

How the Malaysian Parliament Works: A Guide for High School Students

What is Parliament?

Imagine Malaysia is a giant school. Parliament is like the **student council for the whole country** - but with much bigger responsibilities! It's where laws are made, taxes are decided, and the government is held accountable.

The Two Houses of Parliament

Malaysia has a **bicameral** (two-house) system:

1. Dewan Rakyat (House of Representatives)

- **The People's House** - most powerful
- **222 Members of Parliament (MPs)**
- **Elected by citizens** aged 18+ in general elections
- **Forms the Government:** Party with >111 seats wins
- **Main jobs:** Make laws, approve budget, check government work

2. Dewan Negara (House of Senate)

- **The Review House** - less powerful
- **70 Senators**
- **Not elected by public:** 26 from state assemblies, 44 appointed by King
- **Main jobs:** Review laws from Dewan Rakyat, provide expert advice

How Laws Are Made

1. **First Reading:** Bill introduced
2. **Second Reading:** Main debate
3. **Committee Stage:** Detailed review
4. **Third Reading:** Final vote
5. **Senate Review:** Dewan Negara examines
6. **Royal Assent:** King signs into law
7. **Publication:** Becomes official law

Key Players

- **Yang di-Pertuan Agong:** Constitutional Monarch
- **Prime Minister:** Head of Government
- **Speaker:** Parliamentary referee
- **Opposition Leader:** Head of main opposition party

Why It Matters

Parliament ensures:

- **Your voice is heard** through your MP
- **Government is accountable**
- **Laws are properly debated**
- **Tax money is properly spent**