

HEAR! HEAR!



AND THERE!

a fun guide on [////////](#)
Parliament of Singapore

HEAR! HEAR! AND THERE!



AYE!

NO

A FUN GUIDE ON PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

CONTENTS

04 **LET'S TALK:**
SNAPSHOTS OF PARLIAMENT HISTORY

16 **VISITING PARLIAMENT:**
DOS & DON'TS

22 **WHAT AM I?**

30 **PARLCHAT:**
SERJEANT-AT-ARMS (SAA) ANSWERS
PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

40 **WHAT'S IN MY BAG?**

42 **THE LEGACY OF
THE 21-GUN SALUTE:**
THE ARTILLERY SHELLS

44 **WHO AM I?**





SNAPSHOTS OF PARLIAMENT HISTORY

I can't believe that we finally achieved self-governance!



Me neither!

YEAR
1959

92.9%!

And what was the voter turnout?

From 52% in the last elections! What an achievement!

DURING THE FIRST FEW GENERAL ELECTIONS, MANY ELIGIBLE VOTERS WERE NOT AWARE OF THE REGISTRATION AND VOTING PROCESSES. THIS RESULTED IN POOR TURNOUT OF 52% IN 1951.

IN 1957, THE SINGAPORE CITIZENSHIP ORDINANCE ALLOWED CITIZENSHIP FOR IMMIGRANTS WHO HAD LIVED IN SINGAPORE FOR 10 OR MORE YEARS. THIS ALLOWED MORE FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS TO VOTE IN THE 1959 GENERAL ELECTIONS.



Did you vote in the elections?

Of course! As a Singapore Citizen, I want my elected leaders to represent me.



Back then when we had our first General Election, only British Citizens who had lived in Singapore for at least one year could vote.



And now our Cabinet has full control of our domestic policies!

I guess times have changed.

Yes, they have indeed.

In fact, times are changing right now — I was on time and now I'm running late!

OVER THE YEARS, THE NUMBER OF SEATS FOR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES INCREASED. IN 1948, 6 OUT OF A TOTAL OF 22 SEATS WERE ELECTED SEATS. IN 1959, ALL 51 SEATS IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY WERE ELECTED SEATS.

YEAR
1965

As Singaporeans watched the press conference announcing the separation of Singapore from Malaysia, they were shocked at the sudden decision.



BEFORE SINGAPORE GAINED INDEPENDENCE
IN 1965, THE PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE WAS
KNOWN AS THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THE PROCLAMATION OF SINGAPORE RELATING TO THE SEPARATION OF SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA WAS AUTHORED BY EDMUND WILLIAM BARKER AND SIGNED BY LEE KUAN YEW ON 9 AUGUST 1965. TODAY, A COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE FOUND IN THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE.



We're no longer part of Malaysia?

That seems to be the case.

Why didn't they say anything sooner?

Oh, that's great news!

This is bad!

This is so disappointing...

Will we be okay?

THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE INDEPENDENCE ACT WAS PASSED LATER THAT YEAR ON 22 DECEMBER. THIS LED TO THE TRANSFER OF LEGISLATIVE POWERS TO THE HEAD OF STATE AND LEGISLATURE OF SINGAPORE.



Actually, I think this is a good thing.

What are you talking about? We won't be able to survive on our own!

Let's talk through our differences and focus on working together towards a shared future.

We can trust our Legislative Assembly. After all, they led us from colonial rule to a merger with Malaysia.

I suppose you're right.



YEAR
2001

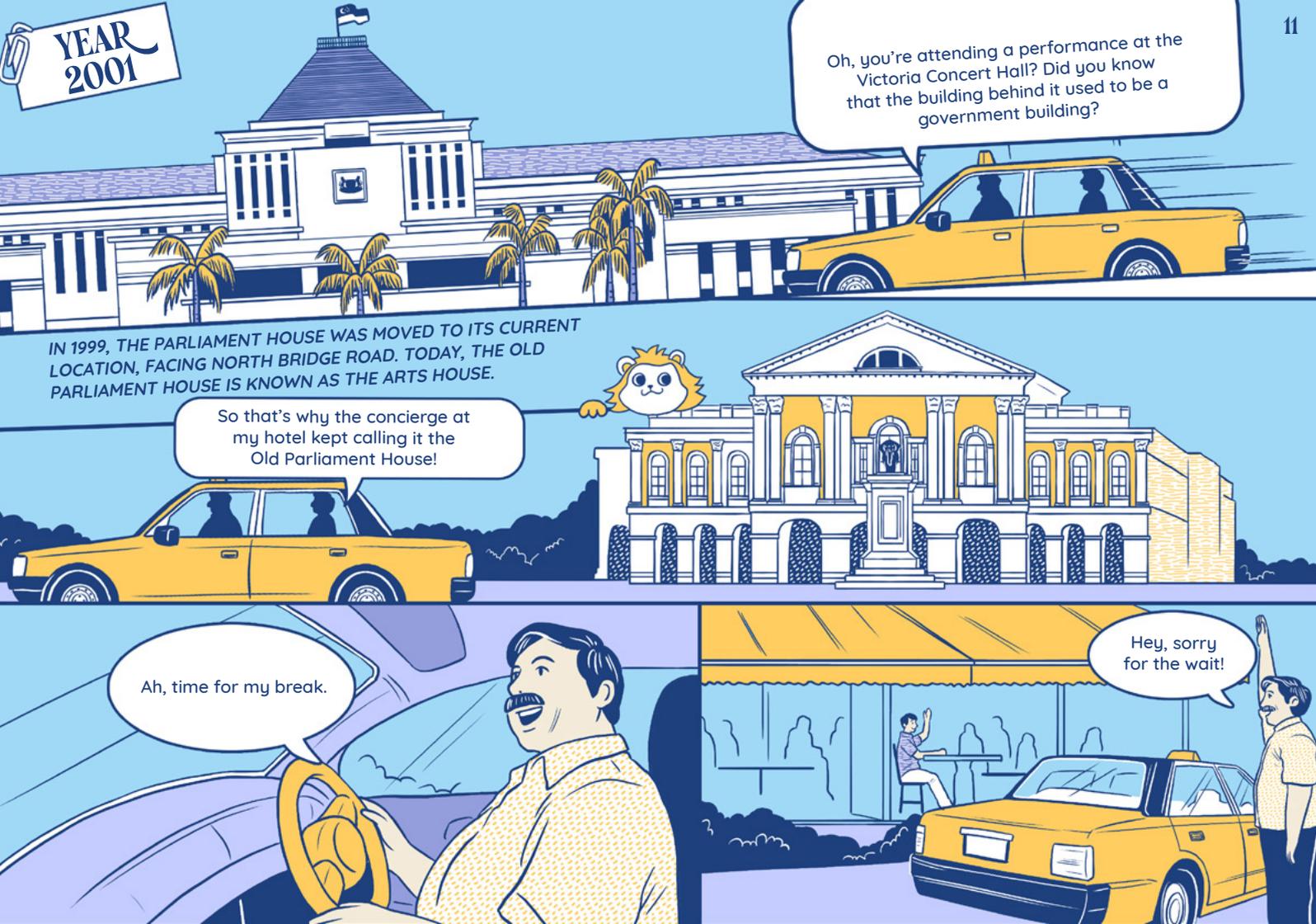
Oh, you're attending a performance at the Victoria Concert Hall? Did you know that the building behind it used to be a government building?

IN 1999, THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE WAS MOVED TO ITS CURRENT LOCATION, FACING NORTH BRIDGE ROAD. TODAY, THE OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE IS KNOWN AS THE ARTS HOUSE.

So that's why the concierge at my hotel kept calling it the Old Parliament House!

Ah, time for my break.

Hey, sorry for the wait!



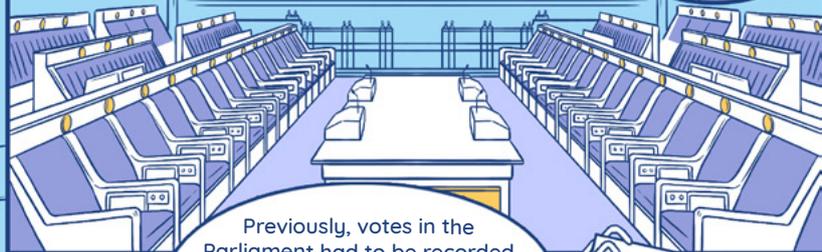


Oh, you passed by the Old Parliament House earlier?

Yes! You know, I wonder what they're going to do with the building now. It would be a shame if it was demolished.

FORMER PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Other than the exterior, is there any difference between the old and new building?



Previously, votes in the Parliament had to be recorded manually. Now, MPs can cast their votes electronically using the voting panel found at their seats!



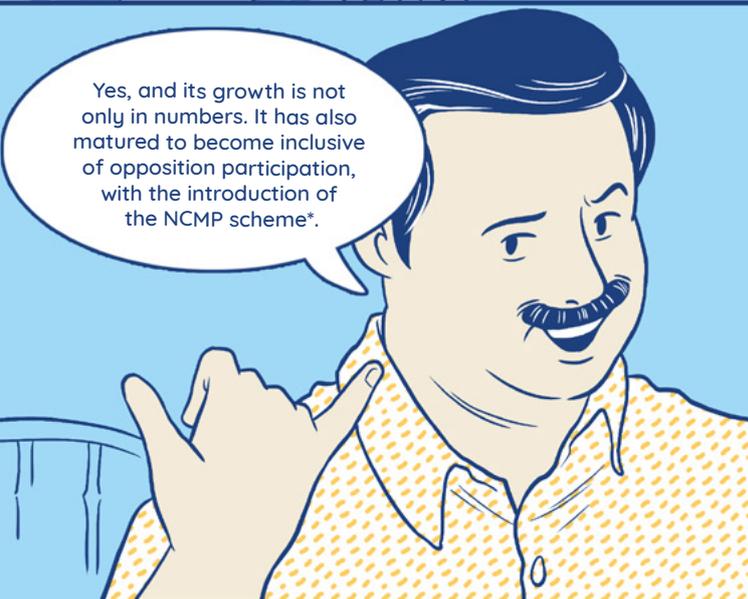
CURRENT PARLIAMENT HOUSE



SEATS IN THE CHAMBER ARE ALSO EQUIPPED WITH AUDIO FACILITIES TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (MPs) TO LISTEN TO INTERPRETATIONS OF SPEECHES IN ENGLISH, MALAY, MANDARIN OR TAMIL.



Wow, our Parliament has really grown over the years!



Yes, and its growth is not only in numbers. It has also matured to become inclusive of opposition participation, with the introduction of the NCMP scheme*.



With more diverse points of view, we can feel more assured that decisions for the country are debated and scrutinised in Parliament to ensure they serve the Citizens of Singapore.

This calls for a toast!



***THE NON-CONSTITUENCY MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT (NCMPs) SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED IN 1984 TO ENSURE OPPOSITION REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT. SINCE 2017, NCMPs HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AS ELECTED MPs, SUCH AS THE ABILITY TO VOTE.**

YEAR 2020

IN 2020, PARLIAMENT PASSED THE COVID-19 (TEMPORARY MEASURES) ACT, WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, STATES THAT THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH CAN MAKE REGULATIONS, SUCH AS MOVEMENT RESTRICTIONS, TO REDUCE THE TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19.



I guess we won't be meeting face-to-face for a while.



Why not?



Parliament just passed a COVID-19 bill. They'll be telling us to avoid meeting in person soon.



NEWS HEADLINE

COVID-19 Safe Distancing Measures: What You Need to Know



Oh well, I guess we'll have to meet online.



AT THE HEIGHT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, MPs PRACTISED SAFE DISTANCING MEASURES BY LEAVING AN EMPTY SEAT IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER BETWEEN EACH PERSON. THIS LED TO SOME MPs BEING SEATED IN THE PUBLIC GALLERIES, ONE FLOOR ABOVE THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER.

VISITING PARLIAMENT: DOs & DON'Ts

Observing Parliamentary sittings can be a thrilling experience, especially for first-time viewers! Here are a few rules to follow when you attend a sitting.



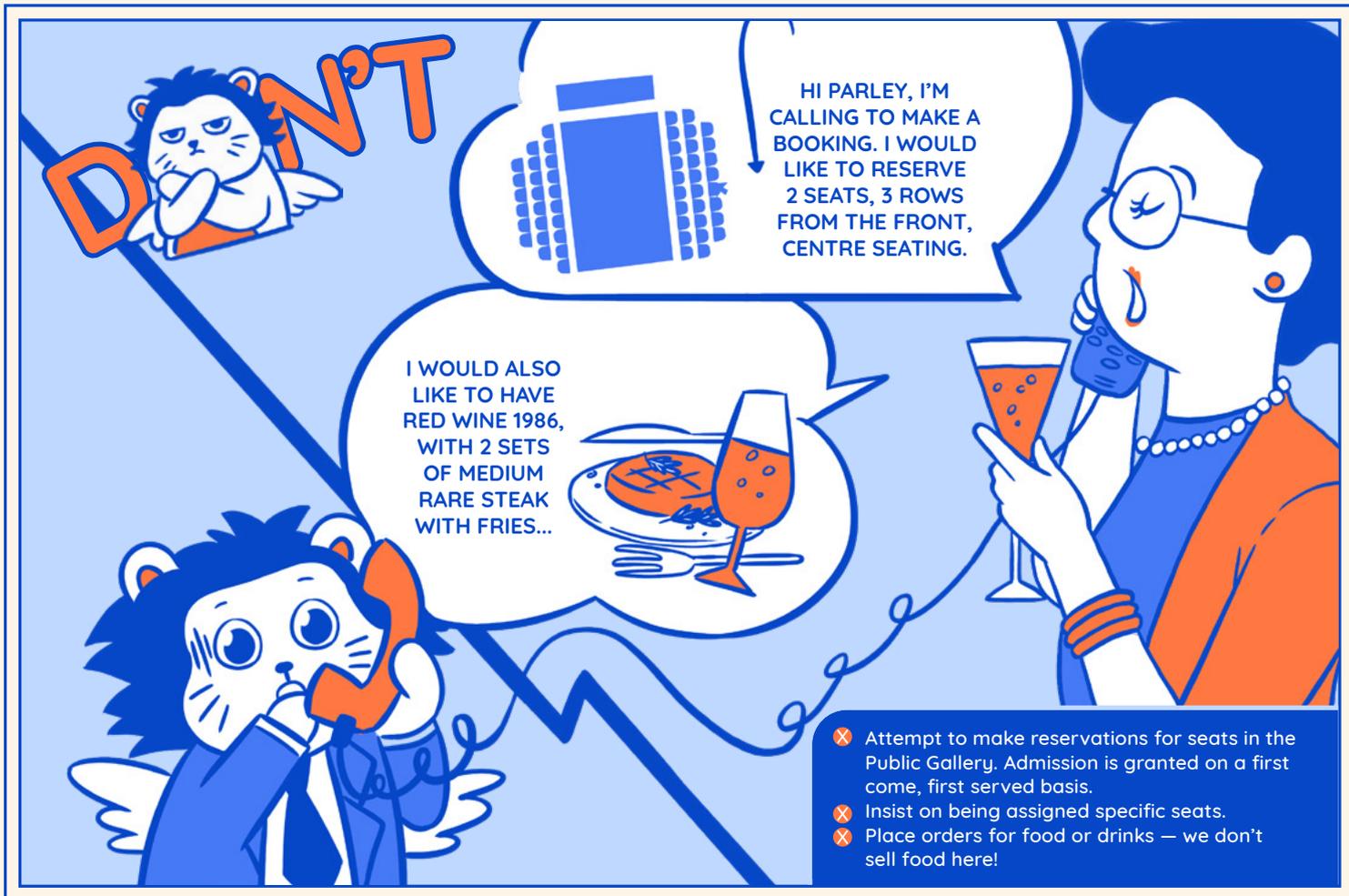


- ✔ Arrive at least five minutes early.
- ✔ Dress smartly and modestly.
- ✔ Present your identification document.
- ✔ Wait in line patiently.
- ✔ Pass through security checks in an orderly manner.
- ✔ Keep your visitor sticker or pass on at all times.





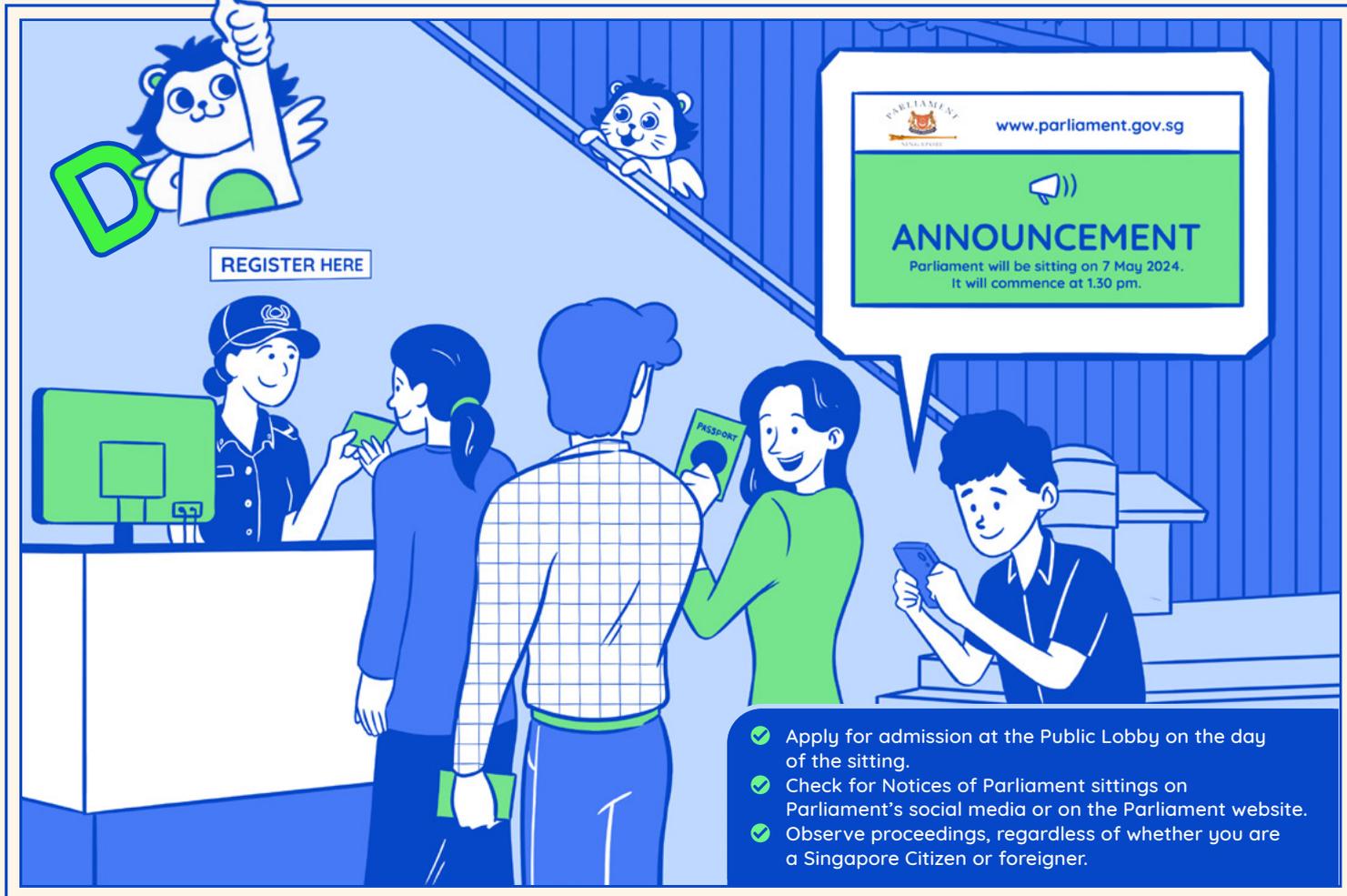
- ✔ Secure your personal electronic devices in the lockers at the Public Entrance.
- ✔ Bow to the Speaker before taking a seat and when leaving the Chamber.
- ✔ Remain silent at all times.
- ✔ Use the audio devices provided.
- ✔ Refer to the Order Paper (found on our website) to keep up with proceedings in the Chamber.



HI PARLEY, I'M CALLING TO MAKE A BOOKING. I WOULD LIKE TO RESERVE 2 SEATS, 3 ROWS FROM THE FRONT, CENTRE SEATING.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO HAVE RED WINE 1986, WITH 2 SETS OF MEDIUM RARE STEAK WITH FRIES...

- ✘ Attempt to make reservations for seats in the Public Gallery. Admission is granted on a first come, first served basis.
- ✘ Insist on being assigned specific seats.
- ✘ Place orders for food or drinks — we don't sell food here!



- ✔ Apply for admission at the Public Lobby on the day of the sitting.
- ✔ Check for Notices of Parliament sittings on Parliament's social media or on the Parliament website.
- ✔ Observe proceedings, regardless of whether you are a Singapore Citizen or foreigner.

The Chamber contains many items that are used during the Parliamentary process.
How many of these items can you name?

WHAT

AM I?



With a silvery sheen, I proudly stand,
A symbol of authority, across the land.
Silent witness to debates so grand,
the power of the Speaker
is what I command.





PARLIAMENT INVENTORY



A winged lion carrying a trident.

The lion is the symbol of Singapore, while the wings and trident represent the city's strategic importance as an air centre and global hub port, respectively.

The letters "EIIIR", Queen Elizabeth's royal cypher. When the Mace was commissioned, Singapore was still a British colony under her rule. The cypher represents her title, "Elizabeth II Regina".

The shaft is embossed with regularly alternating symbols of lions and Chinese junks.



The base is decorated with a ring of fish swimming through the waves. Emblazoned onto the Mace butt is a gryphon's head over a crown, the coat of arms belonging to Sir Stamford Raffles' family.

THE PARLIAMENT MACE

The Mace was commissioned in 1954 by British Governor Sir John Nicoll, who enlisted two renowned craftsmen for the job — the silversmith Leslie Durbin and the sculptor Jacob Epstein. A committee comprising Legislative Councillors from Singapore provided designs, which were then incorporated into the sketch by Durbin. The lion figure alone was commissioned for 1000 guineas, or approximately \$9,215 today. The Mace, which weighs 6.8kg and is 114cm long, arrived in Singapore on 19 August 1958.

The Chamber contains many items that are used during the Parliamentary process.
How many of these items can you name?

WHAT

AM I?

In speeches transcribed debates unfold,
a record of history in volumes behold.
Whisper of the past in stories untold,
the Parliamentary history I do hold.



THE HANSARD

The Hansard is named after Thomas Curson Hansard, the first official publisher of the British Parliament. Before the publication was taken over by the British Parliament in 1909, records of Parliamentary debates were obtained through methods such as, freelance reporters, newspaper reports, and input from the Members themselves after the debate had concluded.

The Hansard has been available online since 2000, with records stretching back to 1955. All sitting reports are uploaded within 7 working days of adjournment, and can be accessed on Parliament's website.

SINGAPORE PARLIAMENT OFFICIAL REPORTS

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

FIRST SESSION

OF THE

TENTH PARLIAMENT

(Commenced on 25th March 2002)

PART II

(Columns 1 to 2776)

(FROM 8th JULY 2002 TO 29th JANUARY 2003)

VOLUME 75



PARLIAMENT INVENTORY

The Hansard, otherwise known as the Official Report of Parliamentary Debates, contains transcriptions of speeches and debates from Parliament. It aims for near-verbatim accuracy, with the exclusion of expletives and minor edits for grammatical errors and clarity.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

OFFICIAL REPORT

SECOND SESSION
OF THE
SIXTH PARLIAMENT

PART I

(Columns 1 to 1490)

(FROM 20th FEBRUARY 1986 TO 31ST MARCH 1986)

VOLUME 47

SINGAPORE PARLIAMENT OFFICIAL REPORTS

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

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(Columns 1 to 2776)

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The Chamber contains many items that are used during the Parliamentary process.
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WHAT

AM I?



A throne of influence, where leaders sit,
to call for a division when the votes are split.
In the heart of discourse, where voices submit,
all for the nation, my decisions permit.



THE SPEAKER'S CHAIR

The Speaker's Chair is made of solid teak. The chair pictured here is the first iteration, which was in use from 1955 to 1999. During Parliamentary sittings, the Speaker sits at the Chair positioned in the centre of a dais at the front of the Chamber.

DID YOU KNOW?



The first man to occupy this chair was Sir George Edward Noel Oehlers, the first Speaker of Parliament (then referred to as the Legislative Assembly of Singapore). He was also an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) and the first Eurasian in Singapore to be knighted.



PARLIAMENT INVENTORY



This metallic cover emblazoned with a tower symbol is more than just a decorative flourish. Embedded behind it is a loudspeaker which amplifies MPs' speeches during Parliament sittings, which allows the Speaker to hear the proceedings clearly.

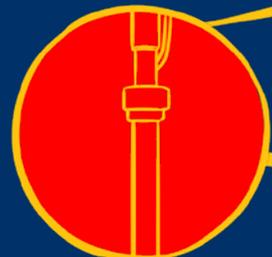
What does the Tower symbol represent? The tower was a part of Singapore's Coat of Arms, from when we were a British municipality. The full Coat of Arms can still be seen at the entrance of Mount Emily Park today.



The Chamber contains many items that are used during the Parliamentary process.
How many of these items can you name?

WHAT

AM I?



In debates and discussion, I take my stand,
a slender figure with a voice so grand.
In the chamber where words expand,
the respect of attendees is what I demand.



PARLIAMENT INVENTORY

THE SPEAKER'S MICROPHONE

These microphones were used in the Legislative Assembly Chamber from 1954 to 1986. After the amplification and interpretation system in the Chamber was upgraded, they were replaced with newer models.



PARLCHAT

Serjeant-at-Arms (SAA) Answers Parliamentary Questions



Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya

Hi Sir! 🙌🙌 It was great meeting you at Parliament House earlier! Please remind me — what's your role in Parliament? 🏛️



Nurul



SAA

Hi everyone 🙌 I'm happy to share. I'm the Serjeant-at-Arms. 🧑

Wait, 'sergeant' isn't spelled with a 'G'?



Priya



SAA

While 'sergeant' is the common spelling today, 'serjeant' is also acceptable. 🙌 In fact, Singapore is not the only country with a Serjeant-at-Arms! 😊

Really? Which other countries have a Serjeant-at-Arms?



Wei Hao

Serjeant-at-Arms answers your questions about Parliament. What does the Serjeant-at-Arms do? When can the Serjeant-at-Arms arrest a person without a warrant? Answers to these questions and many more await — it's PARL Chat!

5 members



Priya
Went to Parl 🏛️



Nurul
Learn something new everyday!



Parley
Everyone loves me! 🍷



Serjeant-at-Arms
At the Parliament



Wei Hao
Hungry



Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya



SAA

Australia 🇦🇺, Bangladesh 🇬🇧, New Zealand 🇳🇿, the United Kingdom 🇬🇧 and more! The tradition of the 'serjeant' spelling has also been preserved by some British military regiments.

So what exactly does a Serjeant-at-Arms do? 🤔



Parley



SAA

Many things, actually. 😊 I act on the direction of the Speaker of Parliament and carry out his orders.

ORDER! ORDER!



Really? Examples pleaseeee 🙄🙄



Priya

For example, I have the ability to remove anyone who is causing trouble in the Chamber 🤬, and if the Speaker issues a ✨ warrant ✨ to summon someone before the committee, I'll have to carry it out. I can even arrest any persons without a warrant! 🚫👉



SAA



SAA SCHEDULE OF THE DAY +

6:00AM

Wake up and get ready for work!

7:00AM

Breakfast time!

8:30AM

Custodian duties for the Mace of Singapore

1:30PM

Lead the Speaker's procession with the Mace

3:30PM

Maintain order within the precincts of Parliament

6:15PM



Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya



Nurul



Wei Hao



Wei Hao

Please don't arrest me! 🙏🙏 I promise to always return my library books on time...

Haha! 😂 Fortunately, I only carry out orders from the Speaker.



SAA

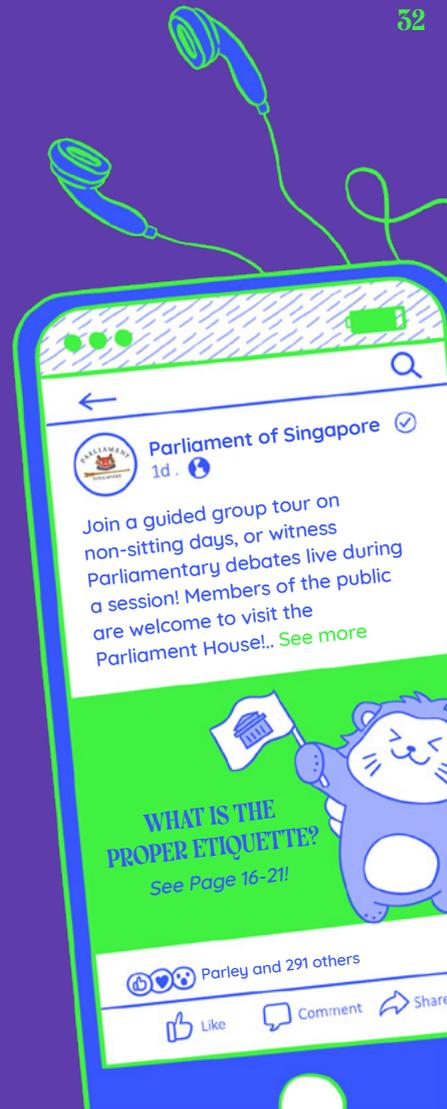
That's a relief...

So... what do you do... as an Officer of the Security and Resilience Department?

Well, I oversee the access of all individuals entering the House, 🧑 including issuing security passes and Admission Orders. Additionally, I work with the Head of Security to ensure the safety of the Speaker and the Members of the House.



SAA





Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya

I see... When I was in the Chamber, I saw this empty bracket.



What is it for? 🤔



Nurul

Great question, Nurul! 🙌
That's where the Mace goes.



SAA



The mace is so ✨ shiny ✨



Parley

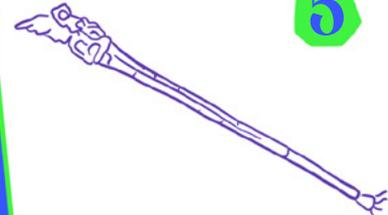
It sure is! 😎 This is actually the **! ONE AND ONLY !** Mace of Singapore. If it's not in the Chamber, no proceedings can take place in Parliament.



SAA

THE MACE OF SINGAPORE

5



ARTIFACT - MIDDLE AGES

A symbol of Parliament and the Speaker's power and authority. Brought into the Chamber whenever the Speaker is present, the Mace is always there during sittings. The Serjeant-at-Arms is in charge of placing it on the brackets of the Table of the House.



Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya

But Serjeant, isn't a mace a weapon? 🗡️😬



Wei Hao

No need to be afraid — while maces started out as a tool of warfare, it has evolved over time into a symbol of authority. 🏰



SAA

Wow, so that's why it looks so ✨ fancy ✨!



Parley

It does, indeed. This tradition actually came from the British House of Commons! 🇬🇧



SAA

Coooooo!!! 😬😬😬



Priya

Looks like our Parliament has many traditions in common with the British Parliament!!





Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya

Serjeant, your job is so cool! 🥰🥰
Is the Speaker's job also as cool? 🤖



Nurul



SAA

Well, the Speaker has many responsibilities. He presides over the sittings, regulates and enforces the rules of debate, decides on who has the right to speak and puts forward the question for the

House to debate on and vote. 🤖👩🗨️🗣️

He also has to enforce the rules prescribed in the Standing Orders of Parliament to maintain the orderly conduct of Parliamentary business.



Throughout all these, he has to remain impartial and fair to all MPs. 😊



The Speaker must be very busy! 🤖



Wei Hao





Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya



SAA

He is... The Speaker even has to sit through the whole time Parliament is in session. 😊😓

The whole session?! I hope the chair is comfortable!



Wei Hao



SAA



See for yourself! Pretty cool, huh?

However, the Speaker leaves the chair to sit by the Clerk of Parliament whenever the House is in committee.

Does he take the Mace with him? ✨



Priya

Haha, of course not! I will move the Mace to the lower bracket whenever that happens.

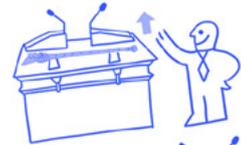


SAA

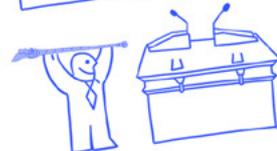


**MOVING THE MACE 101:
THE HOUSE IS IN COMMITTEE**
After a Bill has been debated and voted on, it sometimes may require further deliberation. All Bills must go through 3 readings in Parliament and receive the President's assent to become an Act of Parliament or a law.

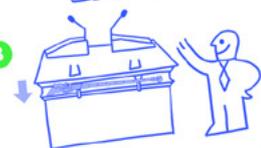
1



2



3





Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya

MPs have to give so many speeches... Do I need to be very good at English if I want to be an MP? 🤔🤔



Nurul

I'm glad this is something you're interested in! However, you don't actually need to be fluent in English. 😊



SAA

So any other language is okay?



Priya

Not quite. The MP can use any or all of the four official languages in his Parliamentary speeches.



SAA

But what if I don't understand some of the languages?

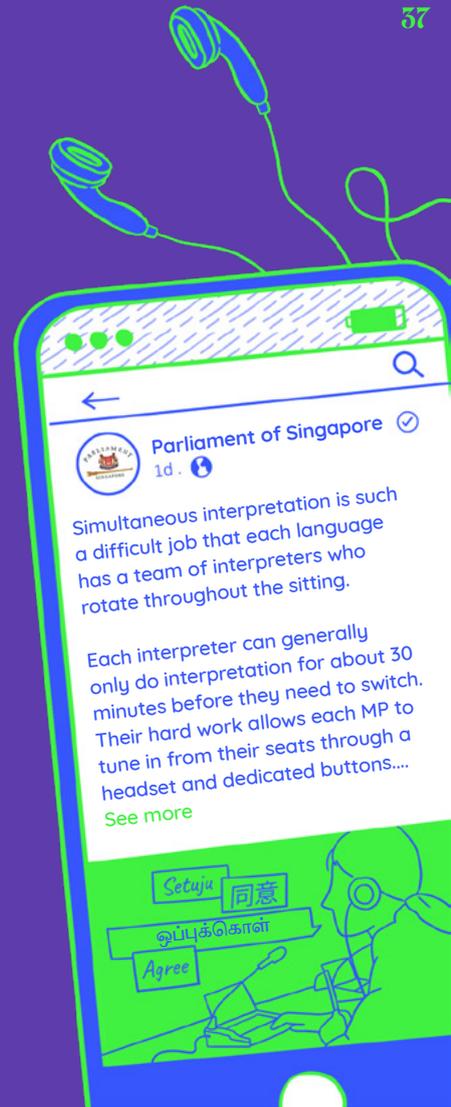


Parley

Luckily for you, all Parliament sessions have teams of simultaneous interpreters for Singapore's four official languages — English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil. 🧑🏫🧑🏫🧑🏫



SAA





Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya

By the way, how are decisions made in Parliament?



SAA

Usually, by a collection of voices. Those in favour will say "Ayes" ✓, and those not in favour will say "Noes" ✗. The Speaker will listen closely to the Ayes and Noes to determine the majority.



Wei Hao

Do they do that every time a vote is called?



SAA

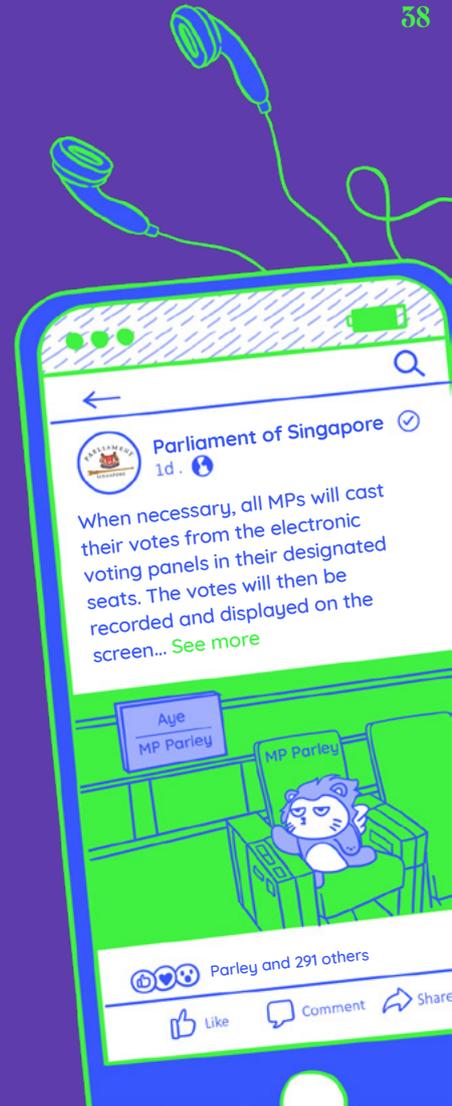
Not always. Sometimes, we need an exact number of votes, such as when an MP calls for a division. That is when voting is conducted electronically and... 🙅



Priya



... MPs vote with these electronic voting panels!





Parl-Mentors

Serjeant-at-Arms, Parley, Wei Hao, Nurul, Priya

So.. if the MPs are seated on the ground floor, who sits in the rows up there? 🤔



Nurul



SAA



These are the galleries. Unlike the Public Gallery and Press Gallery, the Education Gallery is soundproof! That way, educators can give verbal explanations to students without disturbing the Parliamentary proceedings.

Oh! I heard the Public Gallery used to be called something else?



Wei Hao

Haha! Yes, just like “Serjeant”, “Stranger’s Gallery” is a traditional term originating from the British Parliament for non-MPs or House officers.

Well... it’s been fun, but duty’s knocking at my door! Don’t be a stranger 😊 — let’s catch up later! 🙌



SAA

Download Now!

PARLEY
ANIMATED STICKERS



Telegram



WhatsApp



WHAT'S IN MY BAG?

The Clerk of Parliament is a complex role that involves advising the Speaker and MPs on procedures in Parliament, as well as administrative duties. Here are the items used by the longest serving Clerk of Parliament (1967-1995) to discharge his duties.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE LONGEST-SERVING CLERK OF PARLIAMENT BY VISITING THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE!



▲ PORTABLE SPEAKER

To ensure that Clerks could hear speeches clearly, a portable speaker box with interpretation capabilities was used.

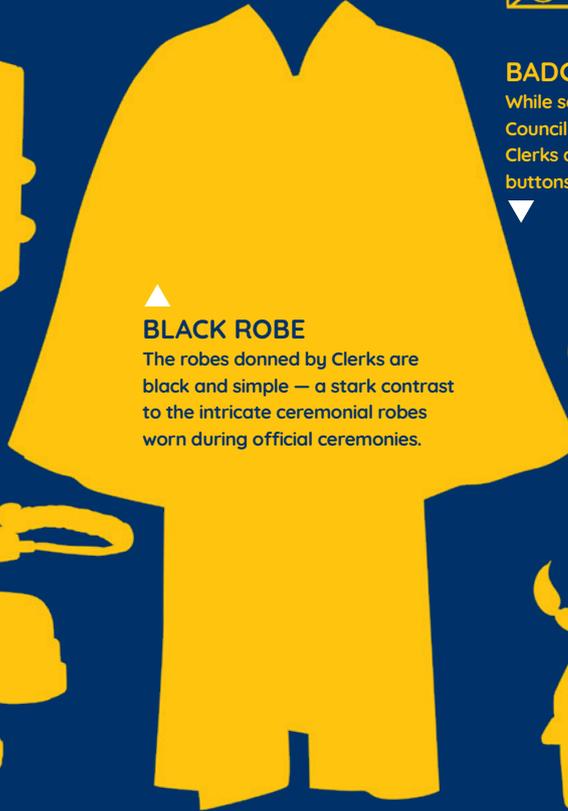
INTERCOM SET

During the early days, an intercom set was used to communicate within the Old Parliament House.



▲ BLACK ROBE

The robes donned by Clerks are black and simple — a stark contrast to the intricate ceremonial robes worn during official ceremonies.



BADGES AND BUTTONS

While serving in the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, Clerks donned various badges and buttons on their servant's uniform.



ASSEMBLY BELL

To signal the start of the Legislative Assembly Sitting, Clerks would ring a hand bell.

▲ BOB WIG

Starting in the 17th century, wigs were worn to cover heads that were shaven to reduce head lice. The length of the wig indicates the seniority of the wearer. Clerks wore bob wigs up till 1994, when wigs were done away with.



THE LEGACY OF THE 21-GUN SALUTE

THE ARTILLERY SHELL CASINGS

The 21-gun salute originates from a naval tradition, in which warships would discharge their ammunition when visiting a foreign port. Over the years, this tradition evolved into a customary gun salute to honour heads of states and former heads of state.

To pay respects to the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew, 25-pounder Howitzers guns were fired from the Padang as part of his state funeral. The artillery shells were then collected and presented to individuals, organisations and institutions that were closely associated with Mr Lee.



TAKE A LOOK AT THE MAP BELOW!

The Parliament of Singapore is one of the recipients of the 21 artillery shell casings. Are you curious to know who the other recipients were?



454,687 members of the public came to the Lying in State at Parliament House from 25 to 28 March 2015 to pay their last respects to the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew. Orchids from the specimen that was named in his honour, Aranda Lee Kuan Yew, could be viewed by visitors during the Lying in State.

HISTORY HAS BEEN MADE IN THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE THANKS TO THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF MANY NOTABLE FIGURES. CAN YOU GUESS WHO THESE PEOPLE ARE?



I was the first female President in the world with my own Twitter / X Emoji!

Not only was I the first female Speaker of the Parliament of Singapore, I am also the first female President!....



Every day, I wake up at 5 am to exercise for 45 minutes to keep myself focused and fit!



WHO AM I?



GRASSROOTS AND GRAVITAS:

A TRAILBLAZING ROLE MODEL

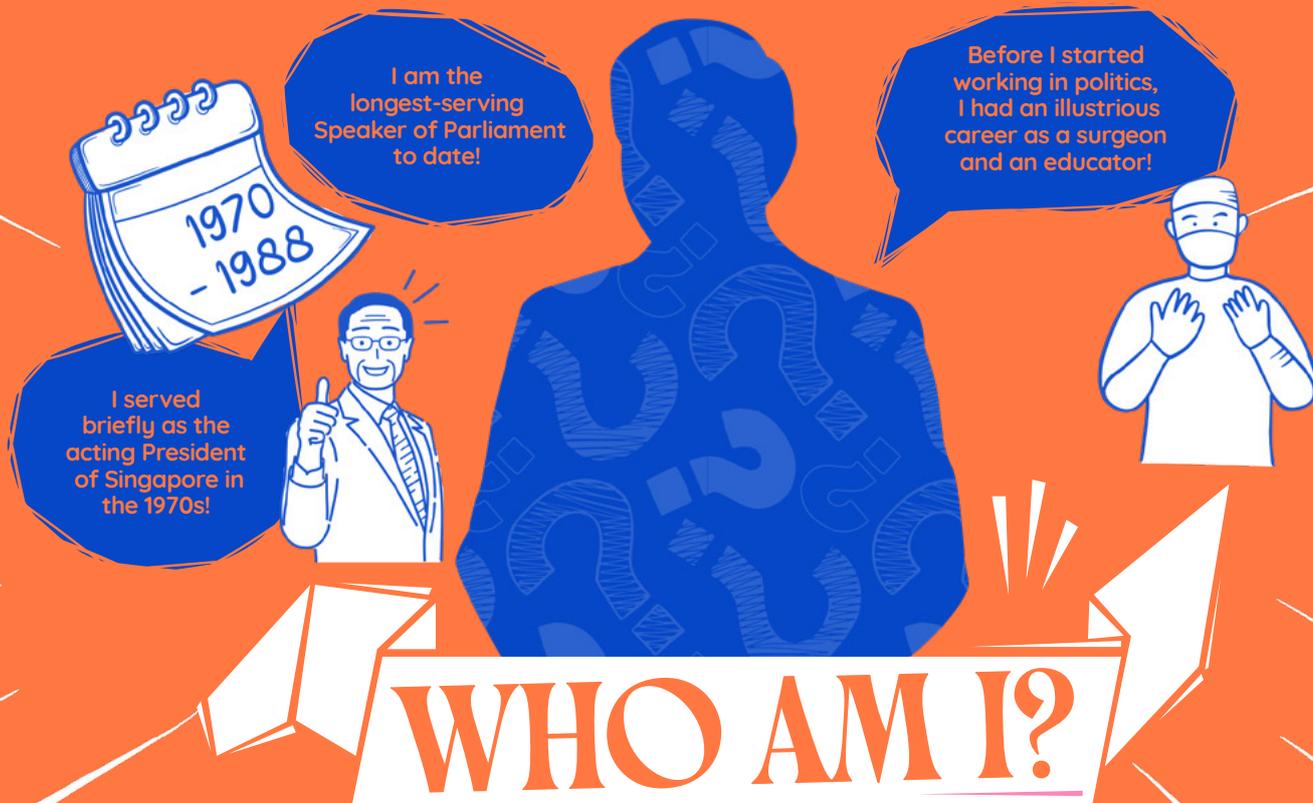
Though best known as Singapore's first female President, Mdm Halimah Yacob had already made history in 2013 as the first woman to be appointed to the Office of the Speaker. In his nomination, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong cited the pragmatism and compassion she had exhibited in Parliament as the admirable qualities which made her an ideal candidate for the role. By the end of her tenure, she had gained a reputation for being a calm and even-handed Speaker.

Prior to her appointment as the Speaker of Parliament, Mdm Halimah spent 33 years at the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) working to improve the lives of workers in Singapore and 16 years as an elected MP. Her journey towards the highest office in Singapore started with her humble beginnings, growing up in poverty as the daughter of a single mother. It is therefore no surprise that she has spent her long career as a unionist and politician dedicated to the labour movement, women's issues and community development. Outside of her political duties, she was also the first Singaporean to be elected to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1999, where she served on the Board for 12 years.



Mdm Halimah served as the Speaker of Parliament for four years, presiding over Parliament during several major debates as well as a Special Sitting to commemorate the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew.

HISTORY HAS BEEN MADE IN THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE THANKS TO THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF MANY NOTABLE FIGURES. CAN YOU GUESS WHO THESE PEOPLE ARE?





A SURGEON'S SOJOURN:

SINGAPORE'S LONGEST-SERVING SPEAKER

A surgeon by trade, Dr Yeoh was the first Speaker to date without any legal training. This did not pose any apparent obstacles to his term in Parliament, as his 19 years in the position remains one of the longest tenures of any parliament in the world. Tenacity and consistency seem to be characteristic traits of the late Speaker, as Dr Yeoh was also an elected MP who served the Joo Chiat constituency for 22 years. He also continued to practice medicine, becoming the first Asian Head of the Department of Surgery in the school now known as the National University of Singapore (NUS) School of Medicine. Due to his imposing height, he earned the moniker of “the biggest but fastest Asian surgeon”. He even served as the acting President from November 1970 to January 1971, bridging the transition between Presidents Yusof Ishak and Benjamin Sheares.

During his long tenure as the Speaker of the House, Dr Yeoh was known for being a firm but tactful enforcer of Parliament’s debate rules. He was respected among his colleagues for his patience and steadfast manner, leaving behind a long legacy of towering accomplishments and quiet dignity.



..... ○
Dr Yeoh Ghim Seng, the first Speaker without legal training, in the Speaker's wig and robe.



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