



Update

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Issue 12
 30 June 2008

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(1) Colloquium on Latimer House Principles

The CPA, Commonwealth Magistrates' & Judges' Association, Commonwealth Lawyers Association, Commonwealth Legal Education Association and the Commonwealth Secretariat will be meeting from 7-10 July in Edinburgh to examine the principles which were endorsed by Heads of Government five years ago. The colloquium will also consider the practical problems which arise in respect to preserving the independence of the judiciary and Parliament, gender and ethical issues, accountability mechanisms and examples of good and bad practice.

(2) 11th North East Region Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference

The Lok Sabha Speaker Hon. Somnath Chatterjee, MP, inaugurated the 11th North East Region Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (NERCPA) at the State Legislative Assembly in Aizawl, Mizoram, 27-30 May.

The Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Hon. K. Rahman Khan, Lok Sabha Secretary-General Shri P.D.T. Achary and Rajya Sabha Secretary General Dr V.K. Agnihotri also attended the conference. Speakers, Deputy Speakers and MLAs from the northeastern states of the CPA India Region participated in the two-day conference which discussed "Time Keeping in the Chamber" and "Performance Budgeting." This is the second time that Mizoram has hosted the conference, the first being in 1998.

(3) Secretary-General visits 2009 Conference Host

CPA Secretary-General Dr William F. Shija is visiting the Tanzania Branch in July to assist in its initial preparations to host the 2009 Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Arusha. He will also visit the Branch in Zanzibar.

(4) Trinidad & Tobago Post Election Seminar

A Post-Election Seminar for the Parliament of Trinidad & Tobago was held on 24 and 25 June in the Red House in Port-of-Spain. Newly elected Members from the House of Representatives and the Senate as well as eminent local persons were in attendance to participate in and lead some of the discussions. The seminar covered: the Commonwealth and the CPA; Parliament and Democracy: powers, privileges, immunities; Parliament and the media/parliamentary broadcasting and Women in Parliament.

Rt Hon. Patrick Manning, MP, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, spoke at the opening ceremony and Hon. Michael Peart, MP, of Jamaica, the senior CPA Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Regional Representative, made opening remarks on behalf of the CPA.

(5) Workshop on Government and Opposition – Roles, Rights and Responsibilities

Participants from national Parliaments and civil society organizations in West Africa attended a Commonwealth Workshop on "Government and Opposition – Roles, Rights and Responsibilities" in Abuja, Nigeria, from 16 to 18 June. The event was organized by the Commonwealth in co-operation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the support of the National Assembly of Nigeria.

The workshop explored the issues under seven broad headings: the challenge of leadership; the work of government; the work of the opposition; political parties and elections; the role of Parliament; accountability, as provided for by oversight institutions, the media and civil society, and the broader context, especially regarding gender and human rights.

(6) Commonwealth Civil Society Consultation

The CPA was represented by Rt. Hon. Edward Ssekandi, MP, Speaker of the Uganda Parliament, and Ugandan Members Hon. Michael Ssebuliba-Mutumba, MP, Vice-Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, and Hon. Margaret Muhanga-Mugisa, MP, Member of the Public Accounts Committee, at the Commonwealth Civil Society Consultation at Marlborough House in London on 21 May.

The event was designed to increase knowledge and understanding of parliamentary processes for civil society organizations (CSOs) and to explore possibilities for productive relationships between the two sides.

Approximately 25 participants from a wide range of Commonwealth associations and mostly U.K.-based civil society organizations recognized that Commonwealth and other countries are striving to increase accountability and improve policy-making as well as seeking greater involvement of citizens in governance.

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