

Library News

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Vol. v No. 1, 1977 January/March.

CEYLON NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES BOARD

72, Bauddhaloka Mawata,

COLOMBO 4

BUNKO

Katei bunko, Chiiki bunko

Bunko is a Japanese word which literally means "a store house of literature". It is often used for a private collection of books. When the word is used in connection with children today, however, it refers to a small children's library sponsored by various non - governmental groups and individuals. In Japan, where public libraries are unfortunately not yet well developed, these small private libraries in the area of children's reading have an important role to play and are gaining considerable influence over the total sphere of children and books in the country.

'Bunko' originated in private homes. A person, often a housewife who is interested in sharing her love of books with children in her neighbourhood invites them to her house, usually once a week in the afternoon. She then offers them her collection of children's books which they can either take home to read or have read to them. This is just one step ahead of lending one's own books to personal friends with whom one wants to share the pleasure of reading.

Such a library run by an individual is called Katei bunko, or a home library and came into being in the country about twenty years ago. The idea caught the attention of many adults who were concerned with children's reading and by and by people volunteered to sponsor such a library in their neighbourhood.

Writers of children's books, who naturally have a large collection, began to offer their books to children. It was a good way for them to have first hand knowledge of how children respond to books.

Older housewives, whose children had out-grown their collection of children's books and who were left with some leisure time, picked up the idea. It served to keep them occupied and gave them the satisfaction of working for others, especially for growing children.

Meanwhile, the younger housewives, whose growing children were in urgent need of good reading materials, were also drawn to the idea. Those young mothers got together and formed a group. Each contributed a small sum of money with which they jointly purchased books to be circulated among their children. It was the beginning of a co-operative effort to provide children with good books. When such a group was formed in a large government housing area, for example, instead of having the collection in a private home, they

placed it in the community centre, thus giving the library more of a public character.

A library that was no longer located in the home, nor the management purely personal, was called Chiiki bunko, or a community library. Though called by that it was financed by concerned individuals and managed by their voluntary services.

Soon kindergartens and nursery schools began to develop libraries, which were called en bunko, or a kindergarten library. Christian churches and Buddhist temples joined in the movement and started small libraries of their own for children who came to their Sunday schools.

Thus interest in bunko and children's reading has grown all over the country and, as a result, the development of public libraries accelerated. The new public libraries make it a point to serve children and when they have a budget for books but not for personnel, they even try to encourage mothers to open a bunko, promising to provide the necessary books for them. Such libraries that are publicly supported but privately run will grow as service points of the public library, and in fact, there were cases where the efforts of mothers earned a branch library in their community.

It is said that there are about 4,000 bunko of various kinds throughout the country now. It is interesting to note that the number is seven times that of public libraries which render services to children.

This idea of a small private library for children seems to fascinate many people outside Japan who share an interest in children and books. It naturally appealed to people in whose countries public libraries are yet to be developed, for this is something they can start themselves and yet it has the potential to become a stimulus for children - to motivate them to read - as well as adults - to let them realize the need for good books and libraries for children.

Although the increase of such private libraries for children will not be the final solution to the various problems concerning children and books in Japan, the idea can very effectively be applied to some countries as the first step towards betterment of children's books and libraries.

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE AT THE
MEETING OF SUPERVISORS OF
LIBRARY AND DOCUMENTATION
SCHOOLS IN THE ASIAN REGION.
(BANGALORE, INDIA) 9-12
NOVEMBER 1976.

Each working group discussed in depth and detail the respective issues and submitted suggestions and recommendation which were then considered in a plenary session. The responding panel consisted of Mr. U D I Sirisena (Chairman), Mr S Parthasarathy, Mr J S Soosai, and Mr K S Deshpande. Following the discussions, explanations and clarifications, areas for framing recommendations relating to intra regional cooperation in L & I S education were identified.

The recommendations, discussed and finalized in a plenary session, are given below.

1. Development of the L & I S courses should be phased and that means and methods be developed or adopted by each country to implement the phasing in conformity with its manpower needs in L & I S, resources available, pattern of education and educational administration, etc., without detracting from the achievement of the objectives of the courses concerned.
2. Professional courses in L & I S should preferably be offered by universities and university - type institutions.
3. Following levels of training courses and research programmes should be offered in the universities of the region:
 - i Undergraduate level: Bachelor's degree with L & I S as one of the subjects.
 - ii Post - graduate level: Master's degree in L & I S
Ph D in L & I S.

Short - term introductory courses aimed at developing manpower at the technicians level (also called semi - professionals and para - professionals) should preferably be offered by organizations and statutory bodies, and libraries, and that such courses

should not normally be the responsibility of the universities.

4. In the context of the accelerated development of L & I S education programmes in the region and with a view to ensure compatibility in the approach to the designing of the curriculum for the different levels in L & I S courses, it will be helpful to use a set of guidelines for the purpose, and in this connection the meeting noted with appreciation the action already taken by Unesco* to formulate such guidelines.

5. (i) The existing Unesco directories of L & I S schools be kept updated periodically:

(ii) A compendium of courses offered in the schools/ departments in the region be compiled;

(iii) A register of the teachers of L & I S in the region be prepared and kept updated; and

(iv) A uniform set of guidelines be applied for the accreditation of L & I S courses in the region.

6. (a) The following projects should be initiated;

(i) Survey of course materials and instructional aids developed and used in the different L & I S schools/ courses in the region be carried out with a view to compiling the returns of the survey into a systematic hand - book or guidebook; and

(ii) Where necessary, new course materials be developed to suit the specific needs of the different countries in terms of language of instruction, orientation and other special characteristics.

(b) That these projects are appropriate areas for collaborative effort among the countries of the region and for support from international bodies -- such as, Unesco, IFLA and FID -- and regional bodies.

7. A regional training programme (including continuing education) for L & I S teachers be established with support and assistance

*Project arising from the UNISIST Ad Hoc Committee on Education and Training Policy and Programme, 2nd Session, Paris, 19 - 21 May 1976.

from the countries of the region, and international bodies such as Unesco, IFLA, UNIDO, IDRC, etc.

8. (1) Joint research programmes (including inter - disciplinary areas) among the L & I S schools in the region be promoted; and L & I S schools in the region be shared.

9. The planners and policy makers of the World University give due consideration to IFLA's efforts and the unanimous recommendation of this Meeting that provision be made in the World University for high level research in L & I S.

10. Continuing education programmes should be organized on a collaborative basis among the countries of the region.

11. The same body (a) could conveniently take the responsibility for the follow - up action on the recommendations 1 - 10 above, and (b) also develop a mechanism to coordinate and disseminate information about about the various projects, programmes, seminars, conferences, etc in the field of L & I S education in the region.

12. L & I S education and research should be included as an area for such collaboration.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION AND
TRAINING IN MALAYSIA.

By D.E.K. Wijasuriya

1. BACKGROUND

Malaysia with a multi-racial population of over 12 million (Malays, Chinese, Indians, Kadazans, Dayaks etc) and one of the highest per capita incomes in Southeast Asia is one of the least populated countries in the region. Literacy is well over 75 per cent and education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels is widely provided. Bahasa Malaysia is the official language and is the medium of instruction at primary and secondary levels and increasingly at tertiary levels as well. Publishing within the country is largely in Bahasa Malaysia, English, Chinese and Tamil with an annual total output of less than 2,000 titles. Malaysia is a Federation of 13 States and hence has, in addition to the Federal Government, 13 State Governments.

Library development tends to follow somewhat traditional lines. There are five university libraries, three of which compare in size, resources and services to some of the newer English universities. By and large, the university libraries are the best endowed and have the largest collections of materials. Special libraries constitute another significant group and some of them, notably the Rubber Research Institute Library has the largest collection on natural rubber anywhere in the world. Public libraries are another developing area with State Public Library Corporations set up by State Enactments. School libraries fall within the ambit of the Ministry of Education and are provided although at somewhat rudimentary levels. Malaysia lacks a National Documentation Centre but has a National Library, which, under the provisions of the National Library Act, 1972 has a very wide mandate to coordinate the library and information resources of the country.

2. EXISTING TRAINING FACILITIES

Library education in Malaysia has been a relatively recent phenomenon. Formal part - time training courses have been

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provided in the country since 1963 but largely to prepare candidates for the British professional examinations and leading to the A.L.A (Associateship of the Library Association). These courses, provided initially through the auspices of the Gulbenkian Foundation (U.K.) have since been continued by the Malaysian Library Association, supported by Asia Foundation grants. With the termination of overseas examinations facilities by the Library Association (U.K.) in 1975, a course was started by the Association to prepare candidates for the Registration examination of the Library Association of Australia and leading to the ALLA (Associateship of the Library Association of Australia). This facility, however, will cease in 1977.

Malaysia's only library school, called the Sekolah Kajian Sains Perpustakaan was established at the Institute Teknologi Mara in 1968. The school has a full - time faculty of qualified staff and has a current student enrolment of over 100 (1st, 2nd, and 3rd year). While initially the School prepared students for the British professional examinations, this was replaced in 1973 with a new curriculum oriented towards local needs and a 3 - year diploma course was introduced. Graduates with the new local Diploma have been produced since 1975 and are being absorbed into library services. The minimum entry requirement for the course is one principal level pass in the Higher School Certificate. The 3- year course covers the core areas of library studies as well as Sociology, Malay and English studies and includes periods of practical work in libraries. The curriculum is under constant review to adapt itself to the changing needs within the country. The I.T.M. Diploma in Library Science is equated with the General Degree for salary grading purposes.

In addition to the above provisions, the Government's Public Services Department sends each year a number of promising persons abroad for training in librarianship on Federal Scholarships. Scholarships are sent largely to library schools in the U.K., Australia or New Zealand and training is largely at post-graduate level. Individual university libraries as well as state public library corporations also recruit and send their staff for training abroad from time to time.

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Other levels of training in the country include a one - year course for teacher - librarians at the Specialist Teachers' Training Institute and library utilization courses at the Teachers Training Colleges and the Faculty of Education at the University of Malaya. Also of significance here are the courses for para - professionals provided by the National Library to meet service requirements, and to complete the picture are the short - term courses organized mostly by the Malaysian Library Association, some of which are at a very elementary or introductory level, while others are in the nature of continuing education courses, such as computer applications in libraries, precis indexing, etc.

3. ACCREDITATION / RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS

Higher education is controlled by the Government in accordance with the Universities and Colleges Act. No new universities or courses can be introduced without the formal approval of the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. Hence approval of a course or a qualification ~~by the Ministry, implies implicit~~ recognition and accreditation. However, there is in existence the Secretariat for the Evaluation of qualifications, within the Public Services Department mentioned earlier. The National Library is consulted from time to time. However, neither the Malaysian Library Association nor the National Library is represented formally on the accrediting committees.

4. MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS

These have not been systematically undertaken, neither have the different levels been fully identified. It is important that Government Planners, financial authorities and the library schools prepare projections jointly so that student intake is strictly controlled in keeping with the country's capacity to absorb qualified personnel.

5. PROPOSALS FOR POST - GRADUATE TRAINING

The Malaysian Library Association has made proposals since 1965 to set up a Post - Graduate School of Librarianship at the University of Malaya. The first proposal was made in 1965 but was

considered premature and hence was not approved. A second proposal was made in 1972, for a School of Librarianship and Archives and this is still under consideration by the authorities. There is concern on the part of the authorities that the country does not need a second school which could lead to an oversupply of professional manpower. Post - graduate training leading to a Diploma or a Master's Degree from the University is considered a first qualification only. There are an increasing number of Malaysians who would like to read for higher degrees over and above their first qualification in .. librarianship for which no provision exists in the country. Research in Librarianship is consequently not provided for.

6. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The Malaysian Library Association set up a Committee on Library Education in early 1976 to look into the whole question of library education in the country and to make appropriate recommendations. The School of Library Science, the National Library as well as selected Universities are represented on the Committee.

" Education makes a people easy to to lead,
but difficult to drive; easy to govern but
impossible to enslave." - LORD BROUGHAM 1778 - 1868

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NEWS ITEMS

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1971 INSURRECTION TRIAL
DOCUMENTS, (Colombo)

The first part of the C.J.C. report pertaining to the April insurrection is printed and is on sale at the government Publications Bureau. The English version of 445 pages is ready. It is understood that the Sinhala version would take several weeks more.

READING HABITS AND TASTES
OF THE PEOPLE OF SRI LANKA.

Two surveys, one on the reading habits of the people and the other on the reading tastes of children, have been organized by the Unesco National Council for Sri Lanka under a proposal suggested by the Unesco Centre for Book Development in Asia in Karachi.

The National Book Development Council of Sri Lanka is to carry out the survey on the reading habits of the people with a view to learning the types of books that people read and why, what books and periodicals are available, and the different categories of readers according to levels of education and vocation.

The survey, planned in consultation with the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka is designed to cover households in the urban, rural and plantation sectors of all 22 districts in the island. Data will be collected on: types of books that are read; reasons for reading as well as for not reading; the availability of reading materials and the demand for them; differences in the reading habits of various income, occupational and religious groups and communities, and constraints on reading habits.

In order to ensure that all aspects relating to readers are covered, four independent surveys are to be conducted corresponding to the four sources of data;

- (i) household survey,
- (ii) School survey (including institution of higher education),
- (iii) library survey and (iv) book sellers and publishers survey.

The survey on the reading tastes of children covers grades 6, 7, 8, and 9 and is conducted under the guidance of the Assistant Commissioner Commissioner, Educational Publications Department. Care has also been taken to ensure coverage of the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim school population in these grades. The period of reference is one year.

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NEWS ITEMS

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IFLA STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC
LIBRARIES IN SINHALA.

The Sri Lanka (Sinhala) edition of IFLA standards for Public Libraries prepared by the Ceylon National Library Services Board is in press.

This book provides guidance to maintain efficient public library services. It is recommended that these standards should be accepted as guide lines for the development of national public library services and should provide a basis of formulation of national standards.

This edition of standards for Public Libraries, translated and edited by Mr. N. Amarasinghe, Director, National Library Services is one of a series of publications planned by the CNLSB, to meet the growing need of professional literature in Sinhala.

EXHIBITION OF THIRD WORLD BOOKS

"Books for and from the Third World" will be on show at a one day exhibition at London University on February 1.

Twenty - six publishers will exhibit their latest publications specifically designed for the developing world as well as books on emergent countries for British school children, students and undergraduates.

The exhibition, organised by the University's Department of Education in Developing Countries, will also include a number of publications from the Third World.

Mr R. Gardner of the University's Department of Education who organised the exhibition, the 25 th to take place since World War 11, said that originally it was aimed to show teachers and students going out to work in developing countries the type of books available and where they could be obtained. (Ceylon Daily Mirror Friday, January 28th 1977).

RESOURCE SHARING OF LIBRARIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

Seminar theme.

The IFLA / UNESCO pre - session seminar, to be held at Antwerp University from Monday, August 29, to Saturday, September 3, 1977, will deal with "Resource sharing of libraries in developing countries".

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NEWS ITEMS

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The seminar is linked to IFLA's 50th Anniversary meeting (Brussels, 3 - 10 September), and to the UNESCO conference on Universal Bibliographical Control (starting in Paris on September 12).

place at the disposition of the scientific and industrial community samples from the ocean's depths from as many geographical sites as possible. Located in a 1,000m air - conditioned building and equipped with an analytical laboratory, it can house more than 30,000 submarine rock samples.

Sub - themes.

Sub - themes to be discussed are ; cooperative Acquisition Plans, processing centers, cooperative storage, cooperative delivery, library net working,

Samples found since 1969 by the Brittany Oceanological Center are now being classified.

(News from France Dec. 1976. No. 3)

Participants.

Participants from both developing and industrialized countries would be invited.

{IFLA / UNESCO pre session seminar for developing countries August 29 - September 3, 1977 Antwerp University (Belgium)).

A LITHOLOGICAL LIBRARY !

The Bureau for Geological and Mining Research (BRGM) and the National Center for the Exploitation of Oceans (CNEXO) recently created a National Lithological Library of Marine Samples at the Brittany Oceanological Center.

The new library will collect, preserve, process and

National Digitization Project

National Science Foundation

Institute : National Library and Documentation Services Board

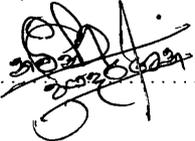
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