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HISTORY of NT’s PARLIAMENT

1863 The Northern Territory is annexed from New South Wales to become part of South Australia. The Parliament of South Australia controls the NT.

1911 Responsibility for governing the NT is transferred to the Commonwealth Govt. An Administrator is appointed to represent the Commonwealth in the NT.

1918 Darwin Rebellion: Demonstrators protest the Administrator’s decisions and the lack of political representation for people in the NT. They burn a picture of the Administrator (Dr John Gilruth) and keep him under house arrest for 3 months.

1922 The NT is permitted one Member to the lower house of the Federal Parliament. This Member is not given any voting rights.

1948 The NT Legislative Council is established and is headed by a President (the Administrator). It has 13 members, only 6 are elected by people of the Territory. The other 7 are chosen by the Administrator.

1958 The one NT Federal Member is given limited voting powers—they can only vote on matters relating to the Territory. The NT Legislative Council is increased to 17 Members, with 8 now being elected.

1962 The Legislative Council sends a Remonstrance (formal complaint) to the Federal Parliament protesting their lack of control over local affairs. They are given a limited increase in powers.

1965 The Administrator is no longer the President of the Legislative Council. The position is now chosen by the elected Members.

1974 The Legislative Council is replaced by a fully elected Legislative Assembly of 19 Members but with very limited powers.

1978 1 July 1978: The Northern Territory is granted Self-Government by the Federal Parliament. Territorians are now able to make most decisions about how the NT is governed. Some powers are kept by the Commonwealth. Over the following years, control over health, education and justice are transferred.

1982 NT’s Legislative Assembly is increased from 19 to 25 Members.

1997 A Remonstrance is sent by the Legislative Assembly to Federal Parliament protesting the Commonwealth’s over-ruling of the NT’s Rights of the Terminally Ill Act 1995 (euthanasia laws). Federal Parliament is able to overrule any law made by NT’s Parliament.

1998 A referendum is held to question whether the Northern Territory should become a state. It is defeated by a 51% no vote.

2001 NT’s growing population enables the Territory a second seat in the Federal Parliament’s lower house.

2004 The Statehood Steering Committee is established to conduct community awareness campaigns.

2011 The Legislative Assembly defers the proposed Constitutional Convention.
Parliament House

Timeline

• 1988 - The NT Government announced a State Square Precinct Project (Parliament House, Supreme Court, car parks and gardens) would be developed.
• 1990 - The old Legislative Assembly building was demolished. On 2 August, the foundation stone for the new Parliament House was laid.
• 1994 - On 18 August, Parliament House was opened by the Hon. Bill Hayden AC, Governor-General of Australia.

Parliament House is intended to serve its purpose for 100 years and was designed to cater for increased usage. For example, the Chamber can accommodate up to forty members should a population rise lead to the need for a bigger Legislative Assembly.

The building houses Ministerial offices, the Department of the Legislative Assembly, offices for all elected members, the Northern Territory Library and the Parliamentary Counsel (who draft bills).

Meldrum Burrows, an architectural firm, was responsible for the design of the building. Numerous other individuals were also involved in the design and interior design. Parliament House was specifically designed to accommodate Darwin’s tropical climate. The façade and roof effectively screen 80% of direct sunlight, as well as serving as protection from cyclones.

Most of the interior timbers are Tasmanian Golden Sassafras, Tasmanian Brushbox and West Australian Jarrah. The main hall and foyer contain pink marble from India, white granite from Sweden, black granite from South Australia and brown granite from the Northern Territory (Mt Bundy).

The main hall is used for parliamentary receptions and public exhibitions and can comfortably accommodate 1000 people.

Also on the site of Parliament House...

• The site was originally occupied by the Larrakia people.
• In 1869 the Surveyor-General of South Australia, G.W. Goyder, landed nearby to set up the original settlement, then known as Palmerston.
• In 1873 Darwin’s first Post Office opened on this site. Part of its stone wall can be seen in the foyer of the NT Library.
• On 19 February 1942 Japanese war planes extensively bombed Darwin. The post office and connected buildings were completely destroyed and ten post office employees were killed. A plaque commemorating those killed can be found in the main hall of Parliament House.
Before learning about the Administrator of the Northern Territory, it is important to understand the role of the Governor-General and State Governors.

### The Governor-General of Australia

The Governor-General is the Queen’s representative in Australia, and is appointed by the Queen on advice from the Prime Minister. Their functions are defined by the Constitution. A main responsibility is to give Royal assent to bills (by signing them) that have been passed by parliament, thereby making them law. Governors-General also open the new parliament after an election, and have a number of other ceremonial duties.

### The State Governors

The Governors of Australian states perform the same constitutional and ceremonial duties as the Governor-General, but at a state level. They directly represent the Queen and are not responsible to the Governor-General. State Governors have actually been around longer than the Governor-General as they were first established with the original colonies that later became states under Federation in 1901 (which established the Governor-General’s office).

The Administrator is appointed by the Governor-General (on advice from the Chief Minister) to administer the Northern Territory in accordance with the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*. The Administrator is not a direct representative of the Queen like State Governors, but is responsible to the Governor-General. Northern Territory has had an Administrator since 1911 when the Commonwealth Government took over control of the NT from South Australia.

The Administrator performs similar constitutional and ceremonial roles to the Governor-General and State Governors, including giving assent to bills. As the Administrator is not a direct representative of the Queen however, they cannot give Royal assent. Ceremonial duties of the Administrator include hosting visiting Royalty and official dignitaries of Australia and other nations, attending functions and acting as patron of public institutions. The current Administrator of the Northern Territory is the Honourable John Hardy OAM.
Australia’s system of government is known as a representative democracy. At each level of government, Australian citizens vote to elect a small number of people to 'represent' them in government. In the Northern Territory, these representatives are called Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA).

In the Northern Territory a general election is held on the fourth Saturday in August in the fourth year after the last general election (a fixed term election). Elections for the Legislative Assembly (as well as local councils) are conducted by the Northern Territory Electoral Commission.

On election day (or polling day) most people vote by going to a polling place near their homes, there are usually a number of them in each electorate and they are often located at schools or community centres. If you are unable to attend a polling place on polling day you can:

- **Pre-poll/early voting** - you can attend an early voting centre to cast your vote;
- **Postal voting** - you can apply to vote by post;
- **Absent voting** - you may vote at a polling place in whatever NT electorate you are in that day, even if you don’t live there;
- **Mobile polling** - electoral officials visit remote communities, hospitals, care facilities and prisons to take votes.

### Who can Vote?

You must be enrolled on the electoral roll to vote at an election. The electoral roll is a list of names and addresses of all electors who can vote in government elections.

In order to enrol you must be:

- 18 years or older;
- An Australian citizen or British subject enrolled on 25 January 1984; and
- Living at your current address for the last month.

The law requires all eligible persons to enrol and vote.

Electoral officials set up polling booths on the veranda of a shack to take the votes of the people of Kybrook Farm, 250 km south of Darwin.
COMMITTEES

A lot of work, inquiry and research is undertaken behind the scenes of parliament and the chamber in committee meetings. They make recommendations based on their research and investigations. This includes listening to experts and the general public for their advice and opinions.

There are permanent (or ‘standing’) committees and others can be set up for either a session (a four year term of an Assembly) or for a particular purpose (a ‘select committee’) over a shorter time.

Each committee consists of members of both the government and opposition, and at times, independent members. Some members belong to more than one committee. Each committee has a chair- person elected by the committee members.

**Standing Orders Committee**
Ensures the rules that control the running of parliament are workable and fair. The committee recommends to the Assembly changes to the rules, for example how long members are allowed to speak in certain debates.

**Public Accounts Committee**
Examines how the government and government bodies spend money to make sure it is spent properly and they are accountable.

**Committee of Privileges**
Inquires into any reported actions which break the rules of parliament or actions by a person or organisation which are disrespectful to the parliament.

**Subordinate Legislation and Publications Committee**
Examines and reports on all papers that are presented to the Assembly. It also checks whether any proposed regulations - documents that provide operational details to a bill or law - are legal and do not take away people’s rights. Please note that, during the current Assembly the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee performs the functions of the Subordinate Legislation and Publications Committee as set out in Standing Order 20.

**House Committee**
Makes decisions about the operation of Parliament House and related matters.

**Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee**
Inquires, reports and makes recommendations on constitutional and legal matters that are referred by the Legislative Assembly or the Attorney General, including in relation to Statehood for the Northern Territory

**Select Committees**
Select Committees have investigated a wide range of issues including Euthanasia (1995), Territory Food Prices (1999), Substance Abuse in the Community (2001 - 2008) and Youth Suicide (2011 - 2012).

**Sessional Committees**
Over time, the Legislative Assembly has established several sessional committees. For instance the Sessional Committee on the Northern Territory’s Energy Future is examining the Territory’s capacity to meet its own future energy demands.
Everything that happens in the Chamber is recorded through individual microphones and a series of cameras. These recordings are used to produce a printed report of all that is said during a parliamentary sitting. This written record of all speeches and debates of parliament is called Hansard. Hansard also refers to the work unit which produces these records.

The Northern Territory Parliament was among the first in Australia to use modern recording technology for Hansard. In other Parliaments, Hansard editors sit at the Table in the Chamber or in the gallery and use shorthand to write down every word. In the Northern Territory, Hansard editors work in another part of the building transcribing what is said in the Chamber from digital audio streams.

Each sitting day a Daily Hansard is produced which provides an unrevised version of what was said in parliament the previous day. It has a yellow cover and members have an opportunity to check it and ask for any mistakes to be corrected. The Hansard editors make these corrections, as well as adjusting mistakes in grammar and generally making it more readable without changing the meaning of what was said. The final version is published as a book (with a green cover), which is available to the public, called the Parliamentary Record.

**The Name**
Hansard takes its name from Thomas Curson (TC) Hansard, a printer and publisher who first started producing these reports in Britain in 1803.

**Website details:**
The Daily Hansard and Parliamentary Record are available online through the website of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly at: [www.nt.gov.au/lant/parliamentary-business/hansard.shtml](http://www.nt.gov.au/lant/parliamentary-business/hansard.shtml)
Most members of Australian parliaments belong to political parties. These are groups of people who share similar ideas and aims about how we should be governed.

Before elections political parties choose candidates they would like elected. The party then supports these candidates by helping them to win votes. In turn, the candidates are expected to follow the party’s policies if they win their seat.

Larger parties are able to raise funds and support their candidates by running advertising campaigns to attract votes. Often, people will vote for a candidate simply because they are supported by a particular political party.

All party members have regular meetings where the party decides policy and how it will vote on specific issues and bills. Most of the time, all members of the same party vote the same way according to the decision made in these meetings. On rare occasions, parties allow their members a ‘conscience’ vote. Members are then free to vote according to their own judgement or beliefs and not necessarily according to the guidelines, policies

How-to-Vote Cards
During elections, political parties and candidates hand out a card or piece of paper showing how they would prefer voters to mark their ballot paper.

Crossing the Floor
When members vote in parliament they leave their seats and walk to the side of the Chamber they support. If members “cross the floor” it is usually members of the government who defect and vote with the opposition against a government sponsored bill. They physically move to the opposition’s side of the Chamber to be included in their vote.

Party Whips
Whips organise the daily activities of the parties in the Chamber and make sure all party members turn up in time to make speeches and vote.
In the Northern Territory, there are 25 Members of the Legislative Assembly (or MLA abbreviated). They are elected by the people of the Northern Territory to represent them and make decisions on their behalf. Members of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly are elected for four year terms.

Members of Parliament spend most of their time listening to, and acting for, their constituents or the individuals and community groups in their electorate. This also involves attending meetings and functions within their electorate. They also represent their constituents during parliamentary sittings and often sit on parliamentary committees. Members may have ministerial responsibilities if they are in government, or shadow ministerial responsibilities if they are in opposition. If members belong to a political party then they will also have party responsibilities like being involved in planning strategies and policies for their party.

Who can be a Member of Parliament?

Any member of the community can become a member of parliament, as long as they are:

- an Australian citizen
- at least 18 years old
- registered on the electoral roll
- a resident of the Northern Territory for at least 3 months

Usually people who want to become a member of parliament join a political party in line with their political views. They then try to get selected by that party to be a candidate for their electorate at the next election.

People can also choose to stand as an independent candidate at elections.

At election time, the electorate will vote for the candidate they want most to represent them in parliament.
LAYOUT of the CHAMBER

Speaker's Chair
Made from Tasmanian Black Oak and leather. A gift from Federal Parliament for 1994 opening of new Parliament House. The previous Speaker’s Chair, presented in 1955, is located in the corner behind the government advisors’ chairs.

Advisors
Advisors are seated in the Chamber to be on hand should a member need technical information usually regarding a bill being debated.

Chairman of Committees
If the Committee Stage of passing a bill is required, the Speaker leaves the Chair, the Serjeant-At-Arms places the mace under the table and the Chair of Committees takes their place at the Table.

Hansard Chairs
Traditionally, and still in some Australian parliaments, Hansard editors sit at the Table and record parliamentary proceedings using shorthand.

The Table
The central T-shaped table is simply called ‘the Table.’ In the past, when a member wanted to present a document to parliament they would put it on the Table. This was before printing and copies were written by hand, so it was placed on the table where members could read it. Although no longer placed on the Table, the reference of documents being ‘tabled’ remains in parliament.

Viewing Galleries
Surrounding the chamber are three public galleries. Two are open while one is enclosed by glass. This is used by students to observe the Assembly without disturbing parliament. The fourth gallery, behind the Speaker’s chair, is the parliamentary press gallery, and behind it are interview rooms and a broadcast studio.

Lobbies
Two doors on either side of the Chamber lead to the Government and Opposition Lobbies where members may make phone calls, meet with staff etc, while being close to the Chamber.

Clocks
Large clocks above each lobby door are used to time the members’ speeches and are operated by the Clerks. They count down the time and a small red light flashes to show when a member has to finish or get an extension.
The **dispatch boxes**

In the Chamber, on the central table known as the Table, are two wooden dispatch boxes. Traditionally, in the British Parliament, these were used to carry bills that had been passed, or other important documents, to the King or Queen for their approval. Although they are no longer used to carry papers, most parliaments still have dispatch boxes. They are often used as speaking points in the Chamber, such as in the Federal Parliament.

The dispatch boxes in the Northern Territory Chamber are copies of those used in the House of Representatives in Canberra. They were presented by the Commonwealth Parliament in 1977 to acknowledge the commencement of the transfer of certain powers to the Northern Territory with Self-Government.

The dispatch boxes of the Northern Territory are made of elm and silver. As Northern Territory’s Parliament House is quite modern and spacious, members are able to make their speeches from their desks in the Chamber. Therefore these dispatch boxes are simply traditional and symbolic links to early parliaments. However, they are used on special occasions. For instance, the treasurer delivers the budget speech from the dispatch box on the government side and the Leader of the Opposition gives their budget reply from their dispatch box.
The Government is the group in parliament formed by the political party or coalition that has the majority of elected representatives in the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly. These numbers are usually determined by the outcomes of general elections.

Government departments or agencies, staffed by public servants, are responsible for putting government policies into practice. These staff also provide advice to the government about making or changing policies and they administer the laws that affect their particular area of responsibility.

The Government always sit to the right of the Speaker in the Chamber.

The Chief Minister always sits in the front row, in the second seat from the end closest to the Speaker.

THE CHIEF MINISTER

The Chief Minister is the head of government in the Northern Territory. They are a Member of the Legislative Assembly and the leader of the party that has the majority of elected representatives in parliament. They are chosen as leader by members of their party.

At any time the party can vote the Chief Minister out and replace them with another government member of parliament. After this the now former Chief Minister usually becomes a backbencher.
Ministers are members of parliament chosen from the government to be responsible for an area or portfolio, and are usually in charge of that government department. Some example portfolios include Health, Education, Housing, Tourism, Lands, Planning and the Environment, Arts and Museums, and Sport, Recreation and Racing.

How many ministers there will be is up to each government, and it is usually the Chief Minister who determines how responsibilities will be shared. Once decided, ministers are formally appointed by the Administrator.

Ministers are accountable to the parliament for the running of their areas of government. Parliament scrutinises ministers during Question Time as well as once a year during Estimates Sittings. In addition, the opposition appoints shadow ministers for each portfolio to ‘shadow’ or follow closely the activities of ministers. They also offer alternative policies from the opposition for that portfolio.

The Cabinet
The Chief Minister and ministers form the Cabinet which is the main decision making body of the government. It is responsible for deciding the government’s policy development and implementation.

Cabinet meets regularly and sometimes meets in different parts of the Territory. In cabinet meetings, ministers introduce proposals for new bills from their departments. Cabinet discussions are not made public, although records of cabinet meetings are made available after thirty years.

Honourable Titles
Ministers of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly may take the title ‘Honourable’. However, not all ministers choose to use this title.

The Backbench
Those members not having ministerial or shadow ministerial responsibilities are usually considered to be junior members and as such sit in the back rows of their respective sides in the Chamber. They are referred to as ‘backbenchers’ because of the benches sat on by members in the Chambers of older parliament buildings.
The Standing Orders

The Standing Orders are the permanent rules which govern the conduct of business in the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory. These rules administer such matters as time limits for how long a member can speak on a particular topic, how bills are debated and how certain votes are taken.

The Speaker is in control of parliamentary proceedings and thereby is responsible for enforcing the Standing Orders. If the Speaker is unsure about a rule, the Clerk of the Assembly, who sits close by, can provide advice.

Members who do not behave correctly according to the Standing Orders can be removed from the Chamber for a certain period on the order of the Speaker.

Standing Orders change over time. In order to change a rule or procedure parliament must vote to accept the changes proposed by the Standing Orders Committee.

Examples of Standing Orders

• Prayers will be said at the commencement of each day’s session.

• Members entering or leaving the floor of the Chamber while parliament is sitting should nod or bow to the Speaker.

• Members should always stand while they are speaking.

• If the Speaker stands during a debate, the member who is addressing parliament must stop speaking and sit down. All members are to be silent when the Speaker stands.

Language in the Chamber

Language used in parliament is formal and follows very clear rules set out in the Standing Orders. A good reason for this is to remind members they are in parliament to represent the people of their electorate, and the need to respect all members.

Members should always speak through the Speaker. Members cannot say for example, “you’re not listening to me!” to another member, rather they would say “Mr Speaker, the honourable member is not listening”.

Of course, no swearing or other offensive language is allowed in parliament.
The Clerk (pronounced ‘clark’) is the most senior parliamentary officer and sits in front of the Speaker. The Clerk is assisted by a Deputy Clerk, and they are both career officials and not elected by the public or by members of parliament.

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk have two main roles. They assist in the running of parliament by providing advice to the Speaker and members about the rules and procedures of parliament. This also involves recording all the decisions made in the Chamber.

The other main role of the Clerks is to act as the equivalent Chief Executive of the Department of the Legislative Assembly which organises the daily operations of parliament (including committees) as well as provide support to members.

Historically...

… the word Clerk means someone who can read and write. The Clerk was first introduced to the English Parliament in 1363 because at the time most parliamentarians were illiterate. The Clerk read the title and content of bills so everyone knew what they were debating. Clerks still stand and read the title of each bill aloud in today's parliament.

A scene from an early English Parliament, with the Clerk and Deputy Clerk at the centre.
In accordance with the Westminster System of Parliament, the political party with the second largest number of members in a parliament forms the Opposition.

The Opposition has a very important role in ensuring that ministers, and the government as a whole, remain responsible to parliament for their actions. In doing so, the Opposition examines the work of the government and offers alternative policies. This allows the public to make informed judgements about the performance of their representatives and consider which candidates and policies they would prefer to vote for at the next election.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

The leader of the party that forms the Opposition after gaining the second largest number of votes in an election, becomes the Leader of the Opposition.

The Leader of the Opposition is often seen as the alternative Chief Minister. They usually take on the same portfolios as the Chief Minister and respond to the Chief Minister’s statements, ask questions and put forward alternative policies for these areas.

Some other members of the Opposition will be responsible for other portfolios and are called Shadow Ministers.
Independents are members of parliament who do not belong to a political party and therefore are not bound by the policies of a party. They are free to make their own decisions and so sometimes vote with the government and sometimes with the opposition. On some occasions they abstain and do not vote at all.

In parliament, independent members do not always have as much influence as members working together in a political party. However, if the numbers of government and opposition are nearly equal, the views and decisions of an independent member may be very important when it comes to voting for legislation or supporting policies.

Independents can introduce their own bills into Parliament. These are called private member’s bills. Independents introduce their own bills so that they can suggest new laws about issues that they think are important and which the government is not addressing.

In the Chamber

Independent members sit between the government and the opposition benches on what is called the ‘cross-bench’.

Getting Elected

It can be difficult for independent candidates to win elections because they may not have the financial resources or public profile of political parties. Independent members are usually elected because they are well known and respected in their community and have a strong personal following.
The Serjeant-at-Arms is an unelected parliamentary official. At the beginning of each sitting day, the Serjeant-at-Arms, carrying the mace, escorts the Speaker into the Chamber and places the mace into its stand at the end of the central table. They also help to keep order in parliament by removing any member from the Chamber at the Speaker’s request.

The Name

The title Serjeant-at-Arms literally translates to a ‘servant bearing arms’, so one serving the Speaker using the mace as a weapon.

History of the Serjeant-at-Arms

The Serjeant-at-Arms is an office with origins in the Westminster System of Parliament. Originally, the Serjeants-at-Arms were members of the King’s bodyguard. In the 14th Century, King Richard II appointed one of his Serjeant-at-Arms to act as the bodyguard of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

In those early days, the Speaker was employed directly by the King and was often in the difficult position of trying to meet the demands of the members and the conflicting interests of the King. As a result, the Serjeant-at-Arms was to protect the Speaker from his enemies in the Commons and at the Palace.

The Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms of the Northern Territory places the mace in its stand to begin the 2009 Alice Springs parliamentary sittings.

Traditionally for formal ceremonies the Serjeant-at-Arms wore silver-buckled shoes, stockings, knee-breeches, a black coat with a large rosette on the back, a waistcoat, a stiff shirt front, white lace around the neck and cuffs, white gloves and a ceremonial sword. The above is a cartoon of Lord Charles Russell from 1873.
In early British Parliaments, the mace was a weapon of war, similar to a club, used to protect the Speaker from members of parliament and in particular the King. It was carried and used by the Serjeant–at-Arms, originally one of the King’s bodyguards given to the Speaker for protection. Before being allocated a Serjeant-at-Arms, seven Speakers were executed because the King did not like the wishes of parliament they reported.

Today the Speaker is well respected and no longer needs protection. The mace is still carried by a Serjeant-at-Arms, but it is now a symbol of the power of the Speaker and therefore the power of parliament. At the beginning of a parliamentary sitting day, the Serjeant-at-Arms carries the mace into the Chamber ahead of the Speaker, and places it on the Table with the crown pointing toward the government. It must be in the Chamber for parliament to be in session.

Every Parliament in Australia has its own unique mace. The Northern Territory’s mace is made of silver and gold gilt and weighs 4.26 kg. It was made by Garrard, the Crown Jewellers in London. From the top the St George Cross sits on a crown which has French fleur-de-lis wrapped around its base. Below the crown the orb of the mace has the Northern Territory’s Coat of Arms on one side and the cypher (a combination of letters, like a monogram) of Queen Elizabeth II on the other. Stylised wedge-tailed eagles connect the orb to the shaft. A Sturt’s Desert Rose intertwined with a Tudor Rose twists around the shaft. Finally at the base is a spider conch shell which is found on the Northern Territory coast.

The NT’s Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms carrying the Mace.

An Interesting Mace Fact:
In Australia in 1891, the Parliament of Victoria’s mace was stolen. Although many suspects were investigated, the case remains unsolved.
The Speaker runs the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory as the Presiding Officer (or chairperson). At the beginning of each new parliament, usually after a general election, the members’ first task is to choose the new Speaker for that parliamentary term. Terms are generally four years.

The Speaker is typically a member of the government. However independent members have also been elected to the position of Speaker.

The Speaker must be seen as impartial and not take sides. If votes on a bill or debate are equal, the Speaker has the option of using a casting vote to break the deadlock. The Speaker also has the option of a deliberative vote, the same as other members, on bills and debates.

The Speaker also has responsibility for Parliament House and its precinct, and of the Department of the Legislative Assembly. As well as other functions, this department administers staff and resources given to all elected members of parliament.

**Origins**
The Office of the Speaker is an ancient one dating back to 13th Century England. In early English Parliaments, the Speaker informed the Monarch about decisions of parliament.

**Title**
The Speaker should always be addressed as Mr Speaker or Madam Speaker while in the Chamber.

**The Mace**
The mace is a symbol of the Speaker and is placed on the Table whenever the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker is in the chair and parliament is officially meeting.