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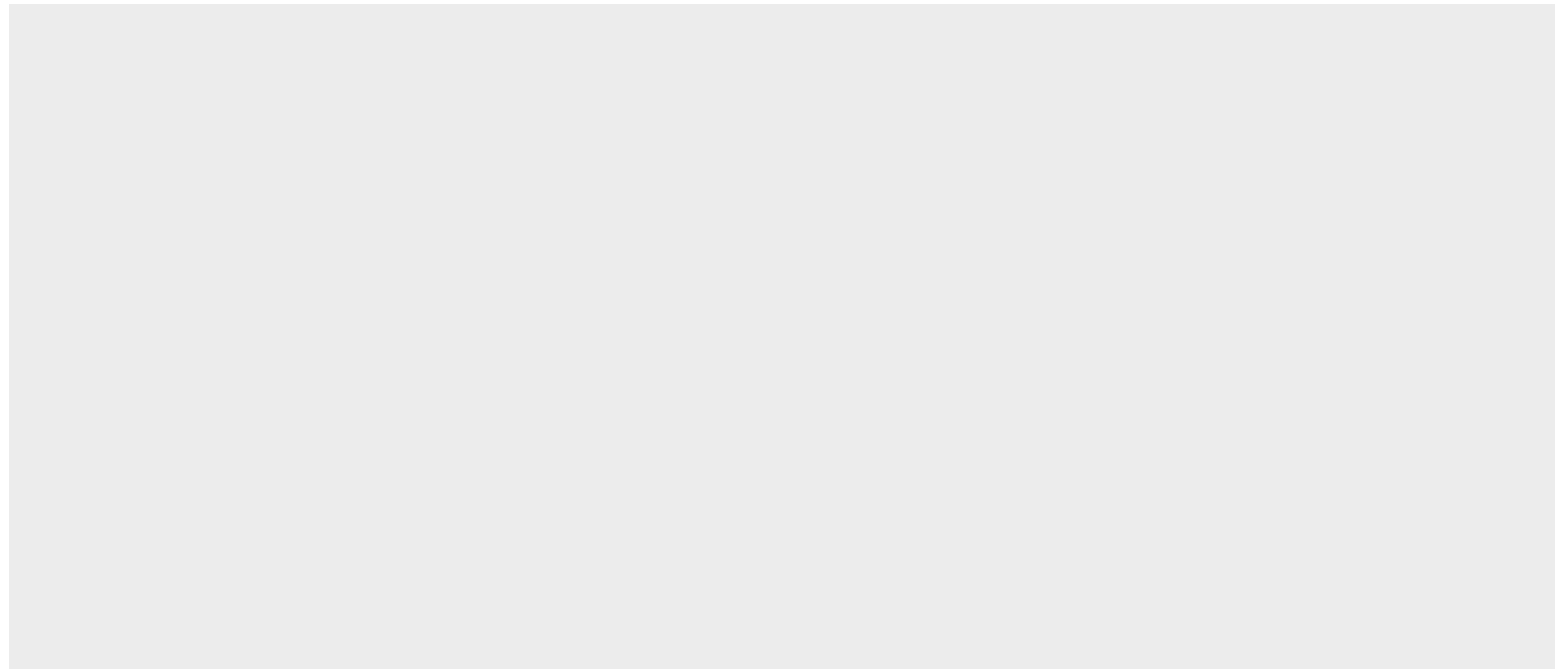
Which neta tweets the most? No, it's not Narendra Modi

Thursday, 24 October 2013 - 7:08am IST | Place: New Delhi | Agency: DNA

Gangadhar Patil



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Manit Balmiki DNA

Contrary to popular perception, Shashi Tharoor and Narendra Modi are not the most active politicians on Twitter. Dhrumil Patel of the BJP and Kavita Krishnan of CPI-(ML) have been most active on the microblogging site between July 16 and October 16 this year, according to a study by Precog.

Patel, convener of the BJP's IT cell in Sabarkantha district, Gujarat, tweeted 4,443 times to emerge at the top whereas Krishnan was at the third spot with 1,772 tweets. The BJP's Delhi unit was second with 2,269 tweets. Tharoor was fifth,

tweeting 1,469 times in three months.

Precog, a research group in the government-run Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Delhi, has been studying the Twitter accounts of India's 100 prominent politicians apart from those of parties and their state units.

Experts said tracking such accounts can help understand the views of online social media (OSM) users about politicians. Also, it shows how well the politicians stay connected with others.

"Social media may not be able to swing voters. However, it does impact urban voters to some extent. We have seen tweets by politicians being retweeted over 1,000 times and Facebook posts shared more than 4,000 times. We strongly believe that social media will have a greater influence on future elections," said Ponnurangam Kumaraguru, assistant professor at IIT-Delhi.

With the Delhi assembly elections slated for December, parties are increasing their presence online. While the BJP's Delhi unit was in second place, accounts of the Aam Aadmi Party and the Trinamool Congress also figure in the top 10. The Precog study also revealed that BJP's prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi is the only politician to have 20 Twitter accounts in different languages.

Some of the active politicians on Twitter are Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Milind Deora, Digvijay Singh, Nirmala Sitharaman, Baijayant Jay Panda, Sushil Kumar Modi and Smriti Z Irani. Nitin Gadkari has over 22,000 followers, but has tweeted only once since creating a profile in 2009. Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar has tweeted nine times, with his last tweet posted in July 2012. He has nearly 21,000 followers.

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