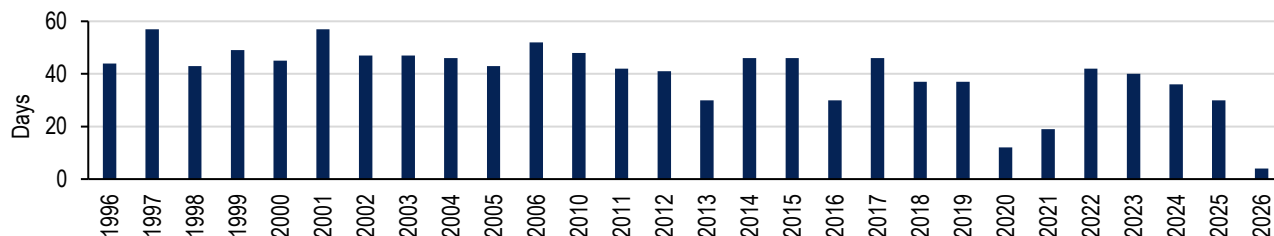


Vital Stats

Functioning of the 17th West Bengal Legislative Assembly

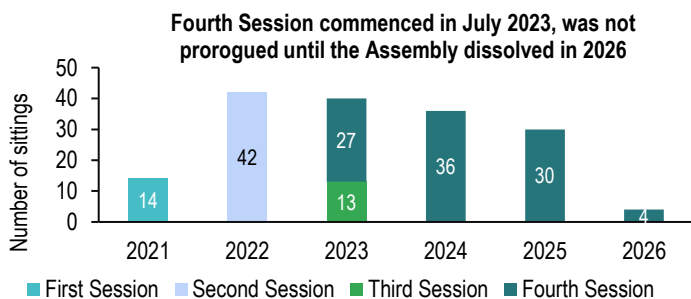
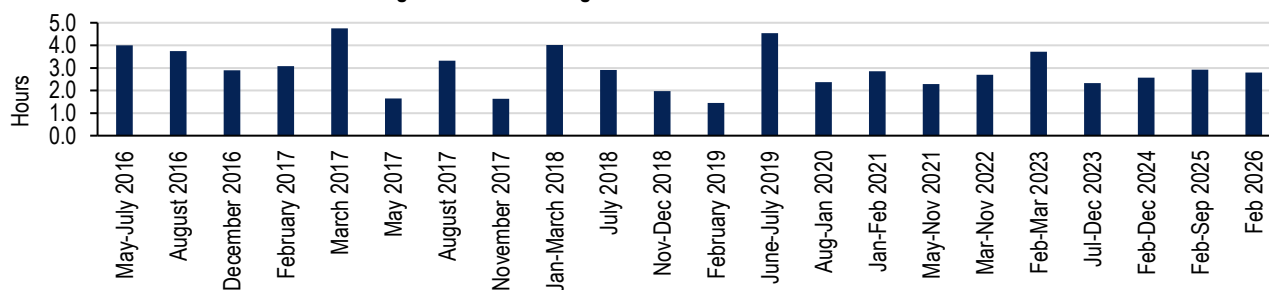
Elections to the 18th West Bengal Legislative Assembly will be held on April 23 and 29, 2026. This note examines the functioning of the West Bengal Assembly between May 2021 and March 2026, the duration of the 17th Assembly.

Assembly has been meeting for fewer days; 166 days recorded in this term



Note: Data for 2007, 2008, and 2009 could not be confirmed.

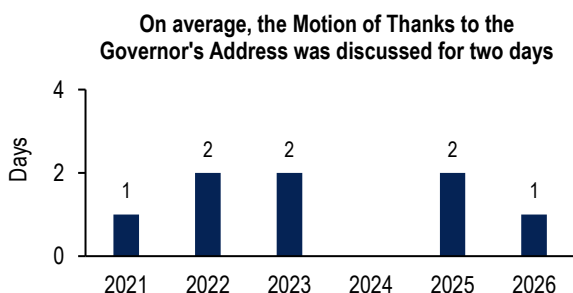
The average duration of sittings has also reduced since 2016



- Between 2021 and 2026, the 17th Assembly met for 166 days and functioned for a total of 430 hours, averaging 33 sitting days per year.
- On average, each sitting lasted about 2.5 hours, significantly lower than the six hours prescribed under the West Bengal Assembly Rules.
- The longest session was held on July 9, 2021, which lasted for almost seven hours. On this day, the state budget for 2021, along with Appropriation Bill was discussed and passed.

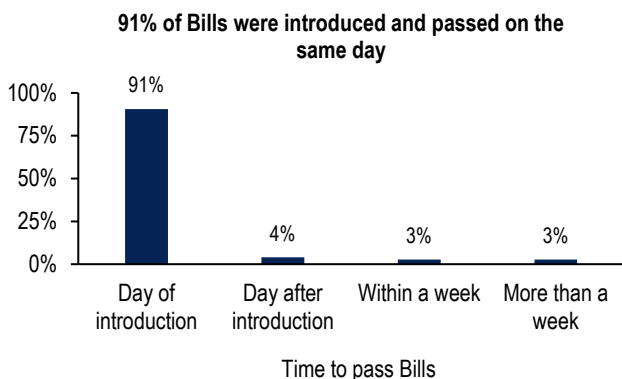
- The Assembly typically meets in multiple sessions each year, commencing with the Budget Session, followed by additional sessions. Under the Constitution, the Governor has the authority to summon and prorogue the Assembly. During the 17th Assembly, sessions were adjourned but not prorogued. As a result, a single session effectively continued from 2023 to 2026. In the absence of prorogation, a session is deemed to be continuing. Pending business, including notices, bills, motions, and resolutions, does not lapse. The Speaker may reconvene the House, and no new summons from the Governor is required.

Governor’s Address not delivered in 2024



- The Governor’s Address, delivered at the commencement of the first session each year, is discussed in the House through a Motion of Thanks.
- In 2024, no such address was delivered, as the session was treated as a continuation of the Fourth Session, which began in 2023. However, despite the same session continuing in 2025 and 2026, the Governor addressed the House in these years.

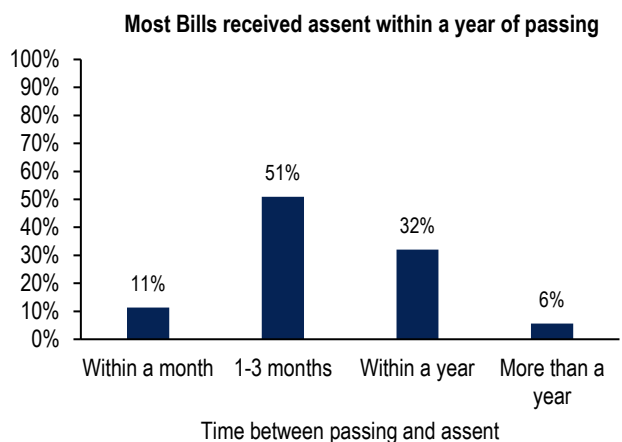
74 Bills introduced between 2021 and 2026; 95% passed within a day of introduction



Note: This excludes Finance and Appropriation Bills.

- Bills that were passed on the day of their introduction include Aparajita Woman and Child (West Bengal Criminal Laws Amendment) Bill, 2024, which strengthens penalties for sexual offences; the West Bengal Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Identification) (Amendment) Bill, 2022, which establishes an appeal mechanism against cancellation or revocation of caste certificates, and the West Bengal Clinical Establishments (Registration, Regulation and Transparency) (Amendment) Bill, 2022, which strengthens oversight and regulation of private healthcare facilities.
- No Bill has been referred to a Committee since 2011.

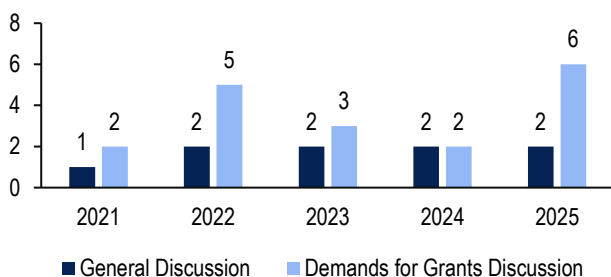
Three Bills took more than a year to receive assent



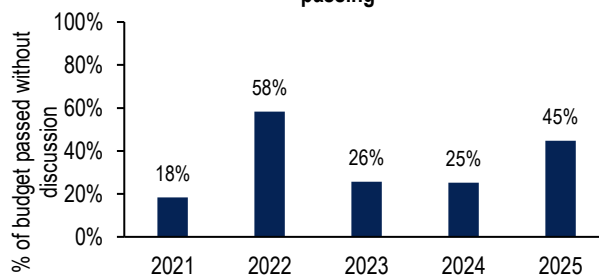
- A Bill becomes an Act when it receives the Governor’s assent after being passed by the Assembly. During the term of the 17th Assembly, 62% of Bills received assent within three months of passing.
- Bills that took more than three months to receive assent include amendments to university laws. These laws aimed to shift certain administrative powers in state universities from the Governor to the State.
- Three Bills took over a year to receive assent. One of these Bills reduced the number of Councillors in the Howrah Municipal Corporation from 66 to 50. Another transferred the power to appoint The Chairman and members of the Taxation Tribunal from the Governor to the state government.

Budget discussed for six days on average

Budget discussion ranged from 3 days in 2021 to 8 in 2025



Less than 50% of the expenditure discussed before passing



Note: The Budget Session of 2026 has been excluded, as it was an interim session held prior to the election.

- Budgets are discussed in two stages. First, there is a general discussion on the budget soon after it is presented. During the 17th Assembly, such general discussions were held for two days (except in 2021).
- Thereafter, the expenditures of major Departments are discussed. Between 2021 and 2026, this discussion lasted for an average of five days every year. Further, on average, every year, the budget was approved without discussing 65% of the expenditure.

Sources: Daily Bulletins, Proceedings, information present on the website of West Bengal Legislative Assembly (<https://assembly.wb.gov.in/>), Journal of Parliamentary Information.

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