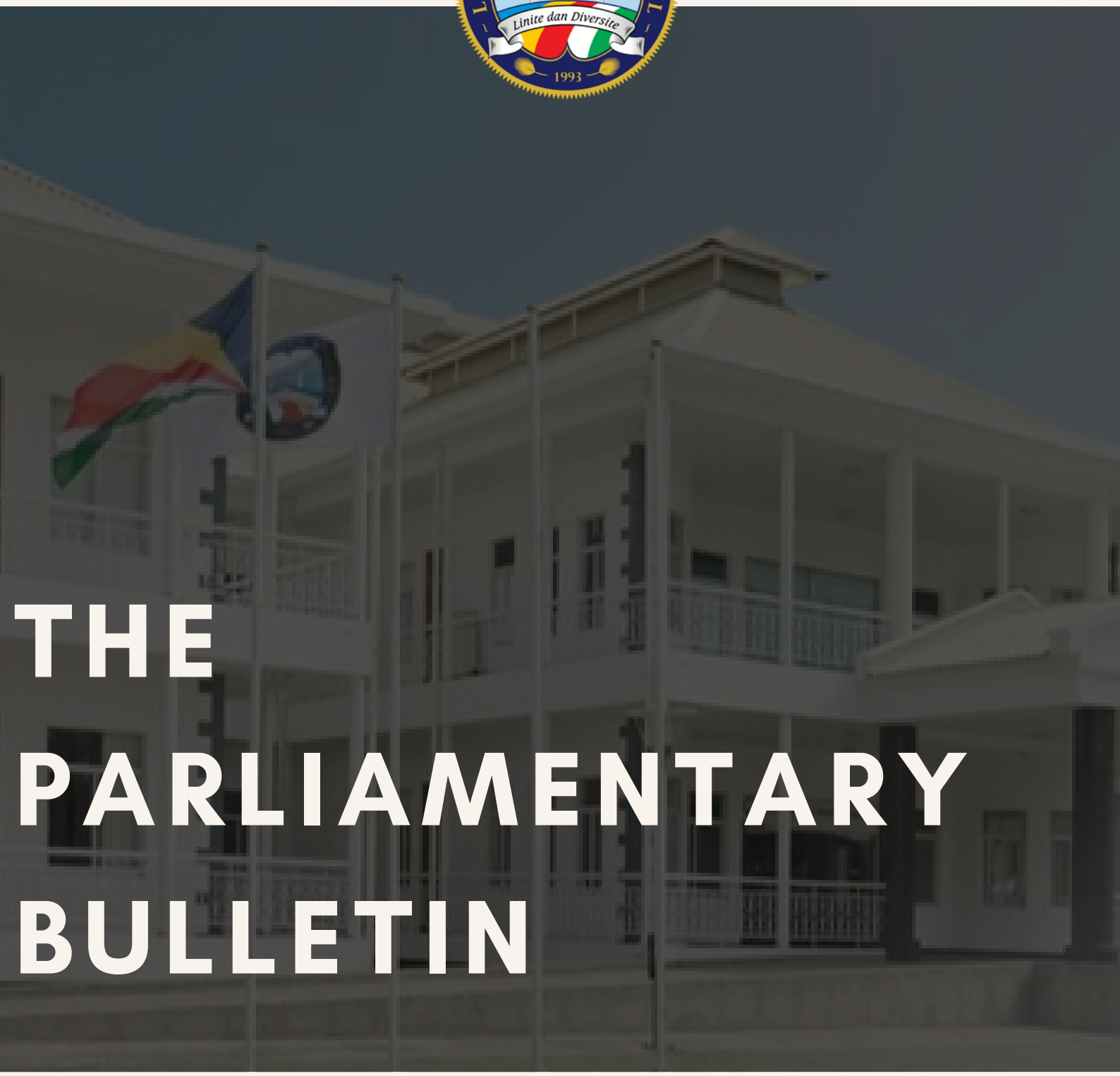


THE PARLIAMENTARY BULLETIN

PARLIAMENTARY AUTONOMY SPECIAL EDITION

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THE PARLIAMENTARY BULLETIN
Special Edition

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Editor's Note

In this edition, we explore the concept of autonomy in depth, examine the legislative efforts currently underway to strengthen it, and situate our national experience within a broader regional context. We also shine a light on the vital role of the Parliamentary Service and consider the future of law-making in an increasingly dynamic and interconnected world.

Through insights from parliamentary leadership, Members, and our administrative professionals, this publication aims to inform, engage, and contribute meaningfully to ongoing discussions on institutional reform and democratic resilience.

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What is Parliamentary Autonomy?

Parliamentary autonomy refers to the ability of a legislature to govern its own affairs independently, free from undue external influence. This encompasses not only the authority to manage its internal procedures, but also control over its administrative structures, staffing, and financial resources.



In modern democratic systems, autonomy is essential to preserving the separation of powers and ensuring that Parliament can effectively hold the Executive to account. Without it, the legislature risks becoming constrained in its operations and diminished in its role as a representative institution.

We will explore the meanings and significance of parliamentary autonomy, placing particular emphasis on its relevance within the national context. It also features reflections from the Honourable Speaker on the importance of strengthening institutional independence as a cornerstone of democratic governance.

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Reflections from the Speaker

Hon. Azarel Ernesta

In practical terms, what does financial and administrative autonomy mean for the day to day functioning of the legislature?

It must be clear from the outset that we have ensured to put in place the appropriate sections in our Act that will ensure that we are compliant with the Constitution and with relevant laws, such as the Public Finance Management Act. Financial Autonomy simply means that we have the powers and the ability to manage our own finances rather than having to depend on an Executive body- the Ministry of Finance. As provided for in our Act, the President as the Constitutional Head of State, shall be the one to whom the Parliamentary Service Commission will submit its budgetary requirements. Once approved, the National Assembly shall then be able to manage its own budget over each financial year.

In practical terms, this represents an ability to decide more strategically on the way forward with our own projects and how we manage our administration. This then ties in well with administrative autonomy, which will provide us with the ability to determine our own administration, once again independently of any Executive body. These practices do not violate our Constitution, but rather enables the Separation of Powers as envisioned within the Constitution. On an operational basis, we are now able to plan and execute more efficiently the administration of Parliament. When it comes to recruitment, we shall be able to manage more efficiently and holistically the staffing of the different offices that are required to serve the Legislature.



“Financial autonomy does not mean that the National Assembly will do as it pleases with public funds.”

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Why is institutional autonomy essential to a healthy system of democratic governance and the separation of powers?

Institutional autonomy does not represent a separation from the public service. This much must be clear. Rather, it represents clear delineation within a public service that comprises of three separate branches of government that each deserve their own enabling legislation. In a healthy democracy, one would seek to provide each branch with the autonomy it requires to allow it to fulfil its roles. Institutional autonomy is an objective that lies within the Constitution itself. The founding fathers of the Constitution provided a solid framework, and it should be our mission to ensure that we enable those provisions.





What have been the most significant challenges (legal, structural, or cultural) in achieving full autonomy?

This is based on purely personal experience. The most significant challenge has been resistance. I remember hearing someone say, *'Where one person is appointed to make a change, fifty persons shall appoint themselves as guardians against that change*'. And that has certainly been the experience. Resistance linked to a mindset that has been informed by years of what I will call 'Executive dominance'. It is a simple (and important) fact that when the term 'Government' is used, what is actually meant is 'the Executive'. The Executive has held the reins for decades. And here I speak solely of government administration and not of partisan politics. For decades it is the Executive that has decided how government is run and it is the Executive that has overseen the operations of all branches of government and of other constitutional/statutory bodies. This era is coming to an end. As our country develops and evolves, the Constitutional requirements set in place decades ago are seeing their day.

This is not a criticism of the Executive but rather simply an observance of how things have developed over decades. It has happened as it has happened, plain and simple. My predecessors no doubt found themselves faced with the same resistance and here I pay tribute to their efforts. They have all contributed to bringing us here.







Looking ahead, what legacy or cultural change would you hope this Bill creates within Parliament and the broader public service?

As I have said, this is now our launching pad. This is where we can start to pave our way forward. At the helm of all this effort is our constitutional objectives. We can now strategically, efficiently and effectively seek to operationalise all our Constitutional roles. We now have a legal framework, a black and white document that we can refer to, to inform our decisions. We have our own enabling legislation that will provide us with the foundation to legally (through regulations) put in place all the fine print required to forge ahead. The work has only just begun.

A Message from the Deputy Speaker

Hon. Egbert Aglae

What specific operational or institutional challenges is this Bill designed to address?

The National Assembly Administrative Bill 2026 seeks to address longstanding institutional challenges relating to the Assembly's administrative and financial independence. While the National Assembly plays a constitutional oversight role over the Executive, it remains dependent on systems and budgetary processes administered by the Executive. The Bill establishes a modern governance framework for the management of parliamentary staff, finances, and operations, while reinforcing the principle of separation of powers. It also responds to the need for a dedicated Parliamentary Service, stronger legislative and budget scrutiny mechanisms, and institutional structures that align with modern parliamentary best practices observed across Commonwealth jurisdictions.



What practical changes will Members, staff, and the public notice once the Bill is implemented?

Members of the National Assembly will benefit from an independent, professional, and non-partisan Parliamentary Service designed to support them in carrying out their constitutional responsibilities, including legislation, representation, and oversight. National Assembly staff will transition under the newly established Parliamentary Service Commission, providing greater clarity regarding employment conditions, administration, and career development. The public will benefit from increased transparency, stronger accountability mechanisms, improved financial reporting, and greater public engagement initiatives aimed at raising awareness of Parliament's role and encouraging citizen participation in parliamentary activities.

Can you describe the process through which this Bill was developed, including consultation and institutional learning?

Throughout its development, consultations were conducted with Members of the National Assembly, the Executive, the Ministry of Finance (due to its budget oversight responsibilities), parliamentary staff, and the Scrutiny of Bills Committee. The Bill also benefited from written submissions received during the White Paper stage from independent institutions. In addition to local consultation, the legislative framework draws upon modern parliamentary practices and institutional models from other Commonwealth jurisdictions, ensuring that the proposed reforms are informed by international best practice while remaining responsive to the Seychellois context.

Once enacted, what are the immediate next steps to ensure the Bill is effectively implemented?

The immediate priority following enactment will be the establishment of the Parliamentary Service Commission, which will serve as the central governance body responsible for administering the new framework. Additional implementation measures include the Parliamentary Budget Office, establishing the Parliamentary Security Unit, appointing a Financial Controller, and developing the regulations necessary to guide the Commission.

> **This Bill before us is the result of work that began at least sixteen years ago.**





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The National Assembly Administrative Bill 2026 represents a landmark step in strengthening parliamentary autonomy and modernising the institution. By establishing administrative and financial independence, creating dedicated parliamentary governance structures, and enhancing oversight, transparency, and accountability mechanisms, the Bill seeks to position the National Assembly as a stronger and more effective pillar of democratic governance. The reforms are the result of years of consultation, analysis, and institutional learning, and are intended to ensure that Parliament is equipped to meet the evolving expectations of the Seychellois people while operating in line with recognised Commonwealth parliamentary standards.



Match the → Provisions!

Can you match each proposed change to its intended purpose?

Establishment of an independent Parliamentary Service	Strengthens scrutiny of government expenditure and supports committee oversight.
Establishment of the Parliamentary Service Commission	Ensures staff can perform their duties without seeking or receiving directions from external authorities.
Creation of the Parliamentary Budget Office	Creates a dedicated professional and non-partisan service to support Members in their constitutional functions.
Operational autonomy for Parliamentary Service	Allows Parliament to manage its own staff, budget and administration independently.

The voice of the Leader of the Opposition

Hon. Bernard Georges

From a constitutional perspective, what is the significance of the NAS Administration Bill?

Constitutions are framework documents into which life must be breathed. On their own they are simply words on a page. In the manner our Constitution is set out, despite the fact that the phrase '*Separation of Powers*' is never mentioned in the text, the separation between Executive, Legislature and Judiciary is nonetheless clear. While the Executive enjoys near absolute power by its size and budget resources, and the Judiciary is revered as a last bastion against anarchy, the Legislature is seen– and has always been seen – by the other Branches as a necessary nuisance. Necessary because of our Legislative role, but a nuisance which takes the time of busy officials with questions and spends time debating motions which have no binding effect. The NAS Administration Bill will reverse this perception and give the Legislature its *raison d'être* as an equal, independent and autonomous Branch of Government, in fact and not only in word.

How does this Bill reinforce core democratic principles such as accountability, transparency, and independence of institutions?

Succeeding administrations have failed to propose a Parliamentary Administration Bill. That is why this Bill seeking financial and administrative autonomy is not a Public Bill, but a Private Member's Bill. It is home-grown, as it needs to be. No authority willingly accepts a diminution of its power, and no institution enjoys being examined by another. That is why Assembly oversight over the other Branches of Government, especially the Executive, is so important, fragile and ephemeral as it is. Up to now, the National Assembly has failed to be an effective check on the Executive. Except for the cohabitation during the 6th Assembly, parliamentary majorities enjoyed by the Executive have meant that nothing but cosmetic adjustments to legislation have been able to be made and, generally speaking, Executive action has been endorsed by the Legislature.



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The NAS Administration Bill presents an opportunity for the Assembly to break away from this norm and evolve into what the framers of the Constitution envisaged, namely an institution exercising effective balance over the enormous power of the other Branches. This alone will enable the Assembly to come into its own and move away from the shadow of the Executive.

> **Independence is rarely granted; it is usually seized. And authority is jealously guarded and retained.**

What potential risks, limitations, or unintended consequences should be carefully considered as Parliament assumes greater autonomy?

The main thing to guard against is complacency and the notion that, with the passage of the Bill, all will automatically change. The Bill is not the destination; it is only the firing of the starting gun. The Executive will still remain powerful and will still be tempted to keep the Assembly weak in order to minimize the effect of oversight. As with the Constitution itself, the notions of autonomy in the Bill will have to be carefully developed and converted from ideas into reality. This can only come with bold leadership in the Offices of the Speaker and Clerk and an acknowledgment that an Assembly works better together rather than one supporting the administration in power and the other opposing it.

The Bill creates an opportunity for the Assembly – perhaps for the first time – to do two things: nurture a sense of pride in its Members and Staff, of belonging to an autonomous and independent institution, and – for Members – a sense of belonging to one institution speaking with one voice. The risk is that the opportunity is missed. That would be tragic.



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How can autonomy strengthen or challenge the Opposition's role in scrutiny and oversight of parliamentary administration?

In too many parliaments, the Opposition is a but voice in the wilderness. It is, for all that, still a voice. Parliamentary autonomy will allow the Opposition to scrutinize and have oversight over the administration of the institution on a par with the parliamentary majority in the sense that the Bill does not distinguish, as other parliamentary business too often does, between the percentages represented in the institution. The Bill will therefore enable the Opposition to play a full role in oversight of the Assembly processes, and to take its rightful place as an integral part of the institution. The challenge for the Opposition is that it may conclude that, being on the inside, it now can rest and go with the flow. Like democracy itself, an Opposition withers unless it constantly works at being a loyal opposition.

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Word Search!

Can you spot the following words?

Administration, Autonomy, Bill, Budget, Culture, Democracy, Evolution, History, Independence, Oversight, Parliament, Reform, Transparency

Reflection:

Which of these words do you believe is most important to building a stronger Parliament and why?

Remarks from the Leader of Government Business

Hon. Sylvanne Lemiel

For many people, the idea of parliamentary autonomy begins with legislation, governance structures, or constitutional principles. But in practical terms, autonomy starts with something much more immediate: the everyday realities of how Parliament functions, how Members work, and how the institution is perceived by the public it serves.

A modern Parliament cannot function effectively without an environment designed to support the demands of contemporary legislative work. This means a Chamber that meets the needs of Members, office spaces conducive to meetings and consultations, committee facilities capable of hosting meaningful engagements, and sufficient working space for the growing body of Parliamentary Service staff who support the institution behind the scenes. It also requires stronger security measures, including health and safety systems that reflect modern standards and expectations. We as a parliament require highly skilled and specialised staff, and more of them! In a best case scenario, the Offices of the Leaders would be fully equipped with a dedicated team of support staff, researchers, legal experts, etc, as seen in much larger and historical legislatures across the globe.

At the heart of parliamentary autonomy lies something less tangible, but equally significant: respect. It can be felt that the Executive looks down on the Legislature; even the Judiciary is more favourably seen, and this is shown in the financial preferences of the national budget. We branches are meant to be on par; that is, equal but very distinctly separated. In reality, our Parliament frequently finds itself overlooked, under-prioritised, and constrained by limited resources. This imbalance is perhaps most visible in national budgeting priorities, where the Legislature is too often among the first institutions to face reductions.



“The National Assembly Administration Bill is therefore seen not as a final solution, but as an important beginning.”

So how do we inspire a true cultural shift? Its not easy. Education is really the key here. Creating lasting change will require a dedication to: strengthening education, public engagement, and transparency. Strengthening public understanding of Parliament’s role is essential if trust and confidence are to grow, and we as Members have an important role to play in this.



Public attitudes towards the institution are often influenced by the conduct of its Members, both inside and outside the chamber. Too frequently, political exchanges become focused on short-term advantage or “political mileage,” rather than constructive debate and national interest, and if we do not actively try and put a stop to this now it will continue to trend in future parliamentary cohorts. Over time, this has contributed to a decline in what many describe as the true parliamentary spirit.



At the end of the day, we could have the most beautiful building and the biggest offices, but if the attitudes of our parliamentarians do not change for the better, then the attitudes of our public towards parliament will never evolve. The responsibility for restoring confidence therefore lies first and foremost with Members themselves.

This same need for modernisation extends to the Assembly's Standing Orders. As parliamentary procedures continue to encounter new realities shaped by technology, evolving communication practices, and changing political dynamics, the rules governing parliamentary conduct must also adapt. Existing gaps within the current Standing Orders can at times allow unparliamentary behaviour to emerge unchecked, undermining both debate and decorum within the chamber.

This Bill represents the beginning of a new era, and we must seize this opportunity for meaningful change. It has now been well over a decade since the original concept and drafting of this Bill first began during the 5th Assembly, and the time has come for us to create history. But this transformation cannot exist only on paper. We as Members must also become active participants in this change, because ultimately, we are the change!

This important moment in our history must be accompanied by a shift in mindset, a new culture of debate, less sensationalised politics within the Chamber, and a renewed respect for our institution as the legislative body of the Republic of Seychelles.

Quick Quiz!

1. The principle that ensures the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary operate independently is called the Separation of **--- ?**
2. One of Parliament's constitutional functions is the **---?** of government.
3. Parliamentarians are elected to provide legislation, oversight and **---?**
4. The Member responsible for maintaining party discipline is the Chief **---?**



Inside the Parliamentary Service

Insights from the Clerk of the National Assembly Mrs. Tania Isaac



Clerk,
Mrs. Tania Isaac

The Parliamentary Service is the administrative and professional backbone of the National Assembly. The Parliamentary Service provides a wide range of support, including procedural advice, committee services, legislative and legal support, research, records management, communications, financial administration, information technology, security, protocol, and public engagement. It ensures that the National Assembly functions effectively on a day-to-day basis and that Members have access to the services and expertise required to make informed decisions. The Act therefore legally establishes the Parliamentary Service as a separate entity, independent from the Civil Service, and emphasises that employees of the Service shall not seek or receive directions from any external source in the performance of their functions.

From an administrative perspective, this is a significant development. It acknowledges the unique role of Parliament as an independent arm of government and provides a framework through which the Parliamentary Service can focus exclusively on supporting the constitutional mandate of the National Assembly. The ultimate objective is to ensure that Parliament has the institutional capacity, expertise, and resources necessary to legislate effectively, hold the Executive accountable, and serve the people of Seychelles.

The National Assembly Administration Act, 2026 recognises that an effective Parliament requires more than elected representatives; it also requires a professional, competent, and non-partisan administration that can support parliamentary work at the highest level.





What structural or administrative changes does this Bill introduce to strengthen the parliamentary Service?

At the centre of the valuable reforms of the National Assembly Administration Act, 2026 is the establishment of an independent Parliamentary Service and a Parliamentary Service Commission. The Commission will serve as the governing body responsible for overseeing the administration of Parliament, including staffing, organisational development, strategic planning, and the provision of services and facilities required for the effective functioning of the National Assembly.

The Act also creates a dedicated legal framework for the management of parliamentary staff through the introduction of a Parliamentary Scheme of Service. This provides a foundation for recruitment, career progression, training, discipline, staff welfare, and other employment matters that reflect the specialized nature of parliamentary work. This means that the Parliamentary Service will be governed by its own Service Order which is similar to the Public Service Order.

A separate Appropriation Bill will emphasize that the Parliamentary Service will no longer be seen as an extension of the Executive and categorized as an "MDA" but will be recognised as a separate and independent institution. This balance between autonomy and accountability is essential to good governance and ensure that it can manage its budget without pressure or interference.



The Act further clarifies the roles and responsibilities of key parliamentary offices, including the Speaker, the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk, parliamentary leaders and other institutional actors. The position of Clerk and Deputy Clerk are legally recognised, and their tenure clearly outlines in terms of their appointments and responsibilities. Taken together, these reforms represent a major step towards aligning the National Assembly with best international practices and strengthening its capacity as an independent and effective democratic institution.



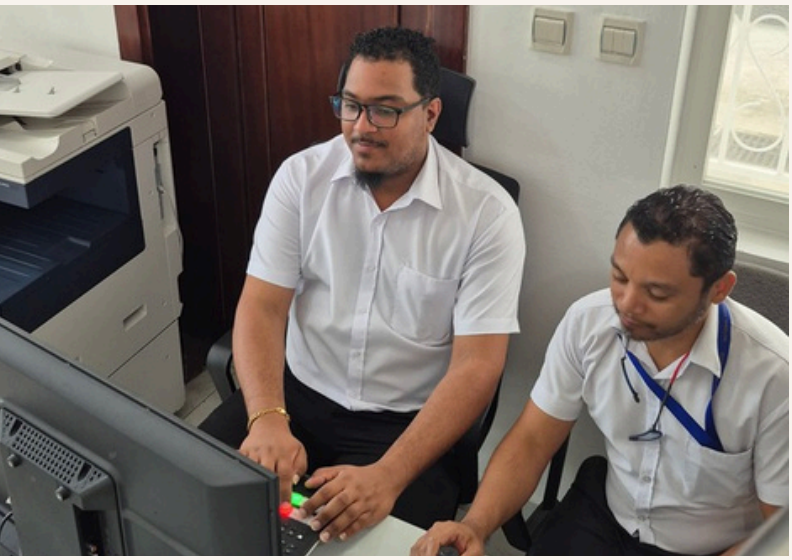
How will parliamentary autonomy change the way staff work, both operationally and professionally?

For staff, parliamentary autonomy represents one of the most important institutional developments in the evolution of the National Assembly Administration. The Parliamentary Service will have greater flexibility to develop policies, procedures, systems, and organisational structures that reflect the unique needs of the National Assembly. The establishment of the Parliamentary Service Commission and the Parliamentary Scheme of Service provides an opportunity to build a more specialised parliamentary administration. Parliamentary work requires expertise that goes beyond traditional public administration.





Parliamentary work requires expertise that goes beyond traditional public administration. Staff are expected to understand legislative processes, parliamentary procedure, committee operations, financial scrutiny, public engagement, parliamentary diplomacy, and institutional governance. The Act recognises these specialised requirements and creates a framework for developing and retaining this expertise. Professionally, the Act reinforces the values that are fundamental to parliamentary administration, namely impartiality, integrity, professionalism, accountability, innovation and efficiency. The legislation makes it clear that parliamentary staff serve the institution and not any political interest. This principle is essential in maintaining public confidence in the National Assembly and ensuring that all Members receive fair and professional support regardless of political affiliation.





Ultimately, parliamentary autonomy is not simply about administrative independence. It is about strengthening the National Assembly as an institution and ensuring that it has the capacity to fulfil its constitutional responsibilities effectively. For staff, it presents an opportunity to contribute to the development of a modern, professional, and resilient Parliamentary Service that supports democratic governance and serves the people of Seychelles with distinction.

As someone who has witnessed the evolution of the National Assembly over the years, and who has long hoped to see this Bill become a reality, this moment is truly powerful and deeply meaningful. The assent to the National Assembly Administration Act is not just a legislative achievement, but the realisation of a long-held aspiration for a stronger, more independent, and more resilient institution. It is a moment filled with pride, reflection, and gratitude.

I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Speaker for her leadership in spearheading this initiative, all staff, management, and parliamentary leaders whose dedication, perseverance, and belief in this process have brought us to this milestone.



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Insights from the Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly Ms. Alexandria Faure

How do you see the introduction of the NAS Administration Bill influencing your role, responsibilities, or the way you contribute to the work of the National Assembly?

One important aspect of the Bill is the crucial formalization of the appointment of the Clerk and Deputy Clerk and the terms of service, which will ensure the independence of these two offices both operationally and politically. The Bill not only empowers the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to contribute more extensively to the Parliament's core mandate but also enshrines the specialized and procedural niche aspects of the role which is often overlooked. I definitely believe that this Bill is innovative and places an enhanced responsibility on the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Parliamentary Service staff to ensure we continue working ethically as an institution, with more robust internal frameworks and mechanisms.



**Deputy Clerk,
Ms. Alexandria Faure**

In addition to that, the creation of the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) will provide the Service with strong technical resources and parliamentary committees with detailed financial scrutiny. I don't see my role as changing per say but rather transforming into a key executive and parliamentary specialized one within the Service. This is indeed quite an exciting time for our Parliament.

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How can an autonomous Parliament better engage citizens and strengthen public trust in the legislative process?

The National Assembly has a key role to play in promoting and advancing good governance and democracy, both of which are fundamental towards Seychelles achieving its goals as a country. Autonomous Parliaments can be great models of transparency, inclusivity and responsiveness through the introduction of specialised services, as it can independently lead on its strategic objectives and public outreach as an institution. Public Engagement is key and many parliaments have specialised services relating to petitions, legislative drafting and innovative public outreach activities. This includes introducing innovative projects, software, and concepts that can be introduced to engage different segments of society, without being tied towards executive led practices.

> **Autonomous Parliaments can be great models of transparency, inclusivity and responsiveness through the introduction of specialized services, as it can independently lead on its strategic objectives and public outreach as an institution.**

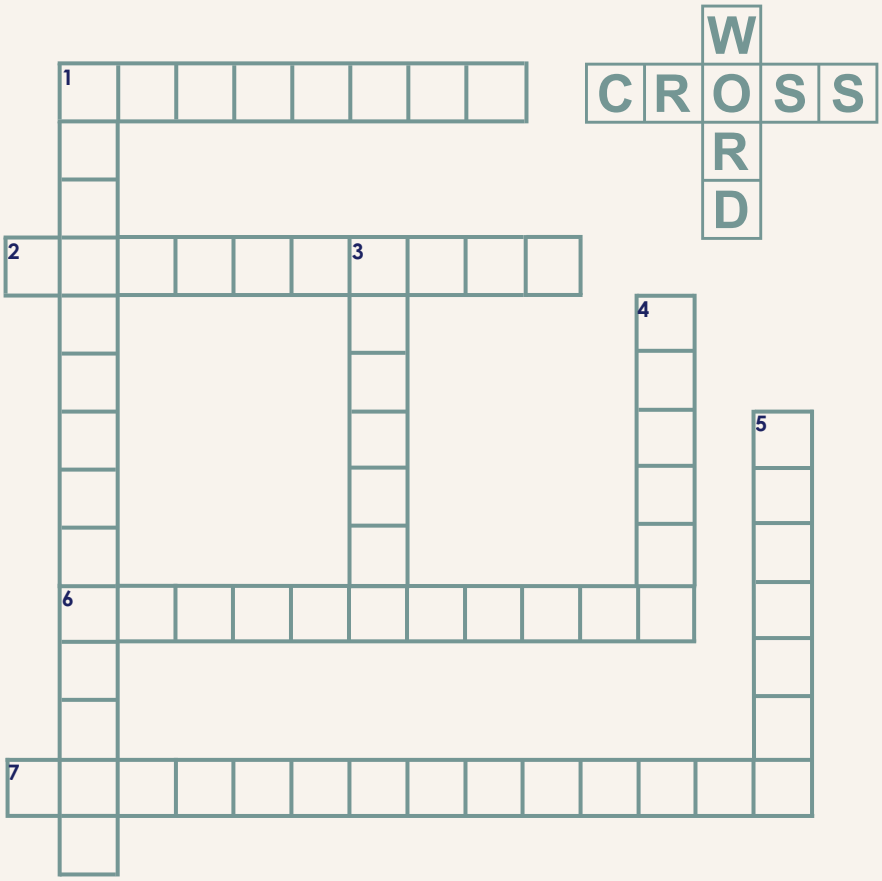




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How will parliamentary autonomy change the way staff work, both operationally and professionally?

The Bill is entrenching and providing a legal cadre to allow for the independence of the Parliamentary Service as a non-partisan and impartial administrative body within Parliament. An impartial, efficient and non-partisan Parliamentary Service is the backbone of a Parliament and ensures its success and instutitional development. The Bill also provides clarity in regards to the differentiation betwenn non-partisan staff and partisan staff within the service. It's important to note that while parliamentary staff are civil servants, as in we work in the public interest, the Bill formalises our role as independent from the public service in the executive and recruited by the parliamentary service.



Across:

1. The principle that allows Parliament to manage its own affairs independently. **(8)**
2. The proposed body responsible for overseeing the Parliamentary Service. **(10)**
6. Free from external control or influence. **(11)**
7. The rules governing parliamentary proceedings. **(14)**

Down:

1. The fundamental principle of of good governance. **(14)**
3. Provides impartial professional support to Members. **(7)**
4. Determines how financial resources are allocated. **(6)**
5. Formal proposals from Members considered by Parliament. **(7)**

Comparisons of Parliamentary Autonomy

Parliamentary autonomy is not unique to any one country; it is a shared aspiration across democratic systems worldwide. However, the extent to which it is realised varies significantly depending on constitutional arrangements, legal frameworks, and institutional practices.

Autonomy is an important aspect of democratic institutionalism as it ensures that Parliament is self-administered, and thus may function without the interference of the Executive. Having dedicated administrations separate from the Executive also allows Parliaments to run more efficiently as they are regulated according to the unique circumstances and needs of Parliamentary work.

Notably, throughout the African continent, establishing administrative autonomy is typically achieved through a dedicated Parliamentary Service Act (PSA). The following list provides key examples:

1. **Ghana** - Parliamentary Service Act, 1993
2. **Uganda**- Administration of Parliament Act, 1997
3. **Tanzania**- National Assembly Administration Act, 2008
4. **Zambia**- Parliamentary Service Act, 2016
5. **Kenya**- Parliamentary Service Act, commenced in 2019

This shows that regionally, a modern approach taken to establishing Administrative Autonomy is through a dedicated Act.





There are different approaches to Administrative Autonomy across parliaments globally, dependent on constitutional frameworks and sociocultural development.

Parliamentary Self-Administration	• Employs its own parliamentary Service and controls recruitment, disciplinary procedures, etc. • Manages all internal services.	*Comparative studies show this model to provide the strongest independence thus, protection against executive influence; but this model requires reliable and effective internal governance and transparency mechanisms*
Hybrid Administration	• Parliament controls daily administration • Staff are governed by parliament-specific rules, aligned with broader public services norms and regulations	*The legal frameworks in these cases are highly context specific. There are often overlaps and/or alignment with civil service frameworks for the purpose of government.*
Executuve-Dependent Administration	• Parliamentary Staff are part of the executive civil service • Administrative rules and norms are set by the executive	*This undermines institutional capacity and oversight, making parliaments vulnerable to political pressure and influence from the executive.*

When Administrative Autonomy is established, Budgetary Autonomy should also be established as a vital mechanism of independence. In systems with budgetary autonomy, the most basic form of control is the parliament's right to propose its own budget. Importantly however, budgetary independence always requires some involvement of the executive as the parliamentary budget still falls under the government expenditure of the state.

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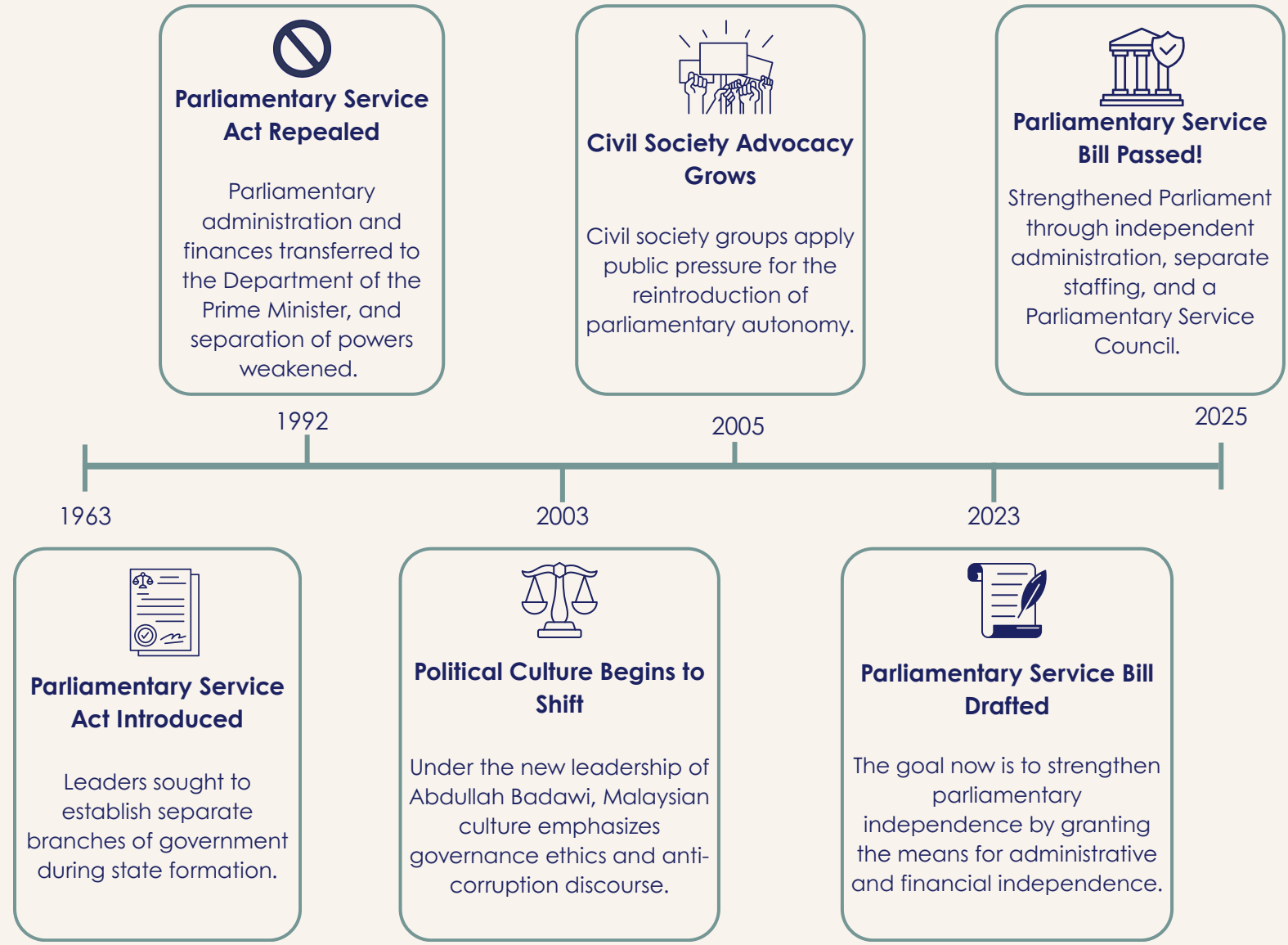




Individual cases will show varying levels of autonomous control depending on the countries' budgetary framework and norms

Parliamentary Independence on Budget Procedures	• Parliament has complete control over their own budget: they independently determine, manage and execute their own institutional budget without Executive interference. • Subjected only to audit and legislative approval	*This model permits a greater extent of financial independence; allowing the parliament to freely govern their own affairs and advancements without executive posing barriers. However, this model requires the highest level of transparency and accountability to ensure that it is managed ethically and responsibly.*
Negotiated Budget Model	• Parliament determines the budget in consultation with the executive.	*An example of this system can be found in the Parliament of Zambia.*
Executive-Controlled Parliamentary Budgets	• The Executive determines the budget of the parliament without any consultation.	*This limits parliamentary processes as the Parliament is restricted in their activities, undermining the institution's ability to uphold democracy values and principles.*

A case study on Malaysia: The Return of Parliamentary Autonomy



Parliamentary autonomy can evolve over decades and depends heavily on political will, democratic culture, and public demand for accountability. For Seychelles, the Malaysian experience highlights that parliamentary autonomy is not only achieved through legislation, but also depends on sustained political will, institutional strengthening, and a continued commitment to democratic governance and the separation of powers.

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Build a Parliament!

The National Assembly has received funding to modernise and strengthen its operations. However, resources are limited. Are you up to the challenge?



You have 60 Parliamentary Points to spend.



Review the options and decide how you would build a stronger Parliament!



There are no right or wrong answers. Every choice reflects different priorities and challenges.

Reform Area	Why it matters	Cost
Parliamentary Budget Office	Strengthens financial scrutiny.	20
Research Department Expansion	Provides Members with policy expertise.	10
Parliamentary Police	Enhances security for the precinct.	15
Cybersecurity and IT	Protects information and digital infrastructure.	20
Public Outreach Programmes	Strengthens civic education and public participation.	15
Additional Committee Rooms	Creates space for engagements.	15
Member Support Offices	Provides administrative support.	10
Staff Training and Development	Builds a professional and highly skilled Parliamentary Service.	15
Legislative Drafting Unit	Strengthens capacity to review and develop legislation.	20
Digital Broadcasting Systems	Improves transparency and public access.	15

What does your parliament look like?

Once you've allocated your 60 points, identify the category that best matches your choice.

The Oversight Parliament: You invested in research, budgeting and legislative expertise, with a priority on holding the Executive accountable through evidence-based decisions.

The People's Parliament: You prioritised outreach and public engagement, with a priority on bringing parliament closer to its citizens.

The Institutional Parliament: You focused on staff facilities and administration, with a priority on building a sustainable workforce.

The Secure Parliament: You invested in physical and digital security, with a priority on protecting Parliament in an increasingly complex world.

A case study on South Africa: Constitutional Independence and Ongoing Reform

Apartheid-era governance

The Parliamentary Services Act was established, providing limited autonomy within the administrative structures.

1974

The introduction of Democracy

The first democratic Parliament is established after the abolishment of Apartheid.

1994

Adoption of the Constitution

Parliament is established as a separate branch of government. Institutional separation now exists, but administrative and financial dependence on the Executive remains.

1996

Financial Management of Parliament Act (FMPA)

Parliament now gains authority over budgetary management, financial controls, and independent oversight on assets and liabilities.

2009

Strengthened institutional independence

The Constitutional Courts reinforced the duty of the Legislative to independently hold the Executive accountable.

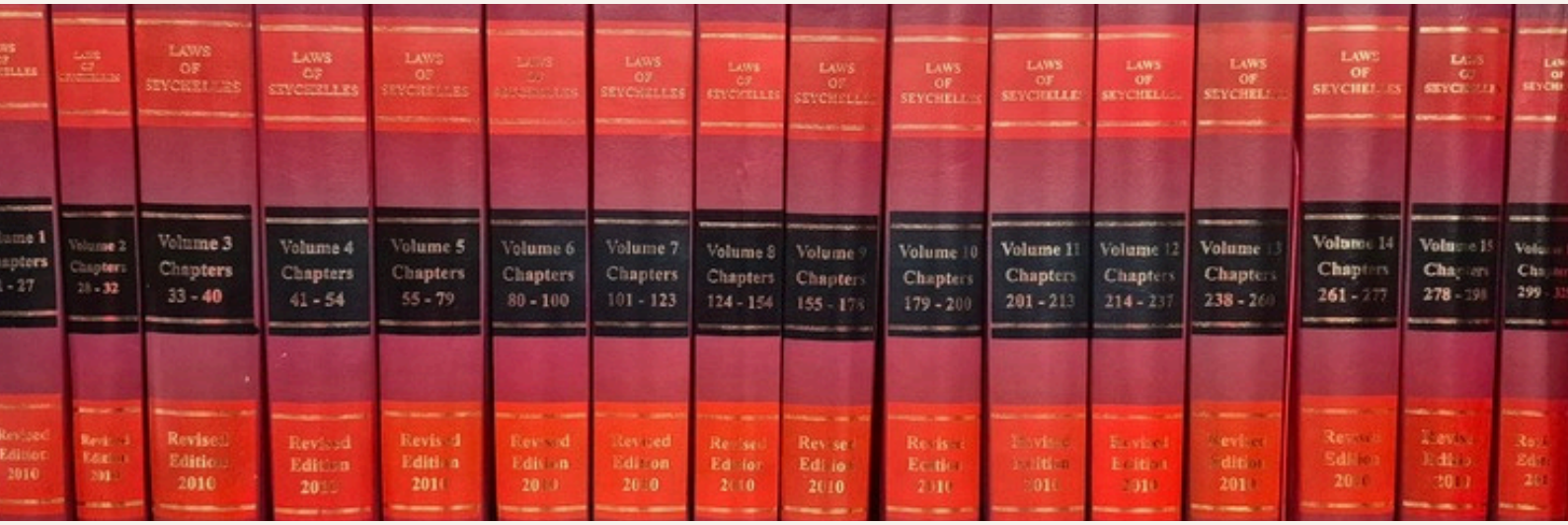
2016

Despite reforms and strengthened independence norms, the Executive continues to define sectoral budgets in this current day and age. Many outdated frameworks remain in place, and the political will to reform such systems remains slow. This demonstrates that formalized parliamentary autonomy in law does not always equal autonomy in practice, and a Bill is not an automatic solution for change.

Strong constitutional protections still require continuous reform, institutional support, and political commitment to function effectively.

These case studies provide insight into how parliamentary autonomy develops in different contexts and demonstrate that the establishment, sustainability, and effectiveness of such autonomy are deeply influenced by political history, processes of state formation and the role civil society and other institutional actors. The separation of powers is often stabilized over time based on a nation's unique democratic evolution.

There is no singularly "correct" approach to parliamentary autonomy, but these comparisons provide comparative bases on how separation of powers has been achieved in developing democracies, how they can be challenged, and how challenges can be mitigated.



For Seychelles, the pursuit of parliamentary autonomy represents an important step in strengthening democratic governance, institutional independence, and public accountability within the country's unique national context as a small island developing state. The experiences of other democracies demonstrate that lasting parliamentary independence also depends on a broader cultural and institutional shift in how the role of Parliament, oversight, and separation of powers are understood and valued across society.

As Seychelles advances toward greater parliamentary autonomy, continued commitment from institutions, leaders, civil society, and the public will be necessary to ensure that the principles underpinning the legislation are fully realised in practice over time.

Insights on the Future of Parliament

From the Parliamentary Service



Legal & Legislative Officer,
Mrs. Shanira Jean-Baptiste

One key improvement I would like to see arising from the NAS Administration Bill is a stronger emphasis on staff capacity building. In particular, the NAS should invest more in the continuous education and professional development of its staff through opportunities such as further studies, short courses, and regular refresher training. Strengthening staff skills and expertise will not only enhance individual performance but also contribute to a more efficient, informed and autonomous institution.

Providing a dedicated online space for public engagement and involvement in the legislative process can be a good place to start! Autonomy, both financial and administrative will provide a clear way forward through increased funds to implement public awareness and sensitisation on the public's role in the process; and ease the recruitment of personnel experienced in outreach and engagement, especially in governance, politics and public relations. With better education and understanding of their role in shaping legislation, through autonomy, the public's trust in the legislative branch and willingness to participate in the process should increase and give the country's future laws greater substance.



Research Officer,
Ms. Emma Didon

An autonomous Parliament can truly come alive for citizens when it opens its doors with warmth, clarity, and a genuine invitation to participate. When people understand how Parliament works, through plain language, real stories, and open conversations, they can see themselves in the democratic process and feel confident that their voices matter. An autonomous parliament should create the spaces for regular engagement with the public, through educational initiatives, community dialogues, and partnerships with key stakeholders. The more open Parliament is about its work, the more confidence citizens are likely to place in the institution, and thus the more effective legislation and representation becomes.



Public Relations and Protocol Manager, Ms. Angelique Hill



IT Manager,
Mr. Vincent Quatre

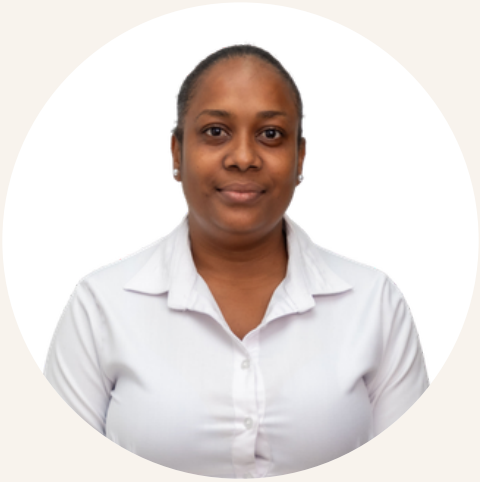
The Bill raises the profile of IT within the National Assembly, putting it at the center of how the organization runs making sure systems are secure, work is efficient, and everything functions properly. With autonomy, IT is in a stronger position to build the internal capabilities to suit the needs of the Assembly. This includes establishing dedicated services such as hosting our own website, handling hardware repairs internally, and strengthening our cybersecurity function. Bringing these services in-house will improve control, responsiveness, and overall resilience. This creates a stronger link between technology and the core work of the Assembly, enabling IT to play a more direct role in improving how the institution operates and delivers on its mandate.



Information Centre Manager, Ms. Thelma Joseph

With greater administrative independence, the National Assembly can invest more strategically in its Parliamentary Education and Information office services, including the modernization of parliamentary information systems, digitisation of records, and the expansion of outreach and civic education programmes. Improved access to timely, accurate, and user-friendly parliamentary information empowers citizens to better understand legislative processes and decisions, thereby fostering trust. Autonomy also allows for closer collaboration with schools, civil society, and the media through structured educational visits, publications, and digital platforms that explain the work of Parliament.

The National Assembly Administration Act 2026 is a historic milestone for Seychelles' democracy, promising stronger parliamentary independence and better working conditions for staff. I hope it will empower the Secretariat staff and Members to serve more effectively, and create a more transparent framework for managing resources, staff, and procedures, which could motivate employees by giving them clearer career paths and fairer working conditions.



Personal Assistant to the Leader of the Opposition, Ms. Gerda Panagary

I believe that the National Assembly Administration Act is going to strengthen the autonomy of parliament by clarifying its administrative independence, which is a positive step for democratic governance. At the same time, I hope it improves the working conditions and professionalism of the parliamentary service, since a well-supported staff is essential. My hope is that all staff are equally included in the changes brought by the National Assembly Administration Act, and that this spirit of encouragement and devotion continues to be fostered across the Parliamentary Service.



Assistant Hansard Reporter,
Mrs. Donatienne Chetty



Senior Housekeeper,
Ms. Celine Bonne

I welcome the new National Assembly Administration Act. I believe it is an important step in strengthening the autonomy and independence of Parliament, while also giving more attention to the people who work behind the scenes every day. I hope this Act will further recognise the important role every employee plays in keeping the National Assembly functioning.

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Special Edition



The National Assembly Administration Act demonstrates a clear commitment to improving governance processes, enhancing transparency, and ensuring more effective service delivery.

Private Secretary to the Leader of Government Business, Ms. Charlotte Beauchamp

The National Assembly Administration Act will create the conditions for more efficient operations, and will allow for more control over the ways in which our security team functions. As parliamentary security is an ever-evolving unit, this Bill will facilitate the needs of our team in matching the high-calibre requirements of Parliament.



Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, Mr. Daniel Rene

A Moment of Reflection

Parliamentary autonomy marks the beginning of a new chapter, but every new chapter is shaped by the people who bring it to life. As Seychelles embarks on this journey, what role can each of us play in fostering a culture of independence, accountability, and service to the nation?

Closing Reflections

Parliamentary autonomy is more than a structural reform; it is a defining feature of a mature and effective democracy. As highlighted throughout this special edition, the journey towards greater independence is both strategic and necessary, ensuring that the National Assembly is fully equipped to carry out its constitutional mandate with authority and integrity. The National Assembly Administration Bill represents a pivotal step in this direction. By strengthening administrative, financial, and institutional frameworks, it lays the foundation for a more resilient, responsive, and professional legislature: one that is better positioned to serve the people and uphold democratic principles.

We are pleased to announce our upcoming Anniversary of Parliament and concurrent launch of the Administration Act, set for Thursday July 30 2026. Additionally, we eagerly anticipate our first celebration of Parliamentary Service Week, which will commence on Monday, July 27, 2026. Stay tuned!

Readers are invited to download and read the relevant legislation here:
Act 8 of 2026 - National Assembly Administration Act, 2026

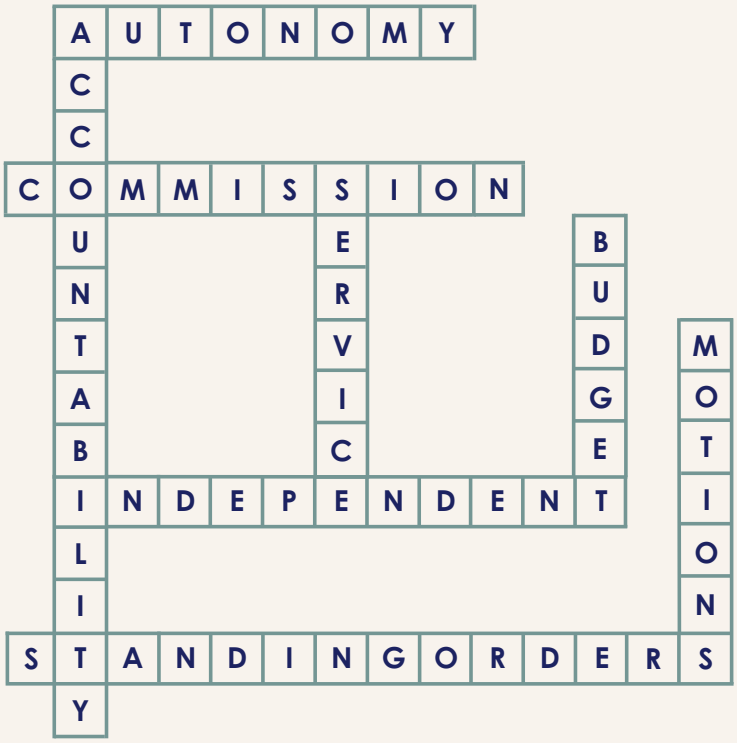
Watch back the debates on the *National Assembly Administration Bill, 2026,* here!



Answer Key

Now it's time to see how you did! The answer key can be found below for you to check your responses and discover more about the principles that help shape a strong and independent Parliament.





Quick Quiz!

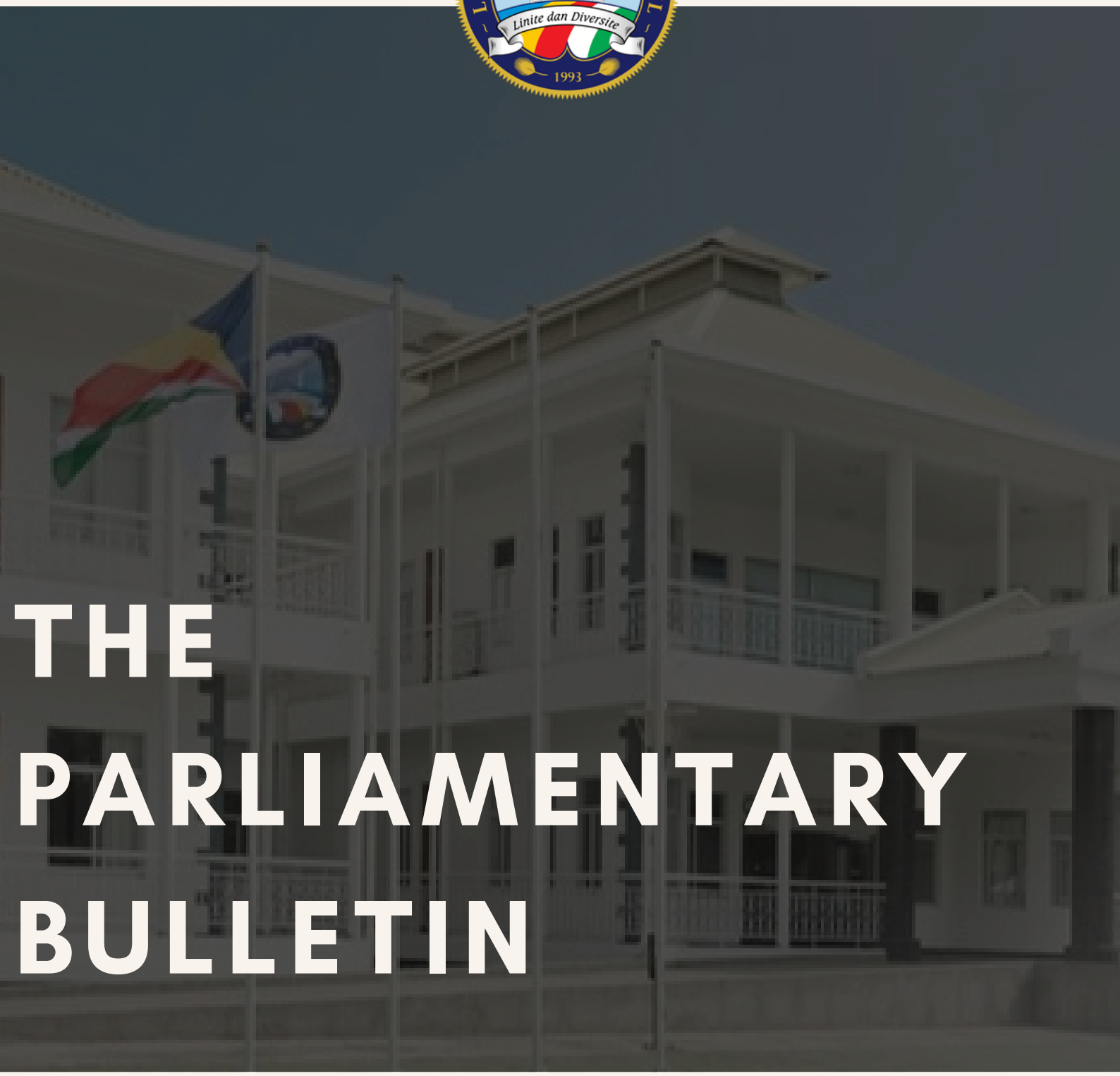
1. Separation of **Powers**
2. **Oversight** of government
3. Legislation, Oversight and **Representation**
4. Chief **Whip**

Match the → Provisions!

Establishment of an independent Parliamentary Service	Strengthens scrutiny of government expenditure and supports committee oversight.
Establishment of the Parliamentary Service Commission	Ensures staff can perform their duties without seeking or receiving directions from external authorities.
Creation of the Parliamentary Budget Office	Creates a dedicated professional and non-partisan service to support Members in their constitutional functions.
Operational autonomy for Parliamentary Service	Allows Parliament to manage its own staff, budget and administration independently.

Thank you for taking part in our interactive activities throughout this Special Edition!

We hope these puzzles and quizzes have provided an engaging way to explore some of the key concepts behind parliamentary autonomy, good governance, and the National Assembly Administration Bill.



THE PARLIAMENTARY BULLETIN

PARLIAMENTARY AUTONOMY SPECIAL EDITION

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