**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The sole idea behind democracy is that the citizens should be able to hold their elected representatives accountable for their activities. Citizens should be able to make informed choices during elections. Citizens should be made aware of the performance of their elected representatives.

In this project, the aim is to develop certain parameters based on which an MP's performance can be assessed. In order to assess an MP's performance, it is first imperative to understand the roles and responsibilities of Members of Parliament.

An MP is a representative of the people of his constituency. He is a legislator- a member of the law-making body of our country. He is also a scrutinizer- It his duty to keep the government in check and oversee the functioning of the executive.

There are four basic roles that an MP is expected to play- he has to make/review/ debate on laws, he has to represent the interests of the people of his constituency, he has to pass the budget and he has to hold the government accountable. There are various mechanisms available to the MPs to perform each of these desired roles. For example, in order to represent the people of his constituency, MPs can ask questions directly to ministers to raise concerns of their constituents, they can raise matters under 377 for discussion in parliament, and they can also recommend developmental projects under MPLADS. For the law-making role, MPs can review/debate/amend government bills or they can introduce their own bills known as Private Member Bills. MPs hold the government accountable by questioning the ministers directly during Question Hour, and also by supporting or criticizing draft legislation.

There are certain parameters that can be used to assess the participation of MPs inside the Parliament like- attendance records, number of questions asked, participation in debates, private member bills introduced, attendance in Parliament Committee meetings, etc. But it is also important to assess how far he has succeeded in representing the interests of the people of his constituency.

Amount of MPLADS funds utilised can be one of the parameters to assess how much contribution an MP has made to the development of his constituency. But it is not only the amount of MPLADS funds utilised but also where they have been utilised,i.e., the sector-wise breakdown of the funds utilisation that is important to identify the focus of the MPs. MPs raise issues of concern for the people of their constituency by raising Matters under Rule 377 inside the Parliament. A count of the instances when the MP raised these matters inside the Parliament can also be a measure. Also, the time spent by the MP in his constituency/ no. of trips to the constituency could also be included as a parameter however, it is very difficult to keep a track of it. Some MPs are also a part of certain Parliamentary Forums or Consultative Committees that equip MPs with information and knowledge on certain critical issues facing our country. MPs are also part of various district level committees which provide a platform to them to address local issues like District Planning Committees (DPC), District Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee (DLVMC) etc. However, it is a common practice for the MPs to appoint some officials who can attend these district level committee meetings on their behalf.

**Key Findings:**

1. Duties of MPs: MPs have a duty to uphold the law. It is their duty to act in the interests of the nation as a whole with a special duty towards their constituents. They should behave with integrity, including in their use of public resources.

2. Activities of MPs inside the Parliament: MPs ask questions during Question

Hour, participate in debates, scrutinize debates, motions and laws and cast

their votes, introduce Private Member Bills, participate in Parliament Committees. Some MPs also participate in Parliamentary Forums, Consultative Committees etc. MPs also have to review and pass the budget of our country.

3. MPLADS: Under the MPLADS Scheme, each MP can recommend developmental projects to the tune of Rs. 5 crore per annum to be taken up in his constituency. Rajya Sabha MPs can select one or more districts of the state for recommending developmental projects. The main objective of the MPLADS is to address the ‘locally felt needs’ of the people. However, due to the absence a participatory mechanism, MPs often allocate funds for developmental projects using their own discretionary power. If the percentage of funds utilised is to be used as a yardstick, then the MPs have fared quite well in MPLADS.

4. Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Rules 2004: Under these Rules, MPs are supposed to declare the details of the movable and immovable property owned by them or their spouse or dependent children within 90 days of taking their seat inside the Parliament.

5. Register of Interests: Under Rule 293 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of

Business in the Council of States, the Rajya Sabha is required to maintain a

Register of Interests which includes the details regarding the Remunerative Directorship, Regular Remunerated Activities, Shareholding of controlling nature, Paid consultancy and Professional engagement of Rajya Sabha MPs.

6. During the course of this project, a comparative study was conducted to analyse how far the educational qualifications of an MP affect his performance inside the Parliament. For the purpose of this analysis, the MPs were divided into different categories on the basis of their educational qualification like Under Matric, Matric, Inter/Higher Secondary or Undergraduates, Graduates and Post Graduates or Doctorates. The results showed that to a large extent, the educational qualifications do have a bearing on the performance of an MP. For example, no 15th Lok Sabha MP from the Under-Matric category has introduced a single private Member bill in the Parliament yet. Further, the MPs from the

Under-Matric and Matric have an average participation in debates of around

13.6 and 19.5 respectively (a total count of instances when they spoke in

Parliament- on bills, during zero hour, special mentions, matters under Rule

377, 193 etc.), very low compared to the national average of around 33.4 whereas the participation of Post Graduates in debates has averaged around

49.6.

7. An analysis was also carried out to study the kinds of issues raised by the MPs inside the Parliament. For the purpose of this analysis, a sample of 35 MPs were selected with due consideration to both ruling and opposition parties and a number of procedural devices available to them to raise issues of concern were considered- Matters under Rule 377, Special Mentions, Short Duration Discussions and Calling Attention. The issues raise were classified into 4 broadcategories- constituency, regional, national and special interest. It was foundout that about 35% of the total issues raised pertained to the respective constituencies of the MPs while another 28% were regional in nature mostly pertaining to the states in which their respective constituencies lie. This finding particularly highlights the constituency focus of the MPs.

8. An analysis of the Parliament Monitoring Organizations also revealed interesting trends in monitoring individual MPs across the world. A majority of the PMOs have used the voting patterns of MPs on important pieces of legislation as the main parameter for depicting the performance of MPs. This enables the citizens to identify the policy positions of MPs on important issues.

However, in India, the number of instances of division (recorded voting) is substantially low, especially after the anti-defection law. Further, the votes cast by the MPs on important pieces of legislation are substantially influenced by their party's directive. Several PMOs have also tried to establish a link between the constituents and the MPs by providing a platform for communication or a platform for citizens to express their opinions on important issues. However, no such platform as yet exists in India that would link the MPs with their constituents.