

Burma Parliamentary Monitoring Workshops and One-Day Conference in New Delhi

Summary

A three-day workshop on Parliament monitoring using very useful tools like **Right To Information (RTI)**, which has become an Act now and other monitoring mechanisms was held in New Delhi between Dec 3 to Dec 4 and on Dec 6, 2012 for Civil Society workers, legal professionals and writers from Burma. The workshop was essential for the Burmese group in that it focused on the fundamental elements of how democracy functions through a parliamentary system of governance.

The well-established systems of workings of parliament in India and in Indonesia, which is shaping up as one of the better functioning democracies in South East Asia has been the focus of the project on “Training on Parliament Education (TAPE)-Burma initiative to learn from and use it to make for a effective parliamentary monitoring system in Burma.

The Parliamentary Research Services (PRS), which is a research wing of the prestigious Center for Policy Research (CPR), India were the key partners in this venture. PRS provided resource persons besides roping in RTI activists and also budget management experts who provided in-depth knowledge about how different organs of governance can be monitored using some very practical and easy tools. Resource persons from the Social Watch India also provided technical inputs on the third day of the workshop.

Besides the workshop, a one-day conference titled, “Myanmar-Distant Neighbours” was also organised in collaboration with the Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi, Center for Policy Research (CPR), India and ANFREL-Foundation. The conference was planned in addition to the workshops to generate interest amongst member of Parliaments, Think Tanks, Policy Makers, Academics, Media and Democracy Workers in India to explore possibilities to work with CSO groups like ANFREL to make the process of the democratic transition in Burma more accountable and credible.

The conference essentially discussed **‘Evolving Political Landscapes in Myanmar’** and **‘Myanmar & Transition: The Challenges of Sustainability.’** It brought together an outstanding group of academics, political activists, media persons, election workers etc in an effort to create an understanding of the changes of Burma and how it has impact in the whole region.