

## Feedback on IFLA Conference in Singapore from 13 to 23 August 2013

I was nominated to participate in the 29<sup>th</sup> IFLA Pre-Conference of Library and Research Services for Parliaments and the 'World Library and Information Congress : 79<sup>th</sup> IFLA General Conference and Assembly held in Singapore from 13<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2013. The Pre-Conference as well as the General Conference were held in Singapore. The theme of the Pre-Conference was "Making Better Laws : The Unique Role of Parliamentary Library and Research Services", whereas the theme chosen for the Congress was 'Future Libraries : Infinite Possibilities'. This theme was chosen as the IFLA's Trend Report was launched during the Congress.

Main subjects for different sessions of the Pre-Conference are enumerated below :

1. Libraries in Singapore
  - a) Special Libraries in the Public Sector
  - b) Library Services to Members of Parliament
2. Libraries in Asia and the Pacific
  - a) Cooperation between Parliamentary Library of the ASEAN Community Countries before Stepping to ASEAN Community in 2015.
  - b) The Parliamentary Centre of Cambodia : Supporting the Constitutional Role of the Cambodian Parliament
  - c) Speed up the processing and servicing with Library Software
3. Singapore Constitutional Development : Autochtony amid Change and Continuity
4. Governance and Relationships

- a) Library committees
  - b) Cooperation Between Parliamentary Library and Research Services.
5. Libraries Research Services in action :
- a) Supporting members
  - b) Parliamentary Information Services : Role of Library and Research Departments in Parliaments in helping Members of Parliament make Better Laws.
6. Learning From Each Other (Interactive session in Regional or Thematic Groups)
7. The Training for Asia Pacific Libraries had exhaustive discussions on :
- a) ICT in Parliamentary Libraries;
  - b) Social Media;
  - c) Getting the Best out of Regional Groups and Regional Resources; and
  - d) Parliament Libraries Working Well with ICT.

Presentations were made by the participants from other Parliaments and organisations such as IPU; Global Centre for ICT in Parliaments on the broad subjects and also shared their experiences in making the ideas, schemes and projects work effectively in their Parliaments. The sessions were, followed by open discussions and question answer rounds.

Interactive sessions were also held wherein the participants were divided into small groups and were posed with a query/problem on a certain practice being followed in their respective Parliaments. After discussion they have to

provide the best way out to deal with the problem. An extremely important Session on ICT and Social Media was presented by Mr. John Pullinger of United Kingdom, House of Commons. He made a very informative and thought provoking presentation on the challenges and concerns being faced by the information providers and the information seekers the worldwide due to new technologies and innovations. This has changed the way we view, consume and create knowledge. Today, we are living in an increasingly inter connected world, so libraries need to evolve and adopt the technologies to better serve the changing needs of society. You need to go where the people is the new tagline in the present scenario so, Social Media Guidelines are required to be followed. As a joint effort between ASGP IFLA Section on Libraries and Research Services for Parliaments and the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament guidelines are being framed. This session was followed by open discussion, group discussions and experience of the participants who are actively using the Social Media in information dissemination.

Knowledge Cafe: Driving Access and Services was also organised during the Conference which was really educative. Participants got an opportunity to discuss an issue and gain comparative understanding and experience in finding probable solutions, to it from the participants working in similar situations and environment around the globe.

Few Sessions of the General Conference such as :-

- Law Libraries with Government Libraries, Library Research Services for Parliaments (Open Access to Official and Authenticated Legal, Information in Asia);
- Information Technology with Preservation and Conservation, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Library and Research Services for Parliaments: Preserving for the future : Integrating physical and digital preservation; and
- Research Resources for Parliamentarians relating to the Section of the Library and Research Services for Parliaments proved to be quite useful in enhancing my knowledge. Discussions and Meetings were also held about the future course of action of the Section.

I participated in the Standing Committee meetings and made valuable suggestions. I also actively participated in the question answer sessions, group discussions and during the exhibition opening. I also made a special mention regarding the Independence Day on the 15 August during the Session.

I actively participated in all the Sessions of the Conference. Experience sharing by participants from other Parliament was highly useful to me. I learnt a lot about the practices they adopt in their respective Parliaments. Besides it also offered vast scope for informal interactions with the

colleagues in Library and Research set-ups to share our respective concerns and practices.

It was indeed a great opportunity for me to participate in such an International Conference. It helped me increase my professional understanding, especially on the issues concerning Parliamentary Research. I am thankful to the Secretary-General for nominating me to attend this conference and also to all the Sections/individuals for extending their valuable help to me.

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