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{ RATING OUR REPRESENTATIVES }

Cong's Amin Patel tops Praja report on MLAs
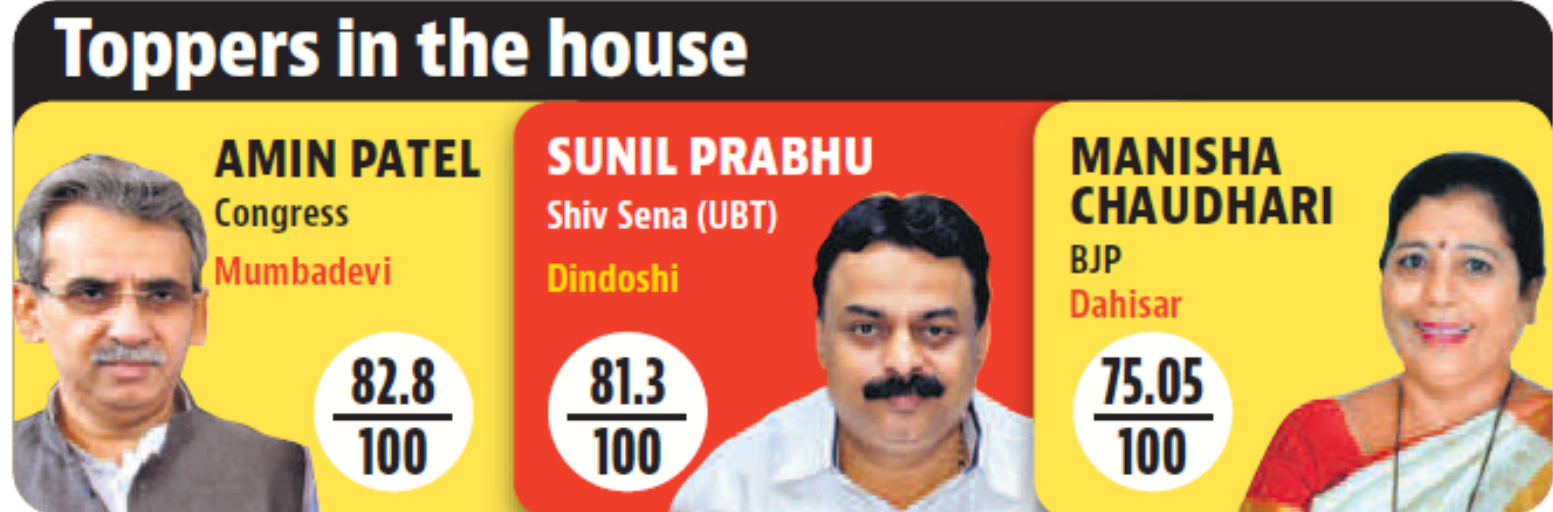
The legislators were rated on the number of issues they raised as well as attendance in assembly

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MUMBAI: The Congress' Amin Patel, who represents Mumbadevi constituency, scored the highest among 36 legislators in NGO Praja Foundation's annual report card which evaluates the performances of Mumbai MLAs. Amin was followed by Sunil Prabhu (Dindoshi) from the Shiv Sena (UBT) and Manisha Chaudhari (Dahisar) from the BJP.

While Patel notched up 82.80 out of 100, Sunil Prabhu scored

Toppers in the house

AMIN PATEL
Congress
Mumbadevi
82.8/100

SUNIL PRABHU
Shiv Sena (UBT)
Dindoshi
81.3/100

MANISHA CHAUDHARI
BJP
Dahisar
75.05/100

81.30 and Manisha Chaudhari 75.05. The MLAs won the highest scores on account of performing their constitutional and legislative duties effectively in deliberative forums, ie by raising a high number of citizens' issues and having the highest attendance in assembly ses-

sions. This year's card covered the period between the state legislature's winter session 2021 and winter session 2022.

Speaking to Hindustan Times, Amin Patel said he was "extremely happy" to be ranked first in Mumbai. "I thank my team members, supporters, the

government, the BMC and my Mumbadevi voters for their trust," he said. "Together, they have reposed faith in me to serve Mumbai and Maharashtra."

Praja CEO Milind Mhaske said that Covid-19 had disrupted

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public lives during the last three years. "This critical period demanded frequent meetings of elected representatives to effectively address citizens' concerns and make inclusive decisions," he said. "Also, the majority of municipal corporations in Maharashtra have completed their terms and elections are yet to happen. In this context, the state legislature stands as the primary platform to raise issues of public importance. But unfortunately there has been a significant decline in the duration of assembly sessions held in recent years."

Mhaske pointed out that while the 12th legislative assembly (from winter session 2011 to winter 2012) met for 58 days and the 13th assembly (from winter session 2016 to winter 2017) met for 57 days, the 14th assembly (from winter session 2021 to winter 2022) met for only 38 days. "The assembly session days dropped by 34 per cent from the 12th to the 14th assembly," he said.

Yogesh Mishra, Head, Research and Analysis, Praja Foundation, observed that when the third tier of governance, the BMC, was 'not functioning' and the state assembly was not meeting adequately, there was a noticeable decline in the number of questions and issues addressed within the assembly. "A lesser number of working days results in lesser opportunities for MLAs to attend and deliberate on public issues," he said. "Mumbai MLAs raised a total of 11,214 questions in the 12th assembly, but this number significantly dropped by 67 per cent to 3,749 questions in the 14th assembly. This clearly indicates the importance of maximising the number of days of assembly sessions."

A total of 29 MLAs out of the 36 in Mumbai have been evaluated in the Praja Foundation report card. These 29 are MLAs who were not ministers and who attended at least three out of the four assembly sessions. The remaining seven MLAs, four of whom were ministers from winter session 2021 till budget session 2022 and one was newly elected from winter session 2022 onwards, have not been evaluated, said a Praja official.