



**REPORT ON  
THE PARTICIPATION OF  
CPA ASSAM STATE BRANCH AT THE  
66<sup>TH</sup> COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY  
CONFERENCE IN GHANA  
30<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER – 6<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2023**



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



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## I

### COMPOSITION OF THE ASSAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DELEGATION

1. Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker,  
Assam Legislative Assembly and Head of the Delegation
2. Shri Debabrata Saikia,  
Leader of Opposition of Assam
3. Shri Manab Deka,  
Hon'ble MLA, Assam Legislative Assembly
4. Shri Sushanta Borgohain,  
Hon'ble MLA, Assam Legislative Assembly

#### Accompanying Officials-

1. Shri Thang Joyful Tonsing,  
Secretary to Speaker (as Secretary to the Delegation)
2. Smti Deerga Baruah,  
Deputy Secretary, I/C, CPA Cell and Coordinator
3. Shri Sauman Baruah ,  
OSD to the Speaker



## II

### Introduction

1. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is one of the oldest International Associations of the Parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth countries. Founded in 1911, it is a membership association which brings together Members, irrespective of gender, race, religion or culture, who are united by community of interest, respect for the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms, and by the pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy. The Association is made up of over 180 Legislatures (or Branches) divided up between nine geographic regions of the Commonwealth. It offers a vast opportunity for Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to collaborate on issues of mutual interest and to share good practices. CPA is dedicated to the standards and ideology of the Commonwealth as written in the Commonwealth Charter.
2. The aim of CPA is to deepen the Commonwealth's pledge to the highest standards of democratic governance and parliamentary practice. CPA's mission is "To promote knowledge of the constitutional, legislative, economic, social and cultural aspects of parliamentary democracy, with particular reference to the countries of the Commonwealth."
3. Good governance lies at the heart of the CPA's Mission with a keen focus on transparency, accountability, financial oversight and thorough auditing processes.
4. As a Member of the Executive Committee of CPA HQs representing India Region and as the head of the CPA Assam State Branch, I attended the 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) in Accra, Ghana from 30<sup>th</sup> September to 6th October, 2023 accompanied by Shri Debabrata Saikia,



Leader of Opposition in the Assam Legislative Assembly along with Shri Manab Deka and Shri Sushanta Borgohain, Hon'ble MLAs of the Assam Legislative Assembly.

5. The report aims to bring out the details of the participation of CPA Assam State Branch (India Region) at the 66th CPA Conference in Ghana and also about the observations during the pre and post-Conference study tour to Egypt and South Africa.
6. I hope the information contained in the report will be valuable for the Hon'ble Members.

BISWAJIT DAIMARY  
Hon'ble Speaker,  
Assam Legislative Assembly  
&  
Head of the Delegation

Dispur: Dated 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2024





### III

## PRE-CONFERENCE STUDY TOUR – EGYPT

### (a) Brief Background on Political System of Egypt

Official name of the country is Arab Republic of Egypt and Cairo is the capital. Egypt has a presidential form of Government with an appointed Prime Minister. Egypt has a Bicameral Parliament –(i) Senate (Majlis Al-Shiyoukh)/Upper House with 300 members: 200 elected and the rest are nominated by the President) and (ii) House of Representatives (Majlis Al-Nuwab)/Lower House with 596 members: 568 elected and 28 nominated by the President.

The major political parties of Egypt are – Future of Nation Party (Mostaqbal Watan Party), Republican Peoples' Party, Al Wafd Party, Free Egyptian Party. Head of the State is the President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi (since June 2014) and Head of Government is Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly (since June 2018).

Approximately, 3600 Indian community people are in Egypt, most of who are concentrated in Cairo/Greater Cairo. There are also a small number of families in Alexandria, Port Said and Ismailia.

### (b) Visit to Egyptian Senate and Discussion

On 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 the Delegation from Assam Legislative Assembly led by Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker visited the Majlis Al – Shiyoukh (Egyptian Senate) as part of the Pre-Conference Study Tour. A delegation from the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly led by the Hon'ble Speaker, Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly also visited the Egyptian Senate at the same time. After visiting the Senate, the delegation had a formal meeting with the Egyptian Senate.



*Hon'ble Speaker, LOP and accompanying officials at the Egyptian Senate*



*Hon'ble Speaker and LOP at the Egyptian Senate*

The following members/officials took part:

**From Assam Legislative Assembly:**

- I. Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker
- II. Shri Debabrata Saikia, Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition
- III. Shri Thang Joyful Tonsing, Secretary to Speaker
- IV. Smti Deergha Baruah, Deputy Secretary
- V. Shri Sauman Baruah, OSD to Speaker

**From Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly:**

- I. Shri Thiru M. Appavu, Hon'ble Speaker
- II. Dr K. Srinivasan, Secretary
- III. Shri P Padmakumar, Joint Secretary/Special Secretary to Speaker

**From Indian Embassy:**

- I. H E Mr Ajit Gupte, Ambassador
- II. Mr Asheesh Gupta, Deputy Chief of the Mission



III. Mr John, M. Kerketta, Second Secretary & HOC

IV. Mr Satish B. Krishnan, Second Secretary (Pol & Info)

V. Mr Narsralla K., Local Protocol Manager

**From the Majlis Al – Shiyoukh (Egyptian Senate):**

I. Mr Bahaa El-Din Abu Shukka, Deputy Speaker of the Senate

II. Mr Essam Helal, Member of the Committee on Housing, Local Administration and Transport

III. Mr Yasser Zaki, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Financial, Economic and Investment Affairs

IV. Mr Tayseer Mattar, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Industry, Trade, Medium, Small and Micro – Scale Enterprises

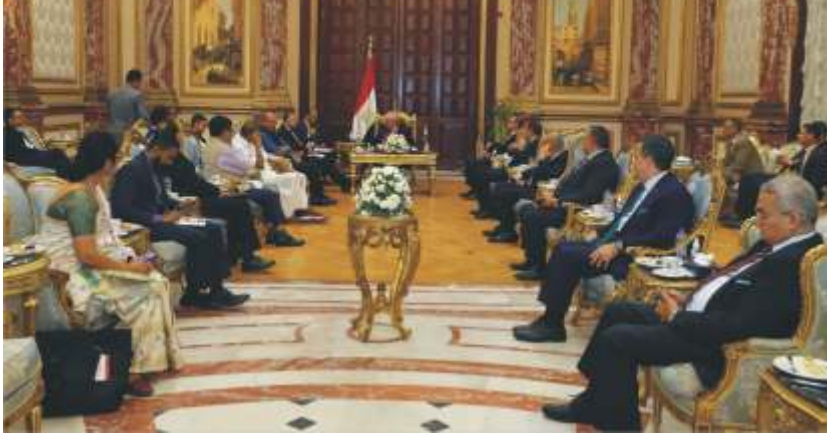
V. Mr Hossam El-Khouly, Member of the Committee on Constitutional and Legislative Affairs

VI. Mr Mahmoud Ismail Etman, Secretary General of the Senate



*Representatives of Assam and Tamil Nadu Legislative Assemblies with representatives of the Egyptian Senate*





*Meeting between the Egyptian Senate and the Indian delegation comprising of representatives of Assam and Tamil Nadu Legislative Assemblies*

At the outset, the Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Senate, Mr Bahaa El-Din Abu Shukka welcomed the delegation to the Egyptian Senate. In his opening remarks, he emphasized on the historical relations between India and Egypt and specifically mentioned the visit to India by the Egyptian President, Al Sisi and the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Egypt which, he said, is a sign of cooperation between the two nations at the highest level.

With regard to the Legislature, he stated that Egypt has two Houses of Legislature - the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Egyptian Constitution of 1923 is one of the best Constitutions based on the Belgian Constitution. The Constitution has been amended in 2014 to abolish the Senate but in the 2019 amendment, the Senate has been restored. The Deputy Speaker then outlined some of the practices and procedures of the Egyptian Parliament.

Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly thanked the Egyptian Senate for giving the time and opportunity for the delegation to visit the Egyptian Parliament. Stating that this is his first visit to Egypt, he expressed that the Senate is very beautiful and that it is a good experience for the delegation to visit the Egyptian Parliament and learn about its practices and procedures. He also mentioned that the delegation is on the way to attend the 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Ghana and took this opportunity to visit Egypt and learn about the Parliamentary practices and procedures of Egypt and about its governance. He stated that in India, there are two Houses of Parliament-Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha just like Egypt has two Houses. At the



State level, there is Legislative Assembly and local self-government at the local level. He also explained about the three lists-Union, Concurrent and State lists and how laws are made by the Central and State Legislatures on the subjects in these lists.

The ensuing discussion focused on mutual exchange of information and views about the various aspects of the legislative procedures and practices. Members of Egyptian Senate enquired about the system of functioning and relationship between the Central Government and the State Government in India and how decisions are taken. Hon'ble Speaker and the Hon'ble Leader of Opposition of Assam Legislative Assembly replied meticulously to their queries and explained about the division of power between Union and State Governments as specified in Seventh Schedule of Indian Constitution under Article 246 regarding the Central, State and Concurrent lists.

H.E. Ajit Gupte, Indian Ambassador to Egypt presented a brief account of the many high-level engagement programs and ministerial trips taken up in recent times from both sides including the visits of the Egyptian President Sisi as the Chief Guest of Indian Republic Day in January 2023 and his subsequent visit in September 2023 to attend the G20 Summit. The participants also took the privilege to discuss about the 9<sup>th</sup> G20 Parliamentary Speakers Summit (P20) and Parliamentary Forum hosted by the Parliament of India from 12 to 14 October, 2023. From the discussions, it has come to light that Strategic Partnership Agreement has been signed by Egypt and India to elevate the bilateral relationship for mutual advantages, specifically in the areas such as security, defense, energy, trade and investments, etc.

During the course of the discussions, the Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly extended a warm invitation to the Egyptian Senate to make a visit to India and the State of Assam in the near future and expressed that he looked forward to meeting the Egyptian delegation in the soon to be held P-20 meeting in India.

The meeting concluded with a mutual vote of thanks.



*Hon'ble Speaker, Assam, Hon'ble Speaker, Tamil Nadu and LOP, Assam with officials of Egyptian Senate.*

The Assam Legislative Assembly Delegation expresses its thanks to the Indian Embassy in Cairo, Egypt for arranging the meetings of the delegation with the Egyptian Senate and rendering all necessary help during the visit.



*Hon'ble Speaker, and LOP with Mr. Ajit Gupte, Indian Ambassador to Egypt.*





## IV

### 66<sup>TH</sup> COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE AND CPA MID YEAR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING IN ACCRA, GHANA FROM 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER TO 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2023

*Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly has been re-nominated as the Regional Representative from India Region in CPA Executive Committee for a 3-year term (66<sup>th</sup> CPC to 69<sup>th</sup> CPC)*

#### (a) Ghana and its political system

The Republic of Ghana is situated on the West Coast of Africa. The capital of the Republic of Ghana is Accra. Political structure of Ghana is one of Unitary Republic and Constitutional democracy. Ghana has primarily two parties- The ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) and opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC). The President of Ghana is both the Head of State and Head of Government. The estimated number of Indians living in Ghana is about 15000 out of which about 3000 hold Ghanaian nationality. The Legislature consists of a unicameral 275-member body plus the Speaker. Members are elected for a four year term in Single Seat constituencies by simple plurality vote.

#### (b) CPA International Executive Committee meetings

Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly attended the Executive Committee Meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) as a Regional Representative nominated by the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha from CPA India Region. It is matter of great pride and honor for Assam that he is the first Speaker to be re-nominated for the second term as Executive Committee Member of CPA HQ. To attend the 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference at Accra, Ghana he was accompanied by Shri Debabrata Saikia, Hon'ble Leader of Opposition, Shri Manab Deka, Hon'ble Member and Shri





Susanta Borgohain, Hon'ble Member from Assam Legislative Assembly.

As per the official record, altogether 75 (seventy five) delegates from the CPA India Region participated in the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC at Accra, Ghana. The Executive Committee Members from CPA India Region attending the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC were:

- 1) Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam legislative Assembly, and
- 2) Smti Ritu Khanduri Bhusan, Hon'ble Speaker, Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly



*Executive  
Committee  
Members of  
CPA HQ from  
India Region*

The Indian delegation was headed by Shri Anurag Sharma, MP, Lok Sabha and Treasurer, CPA Executive Committee.

The CPA Executive Committee Meetings were held on 1<sup>st</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> October which was attended by the Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly as Member of the Executive Committee representing India Region. He also attended the Planning and Review Sub-Committee Meetings as a Member of the Sub-Committee from India Region.

### (c) Gandhi Jayanti Celebrations in Accra, Ghana

The Indian High Commission in Accra, Ghana organized the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations to pay tribute to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi on his birthday at the Ghana-India Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in Accra on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2023. Hon'ble Members of National and State Parliaments of India who are attending the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference being held Accra, Ghana attended the celebration. Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative



Assembly, Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Leader of Opposition, Shri Debabrata Saikia, Hon'ble MLAs Shri Manab Deka and Shri Sushanta Burgohain paid tributes to the Father of the Nation.



*Assam Assembly delegation during the Gandhi Jayanti Celebrations in Accra, Ghana*

#### (d) Briefing meeting of Indian Delegates and Reception Programme

A briefing meeting of Indian delegates to the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC was held at Hotel Kempinski, Accra, Ghana on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2023. Thereafter, the High Commission of India, Accra hosted a reception for the Indian delegation attending the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC. The delegation consisted Members of the Indian Parliament, Speakers, Deputy Speakers and Members of 21 Indian State Assemblies and accompanying officials. Ghanaian MPs and representatives of the Indian community were also present at the occasion. Mr. Anurag Sharma, Leader of the Indian Delegation attending 66<sup>th</sup> CPC and Mr. Mensa Bonsu, Leader of Majority in the Ghanaian Parliament addressed the delegates during the reception.



*Dignitaries during the reception programme for Indian delegates of 66<sup>th</sup> CPC*



*Assam Assembly delegation at the reception programme for Indian delegates of 66<sup>th</sup> CPC*

#### (e) The 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference

*Hon'ble Speaker and LOP, Assam with other delegates during 66<sup>th</sup> CPC*



The 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference was held at the Accra International Conference Centre (AICC), located directly opposite to the Parliament of Ghana, Accra from 30<sup>th</sup> September to 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 hosted by the Parliament of Ghana and CPA Ghana Branch. Alongside the Conference, the 39<sup>th</sup> Small Branches Conference, 66<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly, governing meeting of the CPA Executive Committee, meetings of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) networks and the 57<sup>th</sup> General Meeting of the Society of the Clerks-at- the-Table (SoCATT) and Conference Workshops were also held.

The theme of the Conference was: “The Commonwealth Charter 10 years on: Values and Principles for Parliaments to uphold”.

The 66<sup>th</sup> CPC was attended by over 600 Parliamentarians and Parliamentary





Clerks representing Parliaments and Legislatures from across the Commonwealth.

The Conference brings together Speakers, Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Staffs representing the nine regions of the CPA – Africa, Asia, Australia, British Islands, Mediterranean, Canada, Caribbean, Americas, and Atlantic, India, Pacific and South East Asia.

The opening ceremony of the 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference was held at Accra, Ghana on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2023. The delegates were welcomed by the CPA President, Rt Hon'ble Alban Bagbin, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Ghana by his warm words as he expressed that the Conference brings together all on a single platform to share their experiences and good practices as well as promoting the values of the Commonwealth.



*Hon'ble Speaker,  
Assam with Chairperson, CPA HQ*

The Vice Patron of the CPA, His Excellency Nana Akufo- Addo, the President of Ghana, urged all to work together to reflect deeply the values and principles of Commonwealth Charter and focus the discussions on the goal of attaining and maintaining the democratic ethos of this noble community as he inaugurated the 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference. And he also took the opportunity to commend the Commonwealth for its commitment to the rule of law, open and tolerant societies, equality for all and respect for fundamental human rights and freedom

The delegates were also welcomed by the CPA Chairperson, Hon'ble Ian Liddell-Grainger, MP (United Kingdom), the CPA Vice Chairperson, Hon'ble Osei Kyei-Mensah Bonsu, MP, Majority Leader in the Parliament of Ghana, and the





Ghanaian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Shirley Ayorkor Bothchwey. The Vote of Thanks was offered by the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) , Hon. Dr Zainab Gimba. MP (Nigeria).

The CPA Secretary General, Stephen Twigg said during his speech that the Conference offers an invaluable opportunity to come together and share best practices in addressing common issues and strengthening Commonwealth values, as the theme of the Commonwealth Charter attests. The values within the Charter, and the vital role the CPA has in sustaining and reinforcing them, are as relevant today as they were when they were originally signed in 2013.

#### (f) 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference: CPA Officer Elections

CPA Vice- Chairperson – The 66<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly was followed by a meeting of the new CPA Executive Committee during which Hon. Arthur Holder, Speaker of the House of Assembly of Barbados was confirmed for the position of Vice – Chairperson of the CPA Executive Committee. The position is for a term of one year and the holder is also a member of the CPA Coordinating Committee.



*Some of the Delegates of the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC*



### (g) 66<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly: Key Decisions

The General Assembly during the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC in Ghana was presided over by the CPA President (2022-2023), Rt Hon. Alban Bagbin, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Ghana and was attended by Members from 102 CPA Branches.

The General Assembly also included a topical debate on food security and sustainability in the Commonwealth, with presenters from CPA Branches including Queensland, Tanzania, Canada, Isle of Man and Turks and Caicos Islands.

Further many important decisions were taken during the course of the General Assembly like CPA Status, Annual report, CVPA Secretary General's Annual appraisal and application for a second and final term, CPA Membership report, CPA future Membership subscriptions, Audited Report and Financial Statement- year end 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022, Budget and Financial Management Reports, Internal Auditors, Report of the Working Group of CPA Modalities, Matters submitted by CPA Branches to the 66<sup>th</sup> CPA General Assembly, Network Reports, Future CPC Conferences, Election of new Regional Representatives on the CPA Executive Committee. Delegates also were briefed about the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) to be hosted by the CPA South Wales Branch and Parliament of New South Wales in November 2024.



*Assam Legislative  
Assembly Delegates  
at the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC*



### (h) Workshops:

Various workshops on different topics were held during the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC in Accra, Ghana.

The Workshops attended by Assam Legislative Assembly Delegation are as follows:

Sl. No.	Workshop	Host Topic	Attended by
1	Workshop A	"The threat of Terrorism to statehood: the role of Parliament."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker</li> <li>• Shri Manab Deka, Hon'ble Member</li> <li>• Shri Sushanta Borgohain, Hon'ble Member</li> </ul>
2	Workshop B	"Gender Quotas in Parliament - a means to an end?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shri Debabrata Saikia, Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition</li> </ul>
3	Workshop D	Youth Roundtable: "Role of the Commonwealth in international Security and peace building."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker</li> </ul>
4	Workshop E	"Environmental approaches in tackling energy poverty."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shri Debabrata Saikia, Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition</li> </ul>
5	Workshop H	E-Parliaments: "An effective mechanism for intersectional diversity and equitable public engagement?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker</li> </ul>



The recommendations of the workshops held during the conference are outlined below for reference:-

Sl. No.	Workshop	Recommendations
1	Workshop A: The threat of terrorism to statehood: the role of Parliament (CPA Ghana Branch Host Topic)	Parliaments should collaborate with stakeholders to improve governance architecture and ensure equitable distribution of resources; benchmark best practices for the involvement of Parliaments in combatting terrorism; perform their oversight responsibilities to ensure accountability; make appropriate legislation to combat cross-border terrorism; and address the root cause of terrorism.
2	Workshop B: Gender Quotas in Parliament - a means to an end? (Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians topic)	Parliaments of the Commonwealth, with less than 30% women Members, should implement a percentage of gender quotas through legislative means or via political party candidate selections.
3	Workshop C: What does sustainable trade and economic development mean for small jurisdictions? (CPA Small Branches topic)	The Commonwealth's Parliaments in the smallest jurisdictions should collaborate to promote fair and sustainable international trade.
4	Workshop D: Youth Roundtable: Role of the Commonwealth in international security and peace building (Youth topic)	Commonwealth Parliamentarians should champion peace building initiatives, actively involve youth and collaborate across the Commonwealth network, in order to bolster the Commonwealth's role in international security for a more peaceful, secure future.
5	Workshop E: Environmental approaches in tackling energy poverty	Parliamentarians across the Commonwealth must seek to ensure there is secure, reliable, efficient, affordable and environmentally sustainable energy provision available to all.





6	Workshop F: 20 Years of the Latimer House Principles on the Separation of Powers: Is it working?	
7	Workshop G: The Commonwealth Charter: A Charter for all Human Rights, or just some?	The Commonwealth Charter should apply to all Commonwealth citizens irrespective of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or political views and Parliaments should be actively working to promote the human rights of all.
8	Workshop H: E-Parliaments: An effective mechanism for intersectional diversity and equitable public engagement?	Parliaments should embrace their representative function, both in the diversity of its membership and through engaging with the public, including via appropriate and innovative approaches.



*CPA Executive Committee Members from India Region with accompanying officials*

#### (i) 57<sup>th</sup> General Meeting of the Society-of-Clerks-at-the-Table (SoCATT) in Commonwealth Parliaments

The 57<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Society-of-Clerks-at-the-Table (SoCATT) took place in the margins of the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC in Accra, Ghana on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2023. The Meeting brought together the Parliamentary Clerks and staffs from Commonwealth Parliaments to share and deliberate on the latest legislative procedures and best practices.



The Chair of the meeting was Mr Cyril Kwabena Oteng Nsiah, Clerk of the Parliament of Ghana and CPA Ghana Branch Secretary. Shri Thang Joyful Tonsing, Secretary to Speaker and Smt. Deerga Baruah, Deputy Secretary attended the SoCATT meetings on behalf of the Assam Legislative Assembly.

Following presentations were made during the two day meeting by number of different Parliamentary Clerks on the following topics :

Topic	Presented by	Remarks
Parliamentary systems and developments in Parliament of Ghana	Cyril Nsiah, Clerk to the Parliament of Ghana	—
Presentations of papers on parliamentary procedure, privilege and practice. (a) Ministerial accountability and privilege  (b) Parliamentary Diplomacy	Eve Samson, Clerk of the Journals, House of Commons, United Kingdom  Jeremy LeBlanc, Assistant and Director General, Parliament of Canada	The breakout group on this topic was attended by Shri Thang Joyful Tonsing, (Secretary to Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly), as SoCATT Member.  The breakout group on this topic was attended by Smti Deerga Baruah, (Deputy Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly), as SoCATT Member. She was also nominated to present the break out group recommendations to report in the main SoCATT meeting by the respective group members. She was supported by Ms Christine Salmon Percival, Deputy Head, Legislation Office, House of Lords, United Kingdom.
Cyber security in an e-parliament : A case study of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.	Ms Amarone Nomdo, Senior Researcher	—



Gender sensitive audits in Scottish Parliament	David McGill, Clerk/Chief Executive, Scottish Parliament	—
Approval and ratification of treaties and conventions : The case of the National Assembly of Kenya	Samuel Njoroge, Clerk of the National Assembly of Kenya	—
Digital Sansad Project : Digital Transformation Enabling Smart Parliament	Shri Rajit Punhani, Secretary, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, Parliament of India	—
Developments in procedure and practices in Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly	Shri Pradeep Kumar Dubey, Principal Secretary, Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly.	—
Delegated Legislation :The shifting balance of power between the Legislature and the Executive in United Kingdom.	Christine Simon Percival, Deputy Head, Legislation Office, House of Lords, United Kingdom.	—
Benchmarking against the CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures	Lydia Buchanan, CPA HQ and Tom Duncan, ACT, Australia	—

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr Beale, SoCATT Secretary, (United Kingdom) outlined a number of SoCATT reports and decisions, and proposals for the agenda for the 58<sup>th</sup> SoCATT General meeting were agreed.

Several important issues on Parliamentary practices and procedures were discussed and presentations were made during the SOCATT meeting. It was an enriching experience for the representatives of the Assam Legislative Assembly attending the meeting.

The Assam Legislative Assembly delegates expresses its sincere thanks to the High Commission of India in Accra, Ghana for all arrangements in connection with the CPC Conference and for its help and cooperation during the stay of the delegation in Ghana.



## V

# POST CONFERENCE STUDY TOUR TO CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

### (a) A note on South Africa

South Africa is a melting pot of cultures and languages, and the political backdrop is just as broad and diverse as the country and its population. Similar to countries such as Germany, Japan, and the United States, South Africa is a constitutional democracy. Besides, it has a three-tier system of government – national, provincial and local.

There are three branches of the South African government, each with a different capital city:

- ♦ the executive (the President and Cabinet), based in Pretoria
- ♦ the legislature (Parliament), based in Cape Town
- ♦ an independent judiciary (the Courts), based in Bloemfontein

The Republic of South Africa is a unitary parliamentary democratic republic. The President of South Africa serves both as head of state and as head of government. The South African government is led by the executive branch, the President, and the cabinet.

### (b) The South African Legislature

The Parliament of South Africa consists of two houses:

- ♦ the National Assembly and
- ♦ the National Council of Provinces (NCOP)





### (c) About Western Cape Provincial Parliament

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament (WCPP) is the legislature of the Western Cape province of South Africa. It is in Cape Town.

The Provincial Parliament, along with the other provincial legislatures of South Africa, exists by virtue of Chapter 6 of the Constitution of South Africa and Chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Western Cape. It is unicameral, and consists of 42 members elected by a system of party-list proportional representation.

The Western Cape is unique amongst the provinces of South Africa in calling its legislature the "Provincial Parliament" and the Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs). The other provinces use the terms "Provincial Legislature" and "Members of the Provincial Legislature".

The Sixth Provincial Parliament was elected on 8 May 2019 in South Africa's 2019 general elections. A majority of the members belong to the Democratic Alliance. Mr. Daylin Mitchel is the Speaker of WCPP.

The legislative power of the Provincial Parliament is restricted to certain fields enumerated in the national Constitution; in some of these fields, the power is shared with the national Parliament. The fields on which the Provincial Parliament may legislate include health care, primary and secondary education, agriculture, transport, and land use planning. It also controls the budget of the provincial government departments.

### (d) Visit and Meeting with Western Cape Provincial Parliament

The Assam Legislative Assembly visited the Western Cape Provincial Parliament on 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 as part of its post-Conference study tour for 66<sup>th</sup> CPC. The Delegation from Assam Legislative Assembly had a very fruitful discussion therein.



*Assam Assembly delegation with the representatives of Western Cape Provincial Parliament*



The following persons took part in the deliberation:

- ♦ Assam Legislative Assembly:
  - o Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker
  - o Shri Debabrata Saikia, Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition
  - o Shri Thang Joyful Tonsing, Secretary to Speaker
  - o Smti Deergha Baruah, Deputy Secretary
  - o Shri Sauman Baruah, OSD to Speaker
- ♦ From the Consulate General of India, Office, Cape Town, South Africa:
  - o Mr P. S. Gangadhar, Consulate General
  - o Mr B. Subba Rao, HOC and Consul
- ♦ From the Western Cape Provincial Parliament:
  - o Mr Daylin Mitchel, Hon'ble Speaker
  - o Mr Romeo Adams, Secretary to Provincial Parliament
  - o Mr Lubabalo Stemele, Director, Parliamentary Support Services
  - o Ms Sunelle Fouche, Director, Public Engagement
  - o Mr Achmat Patience, International Relations and Protocol Officer



*Hon'ble Speaker and LOP, Assam with  
Hon'ble Speaker and Consul General of  
India in Cape Town*



*Hon'ble Speaker, Assam with  
Hon'ble Speaker, Western Cape  
Provincial Parliament*



At the outset, Mr. Daylin Mitchels, the Hon'ble Speaker, Western Cape Provincial Parliament welcomed the Assam Legislative Assembly delegation. He thanked the delegation for visiting the Western Cape Parliament and made a brief introduction about their practices and procedures. Shri Biswajit Daimary, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly offered a summary of the Legislative procedures of India as a whole and Assam in particular. Hon'ble Leader of Opposition, Shri Debabrata Saikia also thanked the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and said that the Assam Legislative Assembly have visited South Africa to learn about their best practices.

Mr. Romeo Adams, Secretary to Western Cape Provincial Parliament then made a brief intervention which was followed by two detailed PowerPoint presentations on the following topics:

- ♦ Law making and oversight in South Africa: Ordinary bills not affecting the Provinces and money bills are introduced in the National Assembly and Ordinary Bills affecting the Provinces are introduced either in the National Assembly or the National Council of Provinces.
- ♦ Making of Submissions and Petitions to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament: One interesting feature of submission of petitions is that the petitioner is informed about the progress of his submitted petition every step of the way. A petition can be submitted by registered mail, email, walking in or delivering by hand to a designated official or on the website.

One interesting point mentioned is that the Western Cape Provincial Parliament have cut down on print advertisements which is costly and not effective. They have switched most advertising to social media-facebook, Instagram, snap chat, X (twitter), website, etc which are more effective in view of its increasing use, especially by the younger generation.

At the end, with a sincere gesture of gratitude the Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly extended warm invitation to the Hon'ble Speaker, Western Cape Provincial Parliament along with the officials to visit Assam in near future. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Shri P.S. Gangadhar, the Consul General of India in Cape Town.





*During the meeting with Western Cape Provincial Parliament*

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The Assam Legislative Assembly delegation expresses its thanks to the Consulate General of India, Cape Town, South Africa for arranging the meeting with the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and for all necessary help and cooperation during its visit to Cape Town.

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*Hon'ble Speaker and LOP with Consul General of India, Cape Town*



## VI

### OBSERVATIONS AND KEY TAKEAWAYS

The delegation from Assam Legislative Assembly had a very productive first-hand exposure about various aspects during the 66<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held in Accra, Ghana along with the pre-Conference study tour to Cairo, Egypt and the post-Conference study tour to Cape Town, South Africa.

The delegation also learnt about various legislative practices and procedures about the respective Parliaments during the Conference as well as the Pre and Post Conference Study tour.

During the deliberation and visit of the Majlis Al - Shiyoukh (Egyptian Senate), Cairo the delegation noted about various procedures, specifically about the podium arrangements. During the laying of the Committee Reports the respective Chairman takes the Chair to present and read out the same during the House Proceedings. They have dedicated sitting provision in the house also for the Chairman of the Committees, below the



Speaker's podium and above the Official's Table - there is the dedicated podium for the Chairman of any committee for presentation and reading out of the Reports etc.

The 66th CPC was an enriching experience for all the participants from Assam. The experience in the SOCATT meeting would also be very beneficial for the participating officers as various parliamentary practices and procedures were presented and discussed.

During the discussions in the Cape Town at the West Cape Provincial Parliament the delegation got to learn about the process of different colors used to print the Bills which were called as the green papers (for the color of the paper),



which is a first step towards making a legislation and gives several solution to policy decisions whereby public and stake holders are invited to make a comment accordingly. After that it is a White Paper which signifies the government's clear intention to make a policy and is more defined than the green paper.

One interesting point mentioned by the Western Cape Provincial Parliament is that they have cut down on print advertisements which is costly and not effective. They have switched most advertising to social media-facebook, Instagram, snap chat, X (twitter), website, etc which are more effective in view of its increasing use, especially by the younger generation. This can also be implemented by the Assam Legislative Assembly by making use of social media for dissemination of information to the public and for the public to submit their petitions online.

Regarding petitions and submissions, the petitioner is informed of the status of his petition every step of the way. This is also a very good practice which can be followed by the Assam Legislative Assembly.





## Photo Section



*Hon'ble Speaker and  
LOP with their spouses  
at Egyptian Senate*

*Hon'ble LOP felicitating  
the Secretary, Western Cape  
Provincial Parliament*



*At the Egyptian Senate*



*Arriving for the 66<sup>th</sup> CPC in Accra, Ghana*



*Attending the Executive Committee  
Meeting of CPA H.Q.*





*Hon'ble Speaker paying tributes to Father of the Nation in Accra.*



*Hon'ble LOP paying tributes to Father of the Nation in Accra.*



*Shri Manab Deka,  
Hon'ble MLA paying tributes to Father of the Nation in Accra.*



*Shri Sushanta Borgohain  
Hon'ble MLA paying tributes to Father of the Nation in Accra.*





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*At the briefing  
meeting of  
delegates  
from India in  
Accra, Ghana*

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*With some  
delegates from  
North East India at  
66<sup>th</sup> CPC in Ghana.*

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*At 66<sup>th</sup> CPC in  
Accra, Ghana*

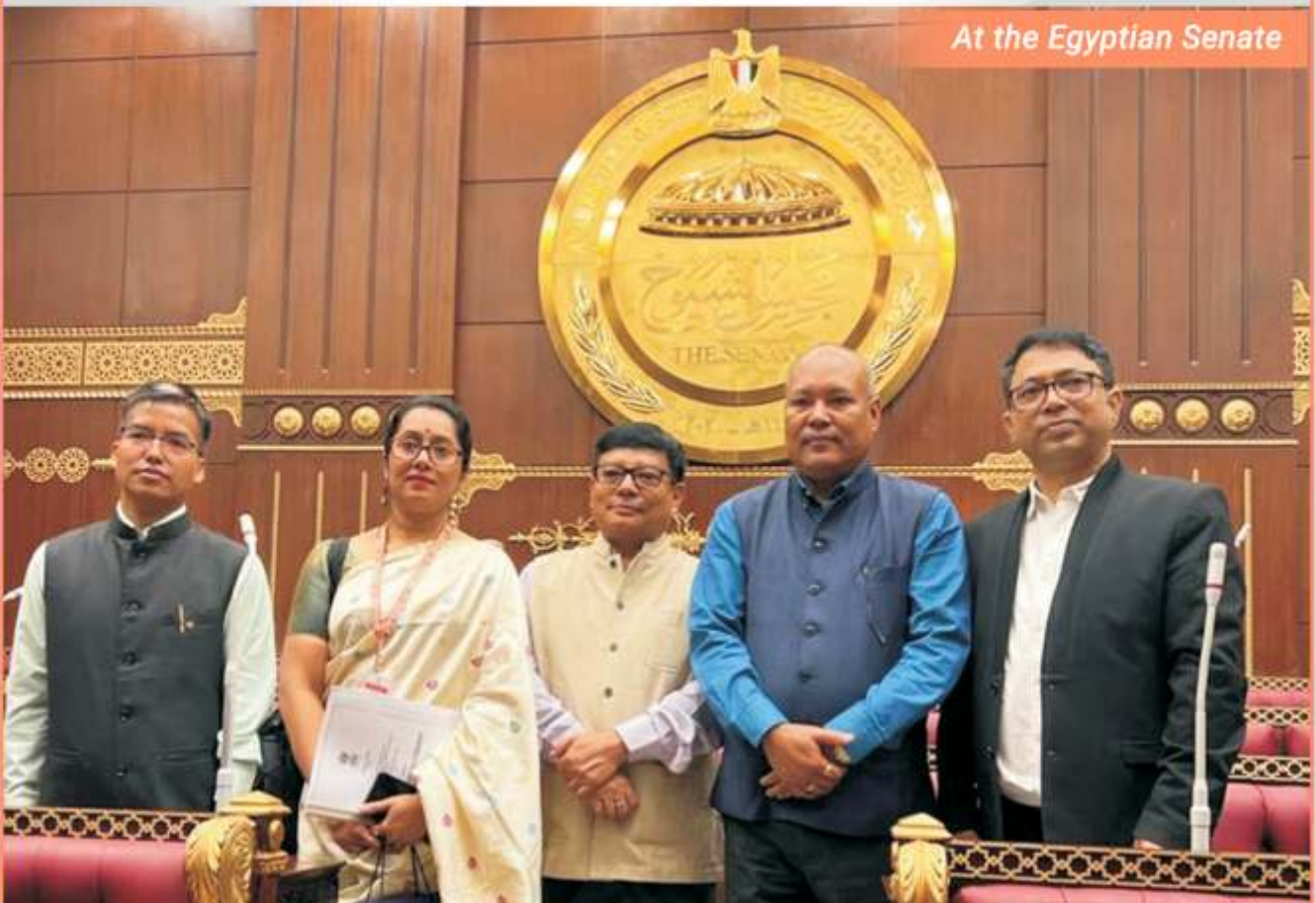
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*At the Western Cape Provincial Parliament*




*At the Egyptian Senate*



Social Media of Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly

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[www.assambidhansabha.org](http://www.assambidhansabha.org)