

Library News

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Volume : 5 No. 3

1977 July/September

CEYLON NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES BOARD

72, Buddhaloka Mawata,

COLOMBO 4

BL-2759

20 JUL 1991
SRI LANKA NATIONAL
LIBRARY SERVICES BOARD

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* Reconstituted as from 22nd September 1977.

Address by Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow
Director-General of the Unesco, at
the opening session of the world
Congress of librarians, Brussels,
5 September 1977.

DG/77/11

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today is the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the International Federation of Library Associations. May I address my warmest congratulations to the Federation on having attained this age of maturity and wisdom, while constantly maintaining its tradition for dynamic action and extending its field of influence - as can indeed be seen from the number and quality of the participants who have come, at its behest, from all parts of the world to meet in this gracious city of Brussels.

It is my pleasure to offer the Federation Unesco's most sincere good wishes for the success of the Congress and I wish to welcome all those whose presence here is a proof of their interest in libraries, their development and modernization.

Without minimizing the importance of the oral tradition for the illiterate millions who make up a large proportion of the world's population, or that of the new technical methods by which science enables man to gather and disseminate information, it cannot be denied that books, and the written word in general, remain in the modern world the privileged vehicle of knowledge and thought and that, today as in the, there is no more precious instrument than the library for the conservation and transmission of knowledge.

Libraries, like museums and archives, preserve the essential sources of knowledge - the memory of the world - and are thereby the repositories of irreplaceable elements of the cultural heritage of mankind, helping to perpetuate from generation to generation the values which form the basis of society. Real links between the past and the future, they are called upon to play a leading role in increasing awareness of cultural identity, by encouraging the preservation and full flowering of all those elements through which the individual is deeply rooted in his own community and that community in the world. Their cultural wealth is derived from the diversity which they reflect and which is so clearly revealed through books. In this way they gradually become, "institutes of international understanding", to quote the words of Andre Maurois in the work which he wrote for Unesco on public libraries.

This important function of the library in the life of the different communities has been greatly extended and diversified in recent decades, following the trends of the modern world. The tremendous increase in knowledge, the need for constant renewal of knowledge already acquired, the increasing desire felt by people in many sections of the population to improve their general level of culture or simply to occupy their leisure hours, the importance of collecting, preserving and disseminating in written form the oral traditions of the different peoples of the world - these are all factors which have led libraries to increase and modernize their activities.

The efforts which have been made throughout the world to supply libraries with adequate resources to meet new needs quantitatively and qualitatively, as they appear, are aimed particularly at making the wealth of knowledge which they contain accessible to all. It is indeed significant that this is the central theme of your discussions. At a point in history where the democratization of education and the dissemination of culture stand out as a practical and moral necessity for all countries, it is painfully obvious that many men and women are still far from being able to benefit from the intellectual and cultural enrichment offered by libraries, that the number of libraries is often ridiculously low in comparison with needs and that those which already exist have not all yet been able, or known how to, modify their structures, activities and methods or organization in order to become, precisely, "accessible to all".

And yet, any person entering a library should be able to find the information he seeks; through books, of course, but also if necessary through audio-visual material intelligently designed to supplement books, not to replace them.

At the outset, the user is often seeking no more than an item of information, perhaps professional in nature. If he goes no further than this, the library often seems to him like a mysterious forest, which baffles yet attracts him. It is the duty of the librarian, then, to guide him through this forest of printed texts, stimulating his interest and providing him with the means to discover and enjoy all its resources.

Starting with books, but also going beyond them, the library is thus led to transform itself gradually into a focal point for cultural action, a meeting place for reflection, a centre of cultural activity, encouraging the participation of the community and being stimulated in turn by that community, in a dialectic movement which is the very condition of democratic access to modern cultural media. These are obvious aims which I would hesitate to evoke before specialists of your calibre, if Unesco had not - like yourselves and like IFLA - a deep desire to see them put into practice throughout the world.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The profound convergence between the action of the International Federation of Library Associations and that of Unesco received factual recognition from the outset, in that consultative relations were established between the two organizations in 1948. In other words, IFLA has been constantly associated with the preparation and implementation of the Organization's programmes and has made available the results of its experience at most of the major meetings which Unesco has organized for promoting the study of questions relating to libraries. This was the case recently, for example, at the Intergovernmental Conference on the Planning of National Documentation, Library and Archives Infra-structures, held in Paris in September 1974, the conclusions of which gave the Secretariat much food for thought, during the preparation of Unesco's Medium-Term Plan for 1977-1982, in regard to the development and promotion of information systems and services.

The International Conference on Cataloguing Principles, convened by IFLA in Paris in 1969, with support from Unesco and the Council on Library Resources, also stands out, when viewed now in perspective, as an especially important landmark on the path to worldwide harmonization of cataloguing techniques.

There is every reason to believe that the International Congress on National Bibliographies which, in co-operation with IFLA, will be organized at Unesco Headquarters from 12 to 15 September 1977, will also lead to a major development in the rationalization and harmonization of bibliographical practice. Unesco is glad to be associated with IFLA in this venture which should lead to the preparation of an agreement on standards and methods which might be adopted for the establishment of national bibliographical systems. This would be a welcome contribution to the continuing efforts which have been made jointly by your organization and Unesco to promote a system of universal bibliographical control.

The increasing part played in your activities by national associations of all regions of the world also seems to me an excellent sign for the future. It is by extending their representativity that the international non-governmental organisations will be able to assert their universality and above all render better service to the world community. The systematic organization of seminars attended by representatives of the developing countries - for which Unesco has provided aid - seems in this context likely to strengthen your action in favour of the development of libraries throughout the world.

Many of you know that the General Conference of Unesco decided at its nineteenth session, held at Nairobi in October-November, 1976 - to establish a General Information Programme with activities which should contribute towards achieving the objective concerning the "development and promotion of information systems and services at the national, regional and international levels" in the Organization's Medium-Term Plan. This general objective subsumes four sub-objectives, namely:

- (1) the promotion of the formulation of information policies and plans;
- (2) the promotion of the establishment of norms and their dissemination;
- (3) assistance in the development of information infrastructures;
- (4) the promotion of theoretical and practical training and education of professionals and users of information.

An Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme, which will hold its first meeting in November, will have the task of guiding the planning and implementation of these activities; within the Unesco Secretariat, these will come under a new division placed under the responsibility of the Director of the Bureau of Studies and Programming, which is directly under my authority.

The General Information Programme is intended mainly to meet the need to propose principles, guidelines, standards, methods and general procedures applicable to all fields of knowledge, both for the international transfer of information and the interconnection of systems and for promoting the planning and development of national information structures.

It is of course the responsibility of each country to organize its own information system, in whatever way is best suited to its requirements and its own specific characteristics, but we hope that through this new programme we shall be able to gain a better understanding of what the various Member States need, so as to provide assistance particularly to those which are least favoured.

Third IFLA Building Seminar
(Public Libraries)

The third Building Seminar was held in Bremen (West Germany) from 12th to 16th September 1977 in connection with the fiftieth Anniversary celebrations of International Federation of Library Associations. A one day session of this seminar took place at Hanover.

The Seminar was intended to give experts in the field of library building (Librarians and Architects) the opportunity to present and discuss some of the main problems of today pertaining to public library buildings.

Over 50 delegates from developed and developing countries participated in the Seminar, the Sri Lanka Library Association being represented by Mr. S.M. Kamaldeen, Assistant Director (Library Services) Ceylon National Library Services Board.

The guiding factor at the Seminar was the formulation of plans for public library buildings which will not entail more than reasonable cost in construction and maintenance. At the same time, due consideration was given to such features as pleasing architectural form and flexibility in use.

The Seminar also paid attention to problems relating to public library buildings in the developing countries. In this connection papers were read by representatives from Singapore, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Mauritius. The Nigerian delegation proposed that the next IFLA Building Seminar be held in their country paying attention mostly to building problems in the developing countries.

The delegates attending the Conference visited a number of libraries in Bremen and Hanover of which special mention must be made of the Library of the University of Bremen which is housed in a spacious modern building with up to date furniture and equipment.

PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDINGS IN SRI LANKA
SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Text of a paper submitted
to the IFLA Conference on
Public Library Buildings
held at Bremen, West Ger-
many from 12th-16th, Sept.
1977.

by

S.M.KAMALDEEN

Sri Lanka's population of 12,711,000 (1971) is predominantly rural. In its land area of about 25,000 sq. miles there is a heavy concentration of population in the South Western Region. However the density of population in the Island being 504 persons per sq. mile most rural local authorities have fairly large population within their administrative areas.

The estimated rural population in the whole island is 9,869,000 ie 77.6% of the total population. About 80% of the population of Sri Lanka is literate; and over 50% of the population consists of youths. The free education scheme from primary to university level introduced by the state in 1945, has over the years increased heavily the demand for library services and consequently the pressure for accommodation on existing library buildings.

The Unesco meeting of experts on the national planning of library services in Asia held in Colombo in December 1967 may be considered a land mark in the development of library services in Sri Lanka. Flowing from this important meeting was the creation of the Ceylon National Library Services Board in 1970 as a statutory body under the Ministry of Education with a view to planning and developing library services on a national scale. However, there is no public library legislation as yet, and this service is provided by local authorities under the Local Government Ordinances.

The problems relating to the provision of Library facilities by local authorities as presently constituted, can be appreciated by a consideration of their number, grading and geographical distribution.

Spread over 22 administrative districts into which the Island is divided are the following local authorities:-

Municipal Councils	-	12
Urban Councils	-	38
Town Councils	-	83
Village Committees	-	589
Total	-	<u>722</u>

It should be noted here that a considerable number of the 33 local authorities in the category of Town Councils could be classed with the village committees for matters relating to library service.

A recent proposal with regard to the reorganisation of local authorities in the island was aimed at the reduction of the number of local authorities to form viable units of local administration.

In this connection it would be useful to recall the warning given as early as 1960 by Horold V. Bonny, the Unesco Advisor to the Government of Sri Lanka in his report on 'Library Services for Ceylon.'

'There is already a danger of mushroom growth of public libraries by small local authorities which will never be in a position to provide a satisfactory service and this would create problems in the future. Indeed if these libraries cannot give a satisfactory service they might well retard public library development.'

In my field experience, since entering the service of the Ceylon National Library Services Board in 1972, I have noted the serious nature of the problems relating to library service by small local authorities envisaged by Mr. Bonny.

The provision of public library service in Sri Lanka is a permissive function and the local authorities neither have nor are willing to spend sufficient funds on a permissive service on account of the pressing demands for other essential services. It was in view of this situation that the Choksy Report on Local Authorities recommended that the Government should assist them by giving them grants amounting fifty percent of the cost of capital equipment and books, in towns other than Municipalities where these services are started and carried on by local authorities.

Although the local authorities other than the 12 Municipalities are being assisted by the Government, the grants allocated to the individual local authority is inadequate on account of the large number to be assisted.

During the year 1976 of a sum of Rs. 700,000 allocated by the Department of Local Government as grants to public libraries to

augment their budgetary provisions for library services, Rs. 339000 was provided for library buildings. Also considerable assistance for Library Buildings was given recently by the Political Authorities from the decentralised budget. Consequently an appreciable amount of library building activities is being witnessed at present in all parts of the island.

Most public libraries, especially in the village committees and town councils are housed in the council buildings itself. During the last few years separate library buildings with floor space ranging from about 600 to over 5000 square feet have been constructed by these local authorities for their libraries. A few local authorities have put up single storeyed buildings.

Plans for library buildings of local authorities are prepared by the Department of Town and Country Planning according to the finances available to the local authorities concerned. Since there are no professionally qualified librarians in the public libraries of local authorities except in the case of a few, the preparation of library building plans are left entirely in the hands of the architects of the Department of Town and Country Planning. Occasionally some local authorities may seek the advice of a qualified librarian. But even here the final result may not reflect the Professional view. This unhappy situation has produced a number of new library buildings which leave much to be desired.

Two noteworthy cases of library building activities by local authorities where professionally qualified librarians and architects were associated in planning new buildings for Public libraries may be cited here. They are the building projects for the Jaffna and Colombo Public Libraries. The Jaffna Public Library Building constructed with the advice of Dr.S.R.Ranganathan is the largest building in its class in the island today. The new building for the Colombo Public Library is yet to be constructed.

It would be evident from the facts so far mentioned that the IFLA Standards for library buildings have hardly any relevance to the present stage of library development in Sri Lanka. However the pattern of library development towards which the local authorities will necessarily move in the years ahead will require a greater awareness of standards for library buildings in keeping with local conditions.

A cursory glance at building activities in general in Sri Lanka will reveal the inordinate rise in cost of building materials and labour which places heavy restraint on the small local authorities striving to provide adequate buildings for the increasing demand for library services. However one redeeming feature with regard to building materials is that except for a small percentage of the requirements for the construction of buildings for which foreign exchange is needed all other times are available locally. Such essential materials as cement, bricks, tiles and timber can be secured locally.

Almost all items of furniture required for the public libraries are turned out locally as both good quality timber and skilled carpenters are available for this purpose. Here again the problem of the individual local authority is the absence of knowledgeable librarians to ensure the provision of suitable furniture and equipment according to accepted library standards. The National Library Services Board has to a great extent helped local authorities with advice regarding furniture and equipment.

Maximum use is made of natural light and ventilation in all library buildings. Prohibitive cost of air conditioning prevents even the few important public libraries providing this facility even in restricted areas requiring it.

The siting of library buildings in centres of population along the coastline of the Island is a matter that has not received sufficient consideration of local authorities. Apart from the usual disadvantages resulting from humidity faced by a library building sited close to the sea shore, the fact that the effect of the sea is accentuated over a greater area of the hinterland during the North East and South West monsoon must be borne in mind.

The problem of pests especially in the tropical regions should receive our attention in the construction of the library buildings. It is also necessary to ensure the prevention of dust from libraries.

The inclusion of toilet facilities within the main library building constructed by local authorities has been discouraged as such facilities should be placed away from the library building for sanitary reasons. Where canteen facilities are to be provided it is advisable to place the canteen building too away from the main library.

The ARISBA (Asian Regional Institute for School Buildings) sponsored by Unesco which functioned in Sri Lanka a few years ago

(1967) was most helpful in providing the guidelines for school library buildings in the regions. The setting up of a similar institution for Public Library buildings in the Asian Region by Unesco would be of great assistance in the promotion of knowledge pertaining to library buildings especially at the present time when there is a great deal of expansion of public library services in developing countries.

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IFLA/UNESCO PRE-SESSION SEMINAR

ON

"RESOURCE SHARING OF LIBRARIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES"

(Antwerp University Library, August 30th - September 4, 1977)

Librarians and Directors of National Libraries of 45 countries particularly from the developing world met at Antwerp, Belgium on the occasion of the IFLA/UNESCO Pre-Session Seminar between 30th August and 4th September, 1977 to discuss the problems confronted with them in their respective countries.

Sri Lanka's delegate Mr. N. Amarasinghe, Director, National Library Services presented to this seminar a paper on the Development of National Library Services in Sri Lanka in which he described the efforts made by the Ceylon National Library Services Board in this context.

Following is the text of Resolutions adopted at the conclusion of the Seminar which were submitted to the two international organisations concerned IFLA and UNESCO to be transmitted to the member states for necessary action.

RESOLUTIONS

Whereas the provision of adequate, well organised information systems is recognised as essential to the healthy development and prosperity of a country;

and

Whereas access to information is widely accepted as an inalienable human right;

We the librarians from 45 countries, assembled together in the Antwerp University on the occasion of the 1977 IFLA/UNESCO Pre-Session Seminar on Resource Sharing of Libraries in Developing Countries, hereby RESOLVE:

1. Recognising that a multiplicity of library authorities can hinder the sharing of resources, and recognising that such resource sharing can be most effectively developed where adequate resources exist, as has already been accepted by the UNESCO NATIS programme, THAT UNESCO BE REQUESTED TO URGE MEMBER STATES:

- 1.1 To constitute a national agency, representative of users and librarians, to plan, finance, and coordinate development of all types of library and information services and to

- 1.2 To concentrate such resource sharing efforts initially on the coordinated development of adequate library resources;
 - 1.3 To initiate, implement and where necessary extend the provision of legal deposit laws as a basis for both the UBC and the UAP Programmes being actively pursued by IFLA and UNESCO.
 - 1.4 To ensure that effective document delivery systems form an integral part of plans for the development of national library and documentation systems.
2. Recognising the wide ranging nature of current social and political changes in the context of recent bibliographical and technical developments, the mutually supportive and closely interrelated nature of many library development projects, and the need for regional cooperation **THAT UNESCO BE REQUESTED:**
- 2.1 To evaluate the progress of pilot library and informations projects in the light of new developments;
 - 2.2 To intensify its efforts to provide assistance in the form of integrated programmes of consultancy and training with appropriate material and financial support;
 - 2.3 To provide sponsorship and financial support for the development of regional schemes and organisations.
3. Recognising that an essential pre-requisite of the establishment of strong and effective library and information systems is the recognition by governments of their importance to development of the role and status of librarians and their professional associations **THAT UNESCO BE REQUESTED:**
- 3.1 To arrange a series of regional meetings for senior officials of member governments to examine the current state of provision of library and information systems in their countries and their future role in development;
 - 3.2 To examine the possibility of preparing a statement on the status of the library profession for circulation to member governments;
 - 3.3 To promote the inclusion of resource sharing as a topic in the core curriculum of library schools in developing countries;
 - 3.4 To ensure that, in the promotion of research at all levels, due attention is given to parallel funding of adequate research into comparative librarianship;

- 3.5 To increase its efforts in the training and education of library personnel and in particular to explore the possibility of providing arrangements, in conjunction with member governments, for the interchange of personnel between developing countries.

Furthermore THAT IFLA BE REQUESTED:

- 3.6 To ensure that the Division of Regional Activities concentrates its efforts in the developing countries on the developments of the library profession and pays particular regard to the promotion of unified professional associations of library and information workers and to the development of programmes of education and training in library and information work.
4. Recognising the increasing importance of the development of standards of international bibliographic description and of bibliographical data bases and of the need to ensure that all countries have an opportunity to participate in their formulation and to benefit from them, UNESCO AND IFLA BE REQUESTED:
- 4.1 To make funds available to ensure that all countries can participate in the formulation of bibliographic standards;
- 4.2 To take positive steps to encourage publishers and librarians in all countries to develop comprehensive CIP programmes;
- 4.3 To examine the possibility of commissioning the preparation of a model bibliographic data base including national MARC and contributed records with attendant software suitable for replication in various regional support centers and as a source of support for the cataloguing services of member countries;
- 4.4 To establish procedures which will ensure the regular interchange of essential data on classification systems, name usages, cataloguing rules, and the like between member states and appropriate international bodies.

British Council Assistance For
Development Of Rural Library Services

The British Council, Colombo has offered considerable amount of aid from the Overseas Development Ministry of Great Britain for the development of Library Services in rural areas in Sri Lanka undertaken by the Ceylon National Library Services Board.

The Board in its annual programmed assistance to public libraries and school libraries provide books, library equipment, technical know-how, training and other forms of professional advice to approximately fifty libraries, selected on a district basis from the entire island. Under the book assistance programme the select libraries are given outright donations as well as loan collections. The loan service, popularly known as the book box scheme is a device to supplement library collections with new books which often cannot be afforded by small rural libraries due to inadequate funds for purchasing.

The ODM aid for this service consists of books on service and technology, English Language text books, and a book mobile for the transport of book boxes to remote places where public transport facilities are inadequate or nil.

Assistance is also being sought from the British Council for developing library education and training, another important facet of the library development programme of the Board.

Ceylon National Library Services BoardWorking Committee onSri Lanka Cataloguing Rules

The first meeting of the CNLSB Working Committee on Sri Lanka Cataloguing Rules was held on 27.6.77 at 10.00 a.m. at the Ceylon National Library Services Board Headquarters.

Committee: 1. Mr. M. A. B. Senadhira, Acting Librarian, Colombo Campus
 2. Mr. E. D. T. Kularatne, Senior Assistant Librarian, Col. Campus
 3. Mr. S. M. Kamaldeen, Asst. Director/Library Services, CNLSB
 4. Mrs. K. S. Jayakuru, Asst. Director/National Bibliography-CNLSB
 5. Mrs. P. Kularatnam, Senior Asst. Librarian, Col. Campus

Convener: Mr. N. Amarasinghe, Director/Secretary, CNLSB.

Mr. Amarasinghe explained to the committee that the function of this committee was to examine the sections relevant to cataloguing of local materials in the AACR 1967 and formulate a broad policy paper for presentation to the general seminar which is scheduled to meet in mid July. He said that General rules as well as special rules in section 56 should be examined with regard to Author Headings-entry.

It was agreed that general rules in the AACR are applicable irrespective of National/Language peculiarities but certain modifications in the special rules are warranted before they are adopted for a national code.

The committee suggested that 'Iudic Names' be replaced by 'Sri Lankan' names with the following four categories:

1. Names of Sinhala origin
2. Names of Tamil origin
3. Names of Arabic origin
4. Names of European origin

Early names: It was decided that section 56A of the AACR, 1967(Bt. Text) should be examined as to whether pre-nineteenth century names and post nineteenth century names should be entered in two different manners as recommended particularly with regard to the names of Buddhist ecclesiastics, where there is no substantial difference between early and modern names.

56 B. Modern Names: The committee was of view that the last name which is not an honorific or caste name should be the entry element.

56 B. 1. Entry should be under given name.

The suggested entry element in each case will be subject to the general rule, 'entry under the best known form of the name'.

Mr. Amarasinghe suggested that as the Heading is a label constructed by the cataloguer whether the cataloguer should not have the freedom to standardise variant forms of a name as well as different forms of the same name used by different authors and use the standard form for heading irrespective of the actual form since the latter is recorded in the authentic form in the author statement. Mr. Senadhira pointed out that authors would not favour 'distortion' of their names and suggested that individual names should be in the authentic form in the heading. If in alphabetical arrangement variant forms of the same name turn up they should be brought together even if they happen to have been separated by other authors coming in between.

With regard to alphabelization it was recommended that compound names should be treated as one-word-names and letter-by-letter method should be adopted in sinhala alphabelization and word-by-word method in English.

The Committee recommended that an urgent task the Board should undertake the compilation of a Dictionary of authors from the earliest times upto date which would serve as an authority list. A similar list for early Sinhala and Tamil Literature also should be compiled as early as possible.

Corporate authors : The Committee is of the view that no modification of AACR rules are necessary.

It was decided that for purposes of the general seminar scheduled to be held in July the suggestions of the committee should be reproduced in the form of a seminar paper written jointly by the members on the following aspects.

1. Names of Sinhala origin by Mr. E. D. T. Kularatne
2. Names of Tamil origin by Mr. S. M. Kamaldeen
3. Names of Arabic origin by Mr. S. M. Kamaldeen
4. Names of European origin by Mr. M. A. P. Senadhira
5. Standardisation of author names and Alphabelization

by Mrs. K. S. Jayakuru

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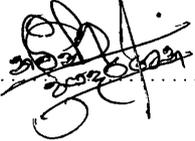
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