all during the term of the first Assembly. In the 13th, 14th, and 15th Assemblies, no notices to introduce private members' Bills were received from members.

Sources: Resumes, Daily Bulletin, Archives, Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly (<https://assembly.tn.gov.in/>)

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¹ Resume of Business, Fifth Session, 16th Tamil Nadu Assembly, March 21, 2024, https://assembly.tn.gov.in/16thassembly/docs/16_05.pdf

² Press Release on Governor's Address, Lok Bhawan, Tamil Nadu, January 20, 2026, <https://cdnbbsr.s3waas.gov.in/s30d73a25092e5c1c9769a9f3255caa65a/uploads/2026/01/202601201537247724.pdf>