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**REPORT ON  
THE PARTICIPATION OF  
CPA ASSAM STATE BRANCH (INDIA REGION) DELEGATION  
AT THE  
65TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION  
CONFERENCE IN  
HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA**

**20 -26 AUGUST, 2022**



**ASSAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT  
Dispur, Guwahati-781006**

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## **COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION**

1. Sri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker
2. Dr Numal Momin, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker

### **Officials: -**

1. Sri Hemen Das, Principal Secretary (participated as the Member of the Society of the Clerks-at the-Table, CPA )
2. Smti Deergha Baruah, Deputy Secretary, I/C, CPA Cell and Coordinator
3. Sri Sauman Baruah, OSD to the Speaker

## **Preface**

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is one of the oldest International Associations of the Parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth countries founded in the year of 1911. The CPA consists of over 180 Legislatures from across the globe, divided into 9 (Nine) geographic regions of the Commonwealth.

2. The aim of the Association is to deepen the Commonwealth's pledge to the highest standards of democratic governance and parliamentary practice.

3. The CPA Annual Conference offers the prospect for the Parliamentarians and Parliamentary Staff to pool resources on matters of common significance and to share high-quality observations. It also provides scope for in-depth deliberation on critical issues facing today's Parliaments.

4. A delegation of CPA Assam State Branch, Assam Legislative Assembly, led by Sri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, attended the 65<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada from 20<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2022.

5. The report aims to bring out the details of the participation of the CPA Assam State Branch (India Region) at the 65<sup>th</sup> CPA Conference and also about the observations during the post conference study tour to the United States of America, Norway and the United Kingdom.

6. I hope the information contained in the report will be useful for the Hon'ble Members.

Dispur:  
Dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2022

(HemenDas)  
Principal Secretary,  
Assam Legislative Assembly  
&  
Secretary, Assam State CPA Branch  
(India Region)



## **REPORT CHAPTER – I**

65<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada  
20 – 26 August, 2022

### **1. Introduction –**

The CPA was established in the year 1911 as the Empire Parliamentary Association and its affairs were governed by the United Kingdom Branch. Growing with the Commonwealth, the CPA in 1948 embraced its current form of nomenclature, name, changed rules to facilitate all member Branches to partake in the Association's administration, and established a separate Secretariat to manage its affairs. The CPA is an International Association of Commonwealth Parliamentarians who, irrespective of gender, race, religion or culture, is integrated by commonalities of interest, respect for the rule of law including individual rights and freedoms, and by pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy. International political issues and developments in the parliamentary system are analyzed in conference debates among leading Parliamentarians representing Parliaments and Legislatures throughout the Commonwealth.

These plenary conferences were biennial from 1948 to 1959 and annual since 1961. A summary of the main views expressed in conference debates is sent to Members, Commonwealth governments and international agencies. The conference period also encompasses meetings of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, Small Branches Members, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) and Parliamentary Clerks and Secretaries.

The CPA is governed by a Constitution adopted in 1993. The General Assembly is the decisive authority of the CPA. The Executive Committee usually meets twice a year and is made up of CPA Officers and Regional Representatives. It is indeed a matter of pride for the CPA Assam State Branch (India Region) that Sri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly is one of the Executive Committee Members of the CPA.

## **The 65<sup>th</sup> CPC –**

The 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) was hosted by the CPA Canada Region at the Halifax Convention Centre, Halifax with the theme **‘Inclusive, Accessible, Accountable and Strong Parliaments: the Cornerstone of Democracy and Essential for Development’**.

During the 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, there were a number of additional conferences and meetings–

- 38th CPA Small Branches Conference;
- 7th triennial Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference;
- 65th CPA General Assembly;
- Meetings of the CPA Executive Committee;
- CPA Executive Sub - Committee Meetings ;and
- The Society of Clerks at the Table (SOCATT) meetings.

The 2022 annual conference also held following important elections for new terms of office for the following posts of:

- The Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee;
- The Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians;
- The Chairperson of the CPA Small Branches; and
- The CPA Treasurer.

## **Meeting of the CPA Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) met ahead of the 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

The CPA Executive Committee represents the nine regions of the CPA- Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic; India; Pacific; South East Asia.

The CPA Executive Committee is currently chaired by Acting Chairperson, Hon. Ian Liddell-Grainger, MP (United Kingdom). In the words of the Acting Chairperson: “The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) provides a unique platform for



**With the Chairperson, CPA at  
Halifax, Canada**

inter-parliamentary dialogue to take place. The CPA’s membership comprises the national, state, provincial and territorial Parliaments of the Commonwealth. The diverse nature of the membership provides the CPA with a unique position within the parliamentary community to offer a comprehensive perspective on how to strengthen parliamentary democracy across the Commonwealth and to discuss new and innovative approaches on how to do so. The 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference is the most prominent

event in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association’s calendar, as it offers a unique opportunity for the representatives of the Association’s 180 Member Parliaments and Legislatures to network with colleagues from other jurisdictions and discuss common issues of concern which affect Commonwealth Parliaments.”



*Group Photo of Executive Committee, CPA at Halifax, Canada.*

It is a matter of immense pride for India Region that the election for the post of Treasurer of the CPA Executive Committee was won by Sri Anurag Sharma, Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha. Members endorsed the appointment of **Hon. Shri Anurag Sharma, MP** as **the new CPA Treasurer..**

The 65th CPA General Assembly was followed by a meeting of the **new CPA Executive Committee** during which **Hon. Osei Kyei Mensah Bonsu, MP**, Majority Leader and Member of the Parliament of Ghana was confirmed for the position of **Vice-Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee.**

### **CPA Small Branches**

Commonwealth Parliamentarians focus on the resilience and preparedness of the smallest jurisdictions across the Commonwealth at 38th CPA Small Branches Conference. Commonwealth Parliamentarians have examined the unique challenges facing the CPA's smallest Legislatures through key thematic workshops and development activities to share knowledge and cooperation across the network.

### **Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP)**

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians aim to 'break the bias' to build gender equality and representation in Parliaments at CWP triennial conference. Women Parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth met in Halifax for the 7th triennial conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) which focused on the theme of 'Break the Bias: Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow'.

### **Workshops held during the conference and workshops participated by the Assam Legislative Assembly delegation**

During the conference, 8 main workshops on different topics were conducted. The themes of the main workshops and the recommendations are outlined below:

<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
Workshop A: Remaining Relevant in Response to a Pandemic: The Role and Responsibilities of Parliament	Parliaments should remain open and accessible institutions to all members of the public that they represent and should, where possible and appropriate, explore modern and innovative approaches to meeting this requirement.



Workshop B: Role of Parliaments in Achieving Sustainable Development	Parliaments should remain open and accessible institutions to all members of the public that they represent and should, where possible and appropriate, explore modern and innovative approaches to meeting this requirement.
Workshop C: A People's Parliament: Accessibility through Innovation	Workshop E: Access to Assistive Technologies: Implementation of Standards Across Commonwealth Parliaments
Workshop D: Professional Development for Parliamentarians - Opportunities and Challenges for Small Parliaments	Commonwealth Parliaments should establish, or develop, existing mechanisms that support their younger Members when experiencing poor mental health or abuse online. Such provision should be innovative and adaptive, and tailored to the needs of new and or more experienced Members.
Workshop E: Access to Assistive Technologies: Implementation of Standards Across Commonwealth Parliaments	Parliaments must adopt assistive technologies to enhance the accessibility of their institutions to persons with disabilities.
Workshop F: Building Gender Sensitive Parliaments	Commonwealth national and sub-national Legislatures should strongly support the promotion of gender-sensitive Parliaments and report progress annually at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference.
Workshop G: Youth Roundtable – Cyber bullying: Youth, Trolling and Mental Health	Commonwealth Parliaments should establish, or develop, existing mechanisms that support their younger Members when experiencing poor mental health or abuse online.
Workshop H: The Climate Emergency: Are Parliaments Holding Governments to Account?	Parliaments have a responsibility to ensure that national climate laws and policies are robust, ambitious and in line with international commitments such as the Paris Agreement. Parliamentarians should, therefore, be bold in holding governments to account when progress is slow or lacking.

The workshops/Sessions/Meetings in which the Assam Legislative Assembly delegation participated during the Conference is outlined below:

<b>Name of Delegate</b>	<b>Workshops/Meetings attended</b>
Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly	<p>Workshop C-A people's Parliament: Accessibility through Innovation Workshop F-Building Gender Sensitive Parliamentarians</p> <p>Executive Committee Meetings:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPA Executive Committee Day-1.</li> <li>• ExCo Planning and Review Sub-Committee.</li> <li>• Official Opening of the 65<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference by Her Excellency the Right Hon'ble Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada and Vice-Patron of the CPA.</li> <li>• Launch of Transitioning to Life after Parliament.</li> </ul>
Dr. Numal Momin, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly	<p>Workshop A-Remaining Relevant in Response to a Pandemic: The Role and Responsibilities of Parliament</p> <p>Workshop E-Access to Assistive technologies: Implementation of Standards Across the Commonwealth Parliaments</p>
Shri Hemen Das, Principal Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly	<p>Workshop B – Building Sustainable Economies in Small Branches</p> <p>SOCATT Sessions 1,2 and 3</p> <p>Workshop E - Access to Assistive Technologies: Implementation of Standards Across Commonwealth Parliaments</p> <p>Workshop F-Building Gender Sensitive Parliamentarians</p>



## **Participation of CPA India Region in the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC**

The Executive Committee Members of India Region in the CPA Executive Committee are Sri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly; Smti Ritu Khanduri Bhusan, Hon'ble Speaker, Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly and Sri Anurag Sharma, MP, Lok Sabha. Shri Neeraj Shekhar, MP, Rajya Sabha have been nominated by the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha as the Member of the CPA Executive Committee in place of Sri Anurag Sharma, MP, Lok Sabha who has been elected as the Treasurer, CPA.

There was a continuous interaction program with briefing meetings for the Indian Parliament Delegation led by Sri Om Birla, Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha. The CPA India Region also utilized the opportunity to celebrate the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav on the sidelines of the Conference by a march of the entire Indian Delegation with holding Tiranga( National Flags)in hand in the HALIFAX Convention Centre led by the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha on 25 August, 2022 at 8.45 AM.

It is noteworthy to mention at the McInnes Room, Delhousie Student Union Building, Halifax that Mr Anshuman Gaur, Acting High Commissioner of India to Canada and Mrs Apoorva Srivastava, Consul General of India to Canada hosted a dinner in honor of Sri Om Birla, Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav with a cultural program by the Indian Community people from Canada. Sri Om Birla, Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha spoke on the occasion hailing the role of Members of Indian Delegation.

## **Important decisions taken and main highlights of the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC Conference**

The following important decisions taken and main highlights of the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC Conference held in Canada are reproduced here for reference:

- (i) Sri Anurag Sharma, Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha has been elected as the new CPA Treasurer;

- (ii) Hon. Ian Liddell-Grainger, MP (United Kingdom) has been elected as the new Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee; and
- (iii) The first winner of the Commonwealth Parliamentarian of the Year Award has been announced at the 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference with Hon. Kate Doust, MLC from the Parliament of Western Australia being awarded with the 2022 Commonwealth Parliamentarian of the Year Award

The following future CPA governance meetings and conferences were discussed:

- **2023 Mid-Year CPA Executive Committee Meeting** – to be hosted by the CPA Gibraltar Branch and the Parliament of Gibraltar in March 2023 (final dates to be confirmed).
- **66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC)** – to be hosted by the CPA Ghana Branch and Parliament of Ghana in Accra, Ghana in 30 September to 6 October 2023.
- **2024 Mid-Year CPA Executive Committee Meeting (virtual)** – details to be confirmed.
- **67th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC)** – to be hosted by the CPA New South Wales Branch and Parliament of New South Wales in November 2024.



**General Assembly, 65<sup>th</sup> CPC dated 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 at Halifax, Canada.**

**The 65<sup>th</sup> General Assembly agreed important Constitutional and other reforms including :**

- Measures to increase the representation of women within the CPA both on the CPA Executive Committee and at the CPA General Assembly.
- In relation to this, the General assembly agreed that all Branches should have a minimum entitlement of two delegates to the Plenary Conference, provided that one of the delegates is a women.
- A change in the population threshold for the CPA Small Branches from 500,000 to 1 million which has enabled the following Branches to join or rejoin the CPA Small Branches network- Fiji, Guyana, Malacca, the Maldives, Malta, New Brunswick, Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia, Sikkim, the Soloman Islands and Tasmania.
- Recognition of the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) network and including its Chairperson in CPA's governance structures on the same basis as the Chairs of CWP and CPA Small Branches.
- A series of reforms addressing issues which have arisen during the long period between the 64<sup>th</sup> and 65<sup>th</sup> CPCs including making provision for CPA Executive Committee meetings to be held virtually or on a hybrid basis as well as in person.
- A policy statement on the recruitment to the position of CPA Secretary- General in which it was agreed that the position will be limited to two terms which eligibility to a second term being based on performance. To enable regional rotation, in future, applications for the role of CPA Secretary- General will be ringfenced to exclude the regions from which the previous two holders of the position have been nominated.

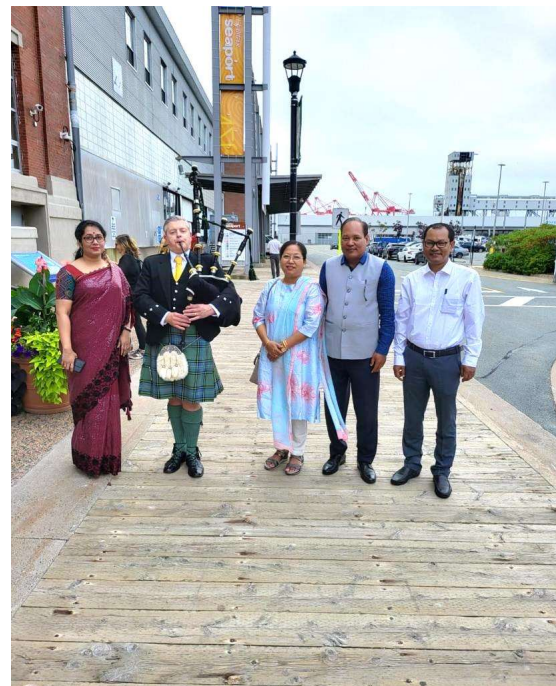




**Group Photo at Conference Venue, Halifax, Canada**



**Group Photo at the Conference Venue, Halifax, Canada.**



**Group Photo at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.**

**CHAPTER – II**  
**Post Conference Study Tour**  
27 August – 6 September, 2022

**Boston, United States of America:**

From Halifax, the CPA Assam State Branch delegation (India Region) arrived at Boston as part of the Post Conference Study Tour on 27 September, 2022. In Boston, There was a very interesting Interaction program with Assamese technocrats settled in Boston about the Agricultural Supply Chain Management Application who had established a company named Kahudi Integrated Organics Pvt Ltd and working relentlessly for the growth and progress of the Agricultural Sector Supply Chain Management System.

The delegation, observing the endeavors to spread the rich Assamese tradition, culture and heritage in the USA by the Assamese Community settled in USA, was overwhelmed and appreciated the technocrats. The entrepreneurial and professional exposure of these Assamese community people settled therein may be utilized to promote and guide various local industrialists in varied areas with focused and systematic approach.

**New York:**

In New York, the delegation visited the Consulate General of India at New York. The delegation was extended a warm welcome and hosted by the Consul General, Mr Randhir Jaiswal, IFS. There was a thorough deliberation about the initiatives undertaken by the CGI office to uplift the Indian Culture and heritage in the USA through many activities and exchange programs.

An in-depth interaction program with the Assamese Community people established in Bronx, New York City was also held. The Delegation indeed was profoundly happy to make an observation about the initiative by the Assamese Community people settled therein to establish a Naamghar out there. There was in depth deliberation on some significant cultural program to be taken up to showcase the rich ethnic heritage of Assam in the USA.

## **New Jersey:**

An Exchange Program was organized by the Assamese Community settled in New Jersey in honor of the Hon'ble Speaker, Assam and the team, which was followed by dinner. The Hon'ble Speaker briefed the gathering about the participation of the Assam Assembly delegation in the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC. A detailed observation was made regarding the health sector and mainly the steps taken by the Government of Assam to tackle the COVID pandemic and special initiatives undertaken by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam. The Assamese diaspora community widely appreciated the efforts of Assam Government during the pandemic. The Hon'ble Speaker and the Hon'ble Deputy Speaker further briefed the gathering about the various steps undertaken by the present Government of Assam to improvise the overall connectivity including the road, bridge, etc even in interior and rural areas across the State of Assam. The Assamese Community highly appreciated the endeavors of the Government of Assam.



**Exchange program organised by the Assamese Community at  
New Jersey**



## **Oslo, Norway**

On 30 August, 2022 the Delegation arrived at Oslo, Norway. Dr B. Balabhaskar, the Ambassador of Republic of India to the Kingdom of Norway hosted the delegation over breakfast for a meeting in his residence. He briefed the delegation about the various cultural events hosted by the Indian Embassy in Oslo to commemorate the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Ambassador also briefed about the events to showcase the rich handloom and handicraft heritage of India where he specifically mentioned about the participation of the Assam Handloom Sector to exhibit the exquisite Assam Silk etc. Hon'ble Speaker, Assam also offered to coordinate for exclusive contribution, if in near future, any Handicraft or Handloom exhibition is organized there. Further, it was observed that there is scope for handloom and handicraft sector of Assam to be promoted in Norway. The delegation made an observation that there is ample scope to promote the Assamese Handloom and Handicraft Industries in Global platform generally and particularly in Norway.



**At the Parliament of Norway.**



**Hon'ble Speaker infront of the Norwegian Storting Building  
(Parliament of Norway)**

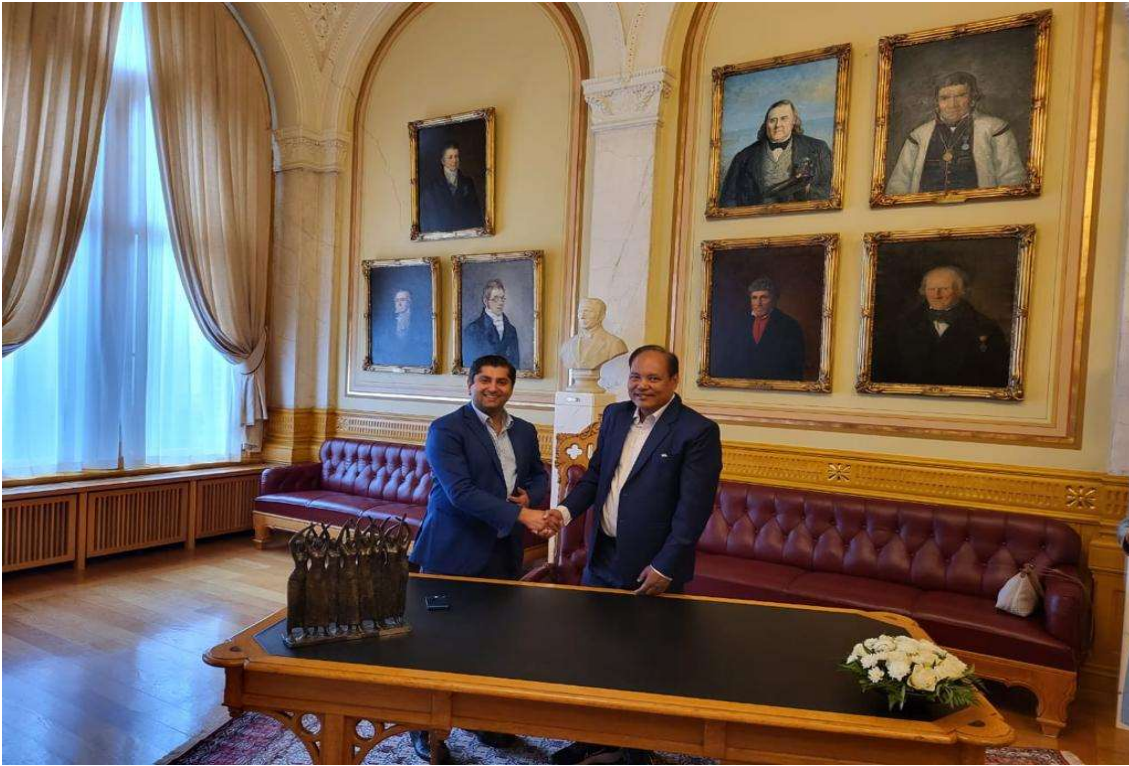
The delegation also visited the Norwegian Storting Building



(Parliament of Norway Building). Mr Himanshu Gulati, (MP) of Norway Parliament representing the Progress Party accompanied the delegation to visit the Storting. The delegation observed that in the Norwegian Storting, Members take seat in the Storting according to the geographical area they represent(State wise) and not according to Party affiliation. This means, for example, that a Labour member may sit next to a Conservative member.

**Group Photo at the Norwegian  
Storting Building (Parliament of  
Norway)**





**At the Parliament of Norway**

## **London, United Kingdom**

Mr Sujit Ghosh, Deputy High Commissioner also invited the delegation and the Hon'ble Speaker, Maharashtra for a lunch on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2022. There were in depth exchanges of views and ideas Indian High Commission's endeavors to uplift the spirit of India together with the celebration of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav in London and UK were also updated during the luncheon discussion.



### **During visit to the British Museum, London**

On 5 September, 2022 the delegation attended a meeting at the British Museum, London. It was a result of the persistent endeavor with the able guidance of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam since last February, 2022 in regard to the proposal from Sri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly for a month long exhibition of the revered fabric of Vrindavani Vashtra in Assam for common public. Ms Jane Portal, Keeper of the Department of Asia and Mr David Packer, Head of Collection Management of the British Museum participated in the discussion. It is learnt that 12 months time is required to be considered as the Loan Application process for any exhibition and in our case it is counted from April 2022 and thus 6 months application period is taken into account. The Delegation assured for an all-inclusive logistical arrangement to be put in place, predominantly during the transportation and installation for the exhibition for the proposed month long exhibition to be organized in Assam. The decision will be taken after a complete deliberation following the

official procedure of the respective Collection Management Branch, Preservation Branch and Loan Committee of the British Museum. They will communicate about their decision and any update regarding our application for an exhibition Loan of the famous Vrindavani Vashtra in Assam for 1 month.



#### **During the meeting at the British Museum, London**

The delegation also visited the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Head Office in London. A luncheon meeting was hosted by the Chairperson, Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General. Hon'ble Speaker, Assam mooted the idea of an elaborate interaction/exchange program regarding the legislative procedures in different States/Provinces so that there can be enough scope for exchanging ideas about the good governance and the practices and procedures and a comparison may be carried out accordingly. He also requested for sensitizing the concerned Mission of the Host Country of any future events of CPA to process for exclusive or special Visa on Arrival/easier Visa Approval system of the visiting/attending delegation from different regions/states/ provinces. Hon'ble Speaker, Assam further informed the Chairperson, CPA about the progress regarding the Vrindavani Vashtra in British Museum and CPA HQ agreed to extend any assistance required in the process of the proposed exhibition to be held in Assam in case of need.

The delegation departed from London, United Kingdom at 0705 Hrs from the Heathrow Airport on 6 September, 2022. On arrival in Delhi at 0945 Hrs the Delegation went to Assam House for freshening up and arrived at the LGBI Airport at 2055.





**Photo taken at CPA Headquarters, London along with Secretary-General Mr. Stephen Twigg**



**At CPA Head Quarters, London.**



### **Observations on the 65<sup>th</sup> CPC and post-conference study tour:**

The Conference has been a great learning opportunity and enriching experience for the entire delegation. The exposure gained during the Conference and the post-conference study tour would definitely help in the efficient discharge of duties by the participants.

It is worthy to mention and a matter of pride that the participants of the Conference lauded the CPA ExCo Meeting organized by CPA Assam State Branch in April 2022.

It should be the endeavor of the Assam Legislative Assembly to note and implement the recommendations made in the various workshops held during the conference as outlined in the report.



**Group Photo at the British Museum, London**

**Social Media of Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly**

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 **[@BiswajitDaimar5](https://twitter.com/BiswajitDaimar5)**

