

Contemporary Issue

(18th Lok Sabha Parliament Sessions)

Overview of the Issue

The 18th Lok Sabha was formed following the 2024 General Elections. As of December 2025, it has completed six sessions, focusing on legislative productivity, constitutional commemorations, and the presentation of the 2024 and 2025 Union Budgets. The 18th Lok Sabha has members from 41 different parties. Out of the 543 seats of the Lok Sabha, 346 members (~64%) are from the 6 recognised national parties, 179 seats (~33%) are from the recognised state parties, 11 seats (~2%) are from the unrecognised parties and 7 seats (~1%) are from independent politicians. 262 (~48%) have previously served as MPs and 216 (~40%) were re-elected from the 17th Lok Sabha.

Timeline of Lok Sabha Parliament Session after Independence

Since India's independence and the adoption of its Constitution, there have been 18 Lok Sabhas (the lower house of Parliament). Below is the timeline of each Lok Sabha, including its tenure and the Prime Minister(s) who served during that period.

Lok Sabha	Tenure (Start - End)	Primary Prime Minister(s)
1st	Apr 1952 – Apr 1957	Jawaharlal Nehru
2nd	Apr 1957 – Mar 1962	Jawaharlal Nehru
3rd	Apr 1962 – Mar 1967	Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi
4th	Mar 1967 – Dec 1970	Indira Gandhi

5th	Mar 1971 – Jan 1977	Indira Gandhi (Term extended due to Emergency)
6th	Mar 1977 – Aug 1979	Morarji Desai, Charan Singh
7th	Jan 1980 – Dec 1984	Indira Gandhi
8th	Dec 1984 – Nov 1989	Rajiv Gandhi
9th	Dec 1989 – Mar 1991	V.P. Singh, Chandra Shekhar
10th	Jun 1991 – May 1996	P.V. Narasimha Rao
11th	May 1996 – Dec 1997	Atal Bihari Vajpayee, H.D. Deve Gowda, I.K. Gujral
12th	Mar 1998 – Apr 1999	Atal Bihari Vajpayee
13th	Oct 1999 – Feb 2004	Atal Bihari Vajpayee
14th	May 2004 – May 2009	Manmohan Singh
15th	May 2009 – May 2014	Manmohan Singh
16th	May 2014 – May 2019	Narendra Modi
17th	May 2019 – June 2024	Narendra Modi
18th	June 2024 – Present	Narendra Modi

Essential Timeline Events:

- **1947:** Special midnight session for Independence.
- **1951-52:** First General Elections (Oct '51-Feb '52).
- **1952 (May 13):** First Lok Sabha convenes, first session begins.
- **1954:** Hindi terms "Lok Sabha" & "Rajya Sabha" officially adopted.
- **1952-1970s:** High legislative activity, passing hundreds of laws.
- **1972:** 25th Independence Anniversary Special Session.
- **1980s:** Frequent mid-term polls and early dissolutions.
- **1992:** 50th Quit India Movement Anniversary Session.
- **1997:** 50th Independence Anniversary Session.
- **2008:** Special Session under PM Manmohan Singh.
- **2012:** Parliament Completes 60 Years.
- **2014:** 16th General Elections.
- **2019:** 17th General Elections & first session of 17th LS.
- **2023:** Special Session convened.
- **The Emergency (5th Lok Sabha):** This was the only Lok Sabha whose term was extended beyond five years (it lasted nearly six years) due to the Proclamation of Emergency in 1975.
- **Shortest Tenures:** The 12th Lok Sabha (1998–1999) was the shortest, lasting only about 413 days.

Note Points to understand the Issue

➤ Session Summary (2024–2025):

- **First Session (June 24 – July 02, 2024):** Dedicated to the swearing-in of 543 members, the re-election of Om Birla as Speaker, and the President's Address.
- **Second Session/Budget (July 22 – August 09, 2024):** Focused on the Union Budget 2024-25, achieving 123% productivity.
- **Third Session/Winter (Nov 25 – Dec 20, 2024):** Standard legislative session.
- **Fourth Session/Budget (Jan 31 – April 4, 2025):** Passed the Union Budget 2025-26.
- **Fifth Session/Monsoon (July 21 – Aug 21, 2025):** Marred by disruptions over issues like space program discussions; productivity dropped to 31%.
- **Sixth Session/Winter (Dec 01 – Dec 19, 2025):** Concluded with 111% productivity. It featured 15 sittings over 92 hours and 25 minutes.

➤ How many sessions of Parliament are held in a year?

By convention, Parliament meets for three sessions annually:

- **Budget Session:** February to May (the longest session).
- **Monsoon Session:** July to August/September.
- **Winter Session:** November to December (the shortest session).

➤ What is the maximum gap allowed between two sessions?

According to Article 85 of the Indian Constitution, the gap between the last sitting of one session and the first sitting of the next must not exceed six months. This effectively mandates that Parliament meet at least twice a year.

➤ Who has the authority to summon a session?

The President of India has the power to summon each House of Parliament. In practice, this decision is taken by the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs and formalized by the President.

➤ **What are the different ways a session can end?**

- **Adjournment:** Postpones the sitting of the House for a specific time (hours, days, or weeks).
- **Adjournment Sine Die:** Terminates a sitting indefinitely without a fixed date for reassembling.
- **Prorogation:** Formally ends a session of the House, typically issued by the President after the House has been adjourned sine die.
- **Dissolution:** Ends the life of the current Lok Sabha (Rajya Sabha is a permanent House and never dissolves).

➤ **What is a "Quorum"?**

A quorum is the minimum number of members required to be present to conduct a valid sitting. This is fixed at one-tenth of the total membership of the House.

- Lok Sabha Quorum: At least 55 members.
- Rajya Sabha Quorum: At least 25 members.

➤ **When is a Joint Session of Parliament called?**

A joint session may be called by the President under Article 108 to resolve a deadlock between the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha over a bill (other than Money or Constitution Amendment Bills). It is presided over by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.

➤ **What is the "Zero Hour"?**

It begins immediately after Question Hour (usually at 12:00 PM) where members raise matters of urgent public importance without prior notice.

➤ **What is the difference between Starred and Unstarred Questions?**

- **Starred Questions:** Require an oral answer in the House; members can ask supplementary questions. Only 20 are listed per day.
- **Unstarred Questions:** Require a written reply laid on the Table; no supplementary questions are allowed. Up to 230 are listed per day.

What were the highlights of First Session of 18th Lok Sabha Parliament Sessions?

The inaugural session of the 18th Lok Sabha took place from June 24 to July 2, 2024, marking the first gathering of India's lower house after the 2024 general elections. The session was primarily dedicated to the swearing-in of newly elected members, the election of the Speaker, and the discussion on the President's address.

Key Highlights and Performance

- **Productivity:** The Lok Sabha recorded a productivity rate of 103–105% despite interruptions.
- **Total Sittings:** The House met for 7 sittings totaling approximately 34 hours.
- **Motion of Thanks:** The debate on the President's address lasted for over 18 hours in the Lok Sabha, with 68 members participating and another 50 laying their speeches on the table.
- **Oath Taking:**
 - 42% of MPs took their oath in Hindi, followed by English (7%) and Sanskrit (4%).
 - 50% of MPs used regional languages like Tamil, Marathi, Bengali, and Telugu.

Demographic and Statistical Profile

- **Composition:** Out of 543 elected members, 280 (52%) are first-time MPs, while 216 were re-elected from the 17th Lok Sabha.
- **Gender:** There are 74 women MPs (14%), a slight decrease from 78 in the previous Lok Sabha.
- **Age:** The average age of the 18th Lok Sabha is 56 years.
 - Youngest: Three MPs are 25 years old.
 - Oldest: The oldest MP is 82 years old.
- **Education:** 78% of the newly elected members have at least an undergraduate degree.
- **Wealth:** 93% of MPs hold family assets exceeding ₹1 crore, with the average assets of all MPs calculated at ₹46.34 crore.

Major Events

- **Election of Speaker:** Om Birla was re-elected as the Speaker on June 26, 2024, via a voice vote, becoming the first Speaker in 20 years to be re-elected to the post.
- **Leader of the Opposition:** For the first time since 2014, the post was filled, with Rahul Gandhi (INC) recognized as the Leader of the Opposition.
- **Pro-tem Speaker:** Seven-term MP Bhartruhari Mahtab was appointed as the Pro-tem Speaker to administer oaths.
- **President's Address:** President Droupadi Murmu addressed a joint sitting of both Houses on June 27, 2024, outlining the government's roadmap for "Viksit Bharat".

What were the highlights of Second Session of 18th Lok Sabha Parliament Sessions?

The Second Session (Budget Session) of the 18th Lok Sabha took place from July 22 to August 9, 2024. It focused primarily on the presentation and discussion of the Union Budget for 2024-25.

Key Session Figures & Productivity

- **Duration:** 15 sittings spanning approximately 115 hours.
- **Productivity Rate:** The Lok Sabha recorded a productivity rate of 136%.
- **Budget Presentation:** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget on July 23, 2024.
- **Discussion Time:** The general discussion on the budget lasted 27 hours and 19 minutes, with 181 Members of Parliament participating.
- **Legislative Work:** 12 government bills were introduced, and 4 bills were passed.
- **Question Hour:** 86 starred questions were answered orally during the session.
- **Public Concerns:** 400 matters of urgent public importance were raised during Zero Hour, and 358 matters were taken up under Rule 377.

Budget Highlights & Economic Estimates (2024-25)

- **Fiscal Deficit Target:** Estimated at 4.9% of GDP for 2024-25, with a goal to reach below 4.5% the following year.
- **Total Expenditure:** Budgeted at ₹48.21 lakh crore.
- **Total Receipts:** Estimated at ₹32.07 lakh crore (excluding borrowings).
- **Capital Expenditure Outlay:** Increased to ₹11.11 lakh crore (3.4% of GDP).

Major Allocations:

- **Agriculture & Allied Sectors:** ₹1.52 lakh crore.
- **Rural Development:** ₹2.66 lakh crore.
- **Education, Employment, & Skilling:** ₹1.48 lakh crore.
- **Women-led Development:** More than ₹3 lakh crore.

Key Legislative Business

The session saw the passage of the following critical bills in the Lok Sabha:

- **The Finance (No. 2) Bill, 2024:** Gave effect to the new tax proposals.
- **The Appropriation Bill, 2024:** Authorized the spending of government funds.
- **The Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation (No. 3) Bill, 2024:** Specifically for the Union Territory of J&K.
- **The Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak, 2024:** To replace the Aircraft Act, 1934 and modernize aviation regulations.
- **The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024** was introduced during this session but was referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for further scrutiny.

Major Discussions & Statements

- **Departmental Demands:** The Lok Sabha discussed Demands for Grants for four specific ministries: Railways, Education, Health and Family Welfare, and Fisheries.
- **Special Issues:** The House held short-duration discussions on India's preparedness for the Olympics and a tragic coaching institute incident in Delhi.
- **Disasters:** Calling Attention motions were taken up regarding devastating landslides in Wayanad, Kerala, and general flood damage across India.

What were the highlights of Third Session of 18th Lok Sabha Parliament Sessions?

The Winter Session of the Indian Parliament, held from November 25 to December 20, 2024, was characterized by intense legislative proposals, historical commemorations, and significant procedural disruptions.

Session Overview

The session marked the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Indian Constitution, which was commemorated with a joint sitting and major debates on December 14 and 16. Despite the historical gravity, productivity was notably lower than in previous years due to repeated adjournments and opposition protests over issues like the "Adani scam".

Key Figures & Statistics

- **Duration:** 26 days total, including 20 sittings of the Lok Sabha and 19 sittings of the Rajya Sabha.
- **Productivity:**
 - **Lok Sabha:** Functioned at approximately 52%–54.5% of its scheduled time.
 - **Rajya Sabha:** Functioned at approximately 39%–40% of its scheduled time.
- **First Week Performance:** Both Houses functioned for less than 10% of their scheduled time during the first week due to persistent disruptions.
- **Legislative Output:**
 - **Five Bills** introduced in the Lok Sabha.
 - **One Bill passed by both Houses:** The Bharatiya Vayuyaan Vidheyak, 2024, which re-enacted the Aircraft Act.
 - **Additional expenditure:** ₹44,143 crore approved via the first batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants (2024–25).

Notable Legislative & Political Developments

- **"One Nation, One Election":** The government introduced the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill to enable simultaneous elections. Both were referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on the final day of the session.

- **Waqf (Amendment) Bill:** Discussions continued through a JPC, with the government aiming for future enactment.
- **Impeachment Notice:** A historic notice to move a motion for the removal of Rajya Sabha Chairman and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar was submitted on December 10, though it was later rejected on procedural grounds.
- **Constitution Day:** Parliament observed the 75th anniversary on November 26, dedicating time to a detailed 16–17 hour discussion on the Constitution's legacy.

What were the highlights of Fourth Session of 18th Lok Sabha Parliament Sessions?

The Union Budget for 2025-26 was presented on February 1, 2025, with key highlights including a lower fiscal deficit target of 4.4% of GDP and a significant revision to the income tax exemption limit. The budget focuses on four main "engines of development": Agriculture, MSMEs, Investment, and Exports, fueled by various reforms.

Key Figures (Budget Estimates 2025-26)

- **Total Expenditure:** ₹50.65 lakh crore (an increase of 7.4% over the revised estimate of 2024-25).
- **Total Receipts (other than borrowings):** ₹34.96 lakh crore (an increase of 11.1% over the revised estimate of 2024-25).
- **Net Tax Receipts (Centre's share):** ₹28.37 lakh crore.
- **Fiscal Deficit:** Targeted at 4.4% of GDP (lower than the revised estimate of 4.8% in 2024-25).
- **Revenue Deficit:** Targeted at 1.5% of GDP (lower than the revised estimate of 1.9% in 2024-25).
- **Capital Expenditure (Capex):** Earmarked at ₹11.21 lakh crore (3.1% of GDP).
- **Nominal GDP Growth Rate Estimate:** 10.1%.

Major Highlights and Initiatives

- **Taxation Reforms:** The income tax rebate limit under the new tax regime was increased to make income up to ₹12 lakh annually tax-free for individuals, with a standard deduction for salaried individuals further raising the tax-free limit to ₹12.75 lakh. The new Income-Tax Bill 2025 will simplify the existing law.
- **Infrastructure & Urban Development:** A ₹1 lakh crore Urban Challenge Fund was created for city development and sanitation. The Asset Monetization Plan 2025-30 was launched to generate ₹10 lakh crore for new projects.
- **Agriculture:** The "Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana" was launched to cover 100 districts and help 1.7 crore farmers. The loan limit under Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) was increased from ₹3 lakh to ₹5 lakh.
- **MSMEs & Manufacturing:** A National Manufacturing Mission will be established to boost the "Make in India" initiative. The credit guarantee cover for micro and small enterprises was raised from ₹5 crore to ₹10 crore.
- **Healthcare:** The government plans to establish 200 day-care cancer centers across the country in FY 2025-26 and add 10,000 additional medical seats in medical colleges.
- **Defence:** A record over ₹6.81 lakh crore was allocated to the Ministry of Defence, with a 13% increase in the capital outlay for new acquisitions.

What were the highlights of Fifth Session of 18th Lok Sabha Parliament Sessions?

The Monsoon Session 2025 of the Indian Parliament (5th Session of the 18th Lok Sabha) was held from July 21 to August 21, 2025. It was characterized by high legislative output despite severe disruptions that led to the lowest productivity of the 18th Lok Sabha to date.

Statistical Overview (Key Figures)

- **Total Duration:** 32 days, including 21 actual sittings.
- **Session Productivity:** Lok Sabha functioned for 29%–31% of its scheduled time, while Rajya Sabha functioned for 34%–39%.
- **Total Bills Passed:** 15 Bills were passed by both Houses.

- **Legislative Activity:** 14 Bills were introduced in Lok Sabha and 1 Bill was withdrawn.
- **Discussion Time:** Lok Sabha held discussions for approximately 37 hours (out of 120 available), and Rajya Sabha for roughly 41 hours.
- **Question Hour:** Severely impacted; Lok Sabha worked for 23% and Rajya Sabha for only 6% of the scheduled Question Hour time.

Notable Legislative Highlights

The session saw the passage of several modernizing and reform-driven bills:

- **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025:** Banned all forms of online money games while promoting e-sports and social gaming.
- **National Sports Governance Bill, 2025:** Aims to bring transparency, accountability, and ethical governance to Indian sports federations.
- **Maritime Law Reforms:** Five major bills from the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways were passed, including the Merchant Shipping Bill, Coastal Shipping Bill, and Bills of Lading Bill.
- **Manipur Business:** The House adopted a resolution extending President's Rule in Manipur for six months starting August 13, 2025, and passed the state's budget and appropriation bills.

Key Discussion Topics & Disruptions

- **Operation Sindoor:** A special discussion was held regarding this successful military mission in response to a terrorist attack in Pahalgam.
- **Bihar SIR Controversy:** The Opposition caused major disruptions demanding a discussion on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, alleging voter disenfranchisement.
- **New Referrals:** Three significant bills seeking to remove the PM, CMs, or Ministers facing serious criminal charges were introduced and referred to a Joint Committee.
- **Space Mission:** A discussion on India's first astronaut mission to the ISS (Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla) was initiated but could not be completed due to disruptions.

What were the highlights of Sixth Session of 18th Lok Sabha Parliament Sessions?

The Winter Session 2025 of the Indian Parliament (the 6th session of the 18th Lok Sabha) took place from December 1 to December 19, 2025. This session was characterized by high productivity despite significant political debates and opposition protests.

Key Performance Figures

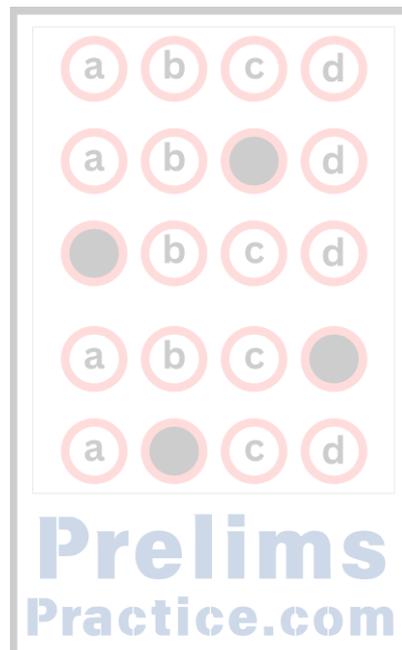
- **Duration & Sittings:** The session spanned 19 days and included 15 sittings.
- **Productivity:**
 - **Lok Sabha:** Recorded a productivity rate of approximately 111%.
 - **Rajya Sabha:** Achieved a productivity rate of 121%, functioning for about 92 hours.
- **Legislative Output:**
 - 10 Government Bills were introduced in the Lok Sabha.
 - 8 Bills were successfully passed by both Houses.
 - 137 Private Members' Bills were introduced in the Lok Sabha.

Notable Legislative Highlights

- **VB-G RAM G Bill, 2025:** The Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill was passed to replace the two-decade-old MGNREGA. It guarantees 125 days of rural employment and was passed amid intense opposition protests.
- **SHANTI Bill, 2025:** The Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India Bill was passed, opening the civil nuclear sector to private participation.
- **Insurance Sector Reform:** The Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Bill, 2025 was passed, increasing the FDI limit in Indian insurance companies from 74% to 100%.
- **Central Excise (Amendment) Bill, 2025:** Passed to levy higher excise duty on tobacco and related products following the discontinuation of the GST compensation cess.
- **Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025:** This bill, intended to set up a new higher education regulator, was referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses for further scrutiny.

Key Debates & Discussions

- **150th Anniversary of Vande Mataram:** A special discussion engaged both Houses—11 hours 32 minutes in the Lok Sabha (65 participants) and 12 hours 49 minutes in the Rajya Sabha (81 participants).
- **Election Reforms:** Significant time was dedicated to discussing electoral reforms, including the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, which saw strong opposition pushback.
- **Financial Business:** The House discussed and voted on the first batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants for the year 2025-26.



Practice Questions

1. Consider the following statements:

Statement I: By convention, the senior-most member in terms of number of terms in the Lok Sabha is usually appointed as the Pro-tem Speaker by President.

Statement II: The President of India appointed Bhartruhari Mahtab as the Speaker Pro-tem of the 18th Lok Sabha.

Statement III: The main duty of the Pro-tem Speaker is to administer the oath/affirmation to the newly elected Members of Parliament and preside over the election of the new Speaker.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

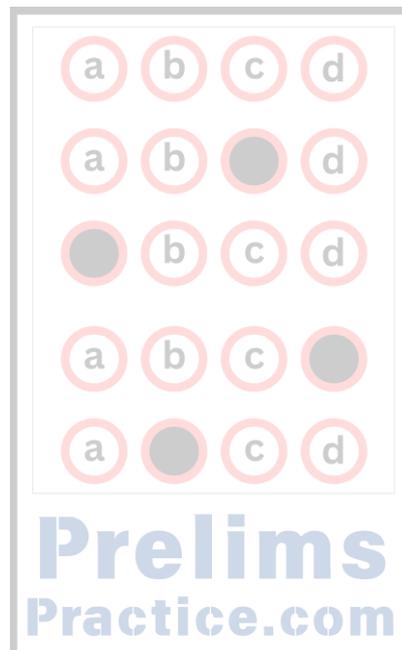
- a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
- b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I
- c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I
- d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

Answer: b

Explanation: Statement I is Correct: By long-standing parliamentary convention, the President usually appoints the senior-most member of the Lok Sabha (determined by the total number of terms served) as the Pro-tem Speaker. **Statement II is Correct:** President Droupadi Murmu appointed Bhartruhari Mahtab, a seven-term MP from Cuttack, as the Speaker Pro-tem of the 18th Lok Sabha in June 2024. **Statement III is Correct:** The primary duties of the Pro-tem Speaker are to administer the oath or affirmation to newly elected MPs and to preside over the election of the permanent Speaker. **Why Option (b):** Statement II provides a real-world application/example of the appointment process (Statement I). Statement III explains the purpose of the office, not the convention of selection.

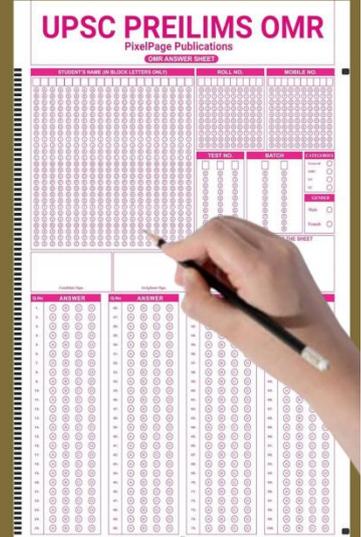
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