

Deputy Speaker

Why in News?

The Opposition of 18th Lok Sabha is demanding the post of Deputy Speaker in Lok Sabha.

What is the position of Deputy Speaker in India?

- **Origin in India** - The post of Speaker and Deputy Speaker originated in India in 1921 under the provisions of Government of India Act of 1919 (Montague-Chelmsford Reforms).

Sachidanand Sinha was the Deputy Speaker of the central legislative assembly in 1921.

- **Nomenclature** - In 1921, Deputy Speaker was called as Deputy President but the Government of India Act of 1935 changed the nomenclatures of Deputy President to Deputy Speaker.
- However, the old nomenclature continued till 1947 as the federal part of the 1935 Act was not implemented.
- **Constitutional provisions** - **Article 93** states that "The House of the People shall, as soon as may be, choose two members of the House to be respectively Speaker and Deputy Speaker".

Ananthasayanam Ayyangar was the first Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha in independent India.

- **Article 178** of Indian Constitution mentions about the position of Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.
- **Election** - Deputy Speaker is elected by the Lok Sabha itself from amongst its members after the election of the Speaker has taken place.
- The Deputy Speaker is elected once a motion proposing his or her name is carried.
- **Timing of appointment** - The Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha says that the election of Deputy Speaker "shall be held on such date as the Speaker may fix".
- The election usually takes place in the second session, even though there is no bar on having this election in the first session of the new Lok Sabha or Assembly.
- But it is generally not delayed beyond the second session unless there are some genuine and unavoidable constraints.
- **Oath** - While assuming the office of Deputy Speaker, he/ she do not make and

subscribe any separate oath or affirmation.

To know more about **Parliamentary Oath**, Click [here](#)

- **Term** - Once elected, the Deputy Speaker usually continues in office until the dissolution of the House.
- However, he/she may vacate his/ her office earlier in any of the following three cases
 - If he/ she ceases to be a member of the Lok Sabha
 - If he/she resigns by writing to the Speaker; and
 - If he/ she is removed by a resolution passed by a majority of all the then members of the Lok Sabha (i.e., an effective majority). Such a resolution can be moved only after giving 14 days' advance notice.

*Under **Article 94 (and Article 179 for state Assemblies)**, the Deputy Speaker "shall vacate his office if he ceases to be a member of the House of the People".*

- Further, when a resolution for the removal of the Deputy Speaker is under consideration of the House, he/ she cannot preside at the sitting of the house, though he/ she may be present.
- Whenever the office of the Deputy Speaker falls vacant, the Lok Sabha elects another member to fill the vacancy.
- **Remuneration** - **Article 97** says that the salary and allowances are determined by the parliament which also includes sumptuary allowances.
- Thus, the Parliament enacted the Salaries and Allowances of Officers of Parliament Act in 1953.
- Deputy speaker comes under the ambit of 'officers of parliament'.
- They are charged on the consolidated fund of India and thus not subject to the annual vote of parliament.

What are powers and functions of Deputy Speaker?

- **Article 95** of the Indian Constitution mentions about the power of the Deputy Speaker.
- **Relation with speaker** - Deputy Speaker is not subordinate to the Speaker but is directly responsible to the house.
- When the Speaker presides over the House, the Deputy Speaker is like any other ordinary member of the house.
- Speaker can resign from the post by writing to the Deputy Speaker.
- **Presiding power** - According to **Article 95(1)**, the Deputy Speaker performs the duties of the Speaker if the post is vacant or when the latter is absent from the sitting.
- In both the cases, he/ she assumes all the powers of the Speaker.

After the first Speaker, G V Mavalankar, died in 1956 before his term ended, the then Deputy Speaker M Ananthasayanam Ayyangar filled in for the remaining tenure of Lok Sabha from 1956 to 1957.

- **Role during joint sessions** - He/she also presides over the joint sitting of both the houses of parliament, in case the speaker is absent from such a sitting.
- **Voting power** - While presiding over the house, he/she cannot vote in the first instance and can only exercise a casting vote in the case of a tie.
- **Special privileges** - Whenever he / she is appointed as a member of a parliamentary committee, he/ she automatically becomes its chairman.
- Deputy Speaker acts as a chairman of "Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions."
- **Role in IPG** - The Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha is an ex-officio vice-president of Indian Parliamentary Group.

The Indian Parliamentary Group (IPG) is an autonomous body, was formed in the year 1949 in pursuance of a motion adopted by the Constituent Assembly.

What is current position of Deputy Speaker?

- The previous Deputy Speaker was Thambi Durai during the 16th Lok Sabha (2014-19).
- **Vacant** - This constitutional post was vacant during the entire period of 17th Lok Sabha from 2019 to 2024.
- The Opposition had the post of Deputy Speaker continuously from 1990 through 2014.

Usually, the post of Speaker comes from the ruling party (or ruling alliance), the post of Deputy Speaker goes to the opposition party (or opposition alliance) saving some exceptions.

- **Challenges** - The Constitution does not specify a time frame for making the appointments.
- It is this gap in the provision that allows governments to delay or avoid appointing a Deputy Speaker.
- **Way forward** - Constitutional experts have pointed out that both Article 93 and Article 178 use the words "shall" and "as soon as may be" - indicating that not only is the election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker mandatory, it must be held at the earliest.

Reference

[The Indian Express| Demand for the Post of Deputy Speaker in 18th Lok Sabha](#)