

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION;-

The Leader of the Opposition is sometimes referred to as the Shadow Leader of the House.

He/She is the obverse of the Leader of the House. He/She holds an office, which arose, out of practice but has no official functions either according to Legislation or to the rules of the House. His/her duties include arrangement of the business programme in consultation with the Leader of the House and the whips.

The Leader of the Opposition is the principal leader of the minority caucus responsible for developing the minority position, negotiating with the majority party, directing minority caucus activities on the Chamber floor and leading debate for the minority.

He/She also leads the Opposition in executing, its duty to limit the extremity of the Government's action, to arouse public criticism of any dangerous policy and to make the Government behave reasonably.

He/She controls the opposition whips, accepts responsibility for the course of negotiation about business with the Government, arranges subjects for debate, watches for encroachments on the rights of minorities and he/she demands debates when the Government is trying to slide away without Parliamentary criticism.

He/She also arranges for more competent speakers to reply to the Ministers.

He/She must be well versed with all the tricks of skilled Parliamentarians and all the opportunities of the rules of the House.

Generally, the Leader of the Opposition remains free from specific departmental responsibilities, and serves as "coordinator in Chief" of the front - bench team, taking the broad view of policy and strategy as a whole, and acting as the "supreme generalist" in a team of specialists. He/She however, receives more news coverage than his/her colleagues do. He/She may encourage specialization among his/her colleagues. His/Her position is enhanced as the chief figure in opposition capable of taking the broad non - departmental view of policy.

In a Parliamentary situation where there are a number of evenly balanced parties there could be confusion over which party is the largest out-of-office party and is entitled to provide the Leader of opposition.

However, in the event of such confusion the Presiding Officer should determine which is the largest of out-of-office party and if necessary, who the Leader of the Party is and he/she makes an appointment.

The appointed leader is allocated a special place on the front bench on the Opposition of the House.