

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



KENYA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF

**THE STUDY TOUR TO LOK SABHA, INDIA BY THE LIBRARY
COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF KENYA**

10TH – 14TH DECEMBER 2006

**CLERKS CHAMBERS
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
NAIROBI**

2006

MEMBERS OF THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Hon. David Musila, MP - Chairman
The Hon. Jayne Kihara, MP
The Hon. Macharia Mukiri, MP
The Hon. Wycliffe Osundwa, MP
The Hon. Moffat Maitha, MP
The Hon. William Boit, MP
The Hon. Reuben Ndolo, MP
The Hon. Samson M. Okioma, MP
The Hon. David Sudi K. Sutter, MP
The Hon. Kipkorir Marisin Sang, MP
The Hon. Francis A. Ewaton, MP

MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION TO LOK SABHA, INDIA

The Hon. Wycliffe Osundwa, MP - Leader of the Delegation
The Hon. Macharia Mukiri, MP
The Hon. Moffat Maitha, MP
The Hon. David Sudi K. Sutter, MP
The Hon. Kipkorir Marisin Sang, MP

The committee was accompanied by: -

Nicholas Ole Matiko - Secretary to the delegation
Esther M. Kamau - Librarian

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The delegation wishes to give special thanks to the Speaker of the Kenya National Assembly the Hon. Francis K.X. ole Kaparo, EGH, MP for giving the Committee an opportunity to travel to India to share with their counterparts experience on library and IT services available to Members. Equally, the Committee wishes to underline their appreciation to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Somnath Chatterje, MP, for accepting and hosting the delegation.

The Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Charanjit Singh Atwal, MP, who is also the Chairman of the Library Committee did a lot to ensure that our delegation had an enjoyable and informative stay while in India. This is to thank him and Members of his Library Committee for the information given to our Committee.

Finally, this is to pay special tribute to Members of the Kenyan Mission in New Delhi led by the High Commissioner, H.E. Mr. Francis K. Baya. Protocol arrangements and hosting of the Jamuhuri celebrations were well arranged. This is therefore to thank them all together with all those who in many ways made the study tour successful.

1.0. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Library Committee of the Kenya National Assembly is established in accordance with the Standing Orders to among other issues, consider and advice parliament, on such matters concerning the library as may be referred to it by the House from time to time. The Committee is also charged with the responsibility to make proposals and consider suggestions for the improvement of the library and to assist Members of the National Assembly to fully utilize the services provided by the library.

The parliamentary library on its part was established in 1910 with the mandate of selecting, ordering, purchasing of books, periodicals, newspapers and journals; cataloguing and classification of books; indexing and abstracting of both books and periodicals and the general organization of the library collection.

The service also involves packaging and repackaging of information, online searching and retrieval, provision of reference, e-mail and internet services and ensuring that the collection is well maintained and organized for easy retrieval and dissemination of information.

Having been established in 1910 the parliamentary library of the Kenya National Assembly is one of the oldest in the region. Over the years, it has expanded both in stock and size. Currently it is operating in three parliamentary buildings i.e. Main Parliament Buildings (currently undergoing renovation and will serve as a reference and Multi-Media Centre), County Hall building which serves as the archival centre of all parliamentary documents and the Continental which will be the refernce and Members only reading room.

The Parliamentary Service Commission has for the last three years embarked on a project to upgrade the library, to improve the capacity and fiscal facilities, IT and Human Resources to enable the library meet the challenges and provide up-to-date services to Members and staff of the Kenya National Assembly. In so doing, the Committee undertook a study visit to India to share with their counterparts experience on the operations of the Indian Parliamentary Library. The following are the findings and recommendations of the study tour of the Library Committee undertaken between 10th and 17th of December 2006.

1.1. OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE PARLIAMENT OF INDIA

The Library Committee embarked on an initiative to visit other parliaments to familiarise and share with their counterparts' experiences on the functioning and operation of their libraries. In particular, the committee visited the Parliament of India, the worlds' largest democracy for the study. Further, the committee was

also keen to learn more on the Information Communication Technology (ICT) programmes available.

1.2. TERMS OF REFERENCE.

- ✓ To learn about the operation of the library and related services
- ✓ To study the information services available to Members of Parliament.
- ✓ To familiarise with live coverage of parliamentary proceedings if available.
- ✓ To learn about the ICT programmes and how they relate to the library functions. To that end, the committee sought to know how parliament is hooked to the Internet Service Provider (ISP)
- ✓ To establish ways and means through which the library committee can do to improve library services i.e. policy formulation and enhance service delivery.
- ✓ To establish other roles apart from library services that the committee can play as well as the relationship between the committee and the ICT committee.

2.0. THE PARLIAMENT OF INDIA.

The Indian Independence Act of 1947 passed by the British Parliament declared the Constituent Assembly of India to be a fully sovereign body. However, it was until the adoption of the first constitution in 1950, which legitimised the first general election held in 1952. Parliament was constituted under the provisions of the new constitution. On the same note, the same constitution of 1950 did provide for the establishment of a bicameral parliament consisting of the President and two Houses known as the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) and the House of the People (Lok Sabha).

2.1. RAJYA SABHA

The Rajya Sabha was constituted for the first time on 3 April 1952. It was to consist of not more than 250 members. Of these, 12 are nominated by the President for their special knowledge or practical experience in such matters as literature, science, art and social service. The remaining seats are allocated to the

various states and union territories, roughly in proportion to their population; each state is, however, represented by at least one member. The minimum age for membership of the House is 30 years.

Rajya Sabha is a permanent body not subject to dissolution, but one-third of its members retire every second year by rotation and are replaced by newly-elected members. The term of an individual member of Rajya Sabha is six years. There are currently 245 sitting members.

2.2. THE LOK SABHA

The Lok Sabha is composed of representatives of the people chosen by direct election on the basis of adult suffrage. The maximum strength of the House envisaged by the Constitution is 552 up to 530 members to represent the states, up to 20 members to represent the union territories and not more than two members of the Anglo-Indian Community to be nominated by the President if in his opinion that community is not adequately represented in the House. The qualifying age for membership of the Lok Sabha is 25 years. Currently, there are 545 members. Each parliament has a lifespan of 5 years unless in the event of early dissolution or in a state of emergency.

2.3. FUNCTIONS OF THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT

As in other parliamentary democracies, Parliament of India has a cardinal function of legislation, overseeing of administration, passing of the budget, ventilation of public grievances and discussing Draft Five Year Plans, national policies and international relations.

3.0. MEETING WITH THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE OF THE LOK SABHA

A meeting between the Kenyan delegation and their host, the Library Committee of India took place on 13 December 2006 at the Library buildings. The Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Hon. Charanjit Singh Atwal, MP, chaired the meeting. During the meeting, the Deputy Speaker of the Indian Parliament welcomed our delegation to India and gave a brief about India and the developments in the parliament.

3.1. MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN LIBRARY COMMITTEE PRESENT

1. Shri Charanjit Singh Atwal - Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committee
2. Dr. Thokchom Meinya, - Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha.

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| 3. Dr. K. Kasturirangan | - | Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha |
| 4. Shri Devdas Apte | - | “ “ “ “ |
| 5. Dr. Prbha Thakur | - | “ “ “ “ |

Here below is the inaugural address of the Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha to the Kenyan delegation.

Dear friends!

It is a matter of great privilege for me to extend my heartiest welcome to the Honourable Members of the Library Committee of the Kenyan Parliament. I also welcome the Members of our Library Committee on this auspicious occasion.

Friends, let me mention that Parliament Library, the second largest library of the country is having a treasure of 1.4 million publications and a dedicated staff at our disposal.

With a view to advising the Speaker on matters concerning the Library, an advisory Committee called the Library Committee is constituted. The Committee was first constituted by an announcement made by the Speaker in the Provisional Parliament on 21 November 1950. The Committee, at present, consists of the Deputy Speaker, five other members nominated from the Lok Sabha and three members from Rajya Sabha. The Deputy Speaker is the ex-officio Chairman of the Committee. Like other Parliamentary Committees, the Library Committee is constituted every year.

Friends, let inform you all that the purpose of the visit of the Library Committee of the Kenyan Parliament is to familiarize with itself with the operations and functions of the Library and IT services which are available to Members of Parliament of India.

I assure on behalf of the Library Committee of Indian Parliament of the best possible help to the Library Committee of Kenyan Parliament.

I also request Honourable Members of our Library Committee to share their valuable knowledge of our Library with the Honourable Members of the Library Committee of the Kenyan Parliament.

Friends, before I invite Dr. R.K. Chadha, Director of our Parliament Library to mention in brief the function of our Library, request Honourable Members of the Library Committee of the Kenyan Parliament to introduce themselves.

Once again I thank you all.

3.2. PRESENTATION BY THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF INDIAN PARLIAMENT

The Parliamentary Committee of India briefed the Kenya Library Committee on the library services of the Indian parliament. It was noted that though their library had a long-standing history, it was not until 2002 when parliament library moved into the new building. The committee was informed that the current library has been developed into what is called the Parliament Library, and Reference, Research, Documentation and Information Services (LARRDIS)

LARRDIS is presently divided into the following functional divisions viz (1) Library division; (2) Reference Division; (3) research and Information Division; (4) Media Relations division; (5) Parliamentary Museum and Archives Division; (6) Computer Division; (7) Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training.

A brief on each of the above-mentioned departments is given here below.

1. LIBRARY SERVICES

The Kenyan delegation did appreciate the massive resources allocated by the Indian parliament to the library services. The library, one of the finest and richest repositories in the country, is located in the newly constructed parliament library building. Its present holding is about 1.25million volumes of printed books, reports, governmental publications, U.N. reports, debates, gazettes and other documents, including periodicals, newspapers, and publications brought by the Lok Sabha secretariat.

A library committee is constituted every year by the Speaker, Lok Sabha, to advise him on all matters concerning the development of parliament library.

2. RESEARCH AND INFORMATION SERVICES

This department is charged with the responsibility of providing information and research services to the members. The overall functions of the research division are broadly to assess in advance the information requirements of members by anticipating and identifying subjects of current parliamentary interest, including legislative measures on which parliament is likely to undertake discussions and which are likely to generate demands from members for detailed information and data.

3. COMPUTERISED INFORMATION SERVICES

Cognizant of the fact that objective, factual and timely information is paramount to members of parliament, the Indian Library took significant steps in adopting technology to assist parliamentarians in the effective discharge of their duties.

The parliament library made a modest beginning towards automation in 1985 when a computer centre for managing the parliament library information system (PARLIS) was set up. Later, an expert committee was set up in 1991 under the chairmanship of Secretary-General, Lok Sabha, to identify relevant areas for introduction of IT and suggest an integrated scheme for implementing the same.

Currently the efforts made have yielded fruits. The computer centre has played a key role in modernization and computerization not only to the parliament library but also for the entire Lok Sabha secretariat. The delegation was happy to learn that parliamentary proceedings must be on the web by 11:00 a.m. the next day.

Further, the committee was informed that a law was recently enacted on the freedom of Information Technology. In the same spirit, the law demands that every publisher is required to place any newly published book or magazine at the parliamentary library. All government publications as well as those of the UN and other internationally recognized agencies must equally send copies of their publications to the parliament library. Former Members of Parliament are allowed to use the library after paying Rupees 500 as annual subscription fee.

Keeping in view the immediate and succinct information requirements of the parliamentarians to discharge their duties, in an effective manner, computer facilities have been provided to the members of parliament at their residences/work places. Further, each member of the Lok Sabha have been provided with a note-book or desk-top computer with digital versatile disk (DVD) facility having fax, modem card along with a printer and a palmop computer.

4. PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICE.

The press and public relations service, a constituent unit of LARRDIS, was set up in April 1956 to cater to the needs of the press and provide facilities to enable them to cover the proceedings of Lok Sabha. This service also endeavours to establish better liaison with the parliamentary

correspondents and the various government and private publicity organizations and communications media for the publicity of parliamentary and other activities of the Lok Sabha.

The press and public relations wing maintains a close liaison with the press and the various government publicity organizations and communication media for the dissemination of information to the public on the business transacted by the House and its committees.

5. PARLIAMENTARY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

The Kenyan delegation was impressed by the tour of the parliamentary museum and archives. Preservation of the historical events leading to India's independence were amazing. The cultural and traditional representation as preserved at the archives gave the delegation a deeper appreciation of the role played by the museum.

It was in 1976 that the Lok Sabha secretariat set up a parliamentary archives of photographs and films to preserve an authentic, comprehensive, complete and up-to-date pictorial record of the history of the institution of parliament and its activities and personalities.

The basic aim of the parliamentary museum and archives is to preserve the past and the present for the future by protecting from ravages of time and neglect all the precious records, historic documents and articles connected with the constitution and parliament and through them to make the history and growth of parliament institutions and the political system better understood.

4.0. CONCLUSION

The visit to the Indian parliament by the Kenyan delegation was both timely and informative. The Kenyan parliament has for sometime been developing an organized information management system to cater to the multifarious information requirement of parliamentarians. Parliament appreciates the fact that Information is of vital importance to a member of parliament to effectively discharge his/her responsibilities. A large number of issues, both national and international are discussed in parliament at different times. To be an effective parliamentarian, a member needs to be well informed of the world around him.

Considering the demands on his time from various quarters, it may not be possible or even feasible for a member to access all the information available in a parliamentary library and other related sources. It is imperative that members

are kept well informed of varied developments by furnishing them with non-partisan, objective and timely information on a regular basis.

The tour of the Indian parliament gave the delegation a broader picture of the dream that the Kenyan parliament longs to achieve. The strategic location of the library coupled with the four main departments shared together under the umbrella of LARRDIS is a milestone. This has enabled the MP's of the Indian parliament to access the right information at the right time. Commitment of the parliamentary staff and the availability of reading materials and IT services has earned India respect and created a niche for themselves. Live broadcasting of the parliamentary proceedings has increased the democratic space in that country by ensuring that the people follow daily business of the house.

5.0. RECOMMENDATIONS

After the successful tour of the Indian parliament, the Committee came up with the following recommendations in order to improve the services offered by the Kenyan National Assembly Library.

1. This is to recommend that the Parliamentary Service Commission to come up with a task force to look at possibilities of establishing a museum and archives within parliament grounds. This is to preserve the rich and diverse cultures and heritage as well as political history of our country.
2. Live broadcast of parliamentary proceedings of the Kenya National Assembly is long overdue. The Committee underlines the need for the process to be speeded up. This is will enable the House be accessed by the general public and the international community.
3. The Committee further recommends that the Commission needs to further training of the parliamentary staff on the implementation of the IT and library programmes. This will help staff cope up with the ever changing IT services. The Committee recommends that Library staff be attached to the Indian parliament to learn the operations of a modern parliamentary library.
4. Training for MP's is also paramount. They need to appreciate the role of IT and how it can help them in their oversight role. Refresher course and special modules can be organized for the MP's.
5. The Committee recommends that Members of Parliament to be provided with laptops and Internet connections in their residence as well as in their

offices. This will enable staff relay information to all MP's wherever they will be at the right time.

6. The Committee needs to gather more information from other world democracies on the integration of library services and Technology Information to meet the needs of the next century.
7. The Committee recommends that the Parliamentary Service Commission allocate enough resources in the next financial year to allow completion of the modernisation project of the parliamentary library.

Signed.....
(Chairman)

Date.....