

LAW OF NUMBERS: ON THE WINTER SESSION AND A LOW IN INDIA'S PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

Relevant for: Indian Polity | Topic: Comparison of Indian Constitutional System with that of other Countries - Parliamentary & Presidential Systems of Governance

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

December 27, 2023 12:20 am | Updated 09:02 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

The 18-day winter session of Parliament that was [adjourned sine die on December 21](#) marked a new low in India's parliamentary democracy as the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party refused to engage with the Opposition, evaded executive accountability and passed a battery of Bills with far-reaching consequences for the country while a majority of the Opposition members remained suspended. In the final count, [a total of 146 Members of Parliament \(MP\)](#) from the Opposition bloc were [suspended](#) — 46 of the Rajya Sabha, and 100 of the Lok Sabha, as they clamoured for a statement by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on a breach of security that involved protesters gaining entry into the chamber of the Lok Sabha on December 13. The rift lingers, as Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge has written to Vice-President of India and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, terming the [suspension of Opposition MP as "predetermined and premeditated"](#) by the government. The absence of any application of mind was evident, Mr. Kharge has written, recalling that an MP who was not even present in the Lok Sabha, was among those suspended. The Chairs of both the Houses could not ensure smooth conduct of the session. Attempts made by Mr. Dhankhar and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla lacked the requisite imprimatur of impartiality.

It was in the absence of a majority of the Opposition members that the government passed new laws that rewrite the criminal code of the country, regulation of telecommunication and the appointment of the Election Commission of India. The common feature of these laws is an unprecedented increase in the power of the executive, and it is not a coincidence that they were passed without a meaningful parliamentary debate that took on board conflicting views. The government refused even the Opposition demand for a statement on the security breach, in a show of obstinacy that equates numerical majority with logical and moral infallibility. The government has blamed the Opposition for bringing the suspensions upon itself, and this position has been echoed by the Speaker and the Chairman. The case of the alleged mimicry of Mr. Dhankhar by an Opposition MP was a distraction that was convenient for the ruling party. Mr. Dhankhar himself told the Rajya Sabha that the alleged mimicry was an insult to his community, a dismaying correlation to be made by anyone, let alone a legal luminary such as himself. It is another matter whether the Opposition should have invested so much time and effort in asking for a debate on the security breach by a few misguided youths. The effect, if not the objective, of it all was to derail parliamentary functioning and obtain a free pass for the executive.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Parliament proceedings](#) / [parliament](#) / [Bharatiya Janata Party](#) / [Lok Sabha](#) / [Rajya Sabha](#) / [telecommunication service](#)

BACK TO TOP

[Terms & conditions](#) | [Institutional Subscriber](#)

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS