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Dr. Rathna Sri Wijesinghe Appointed as 20th Chairman of the NLDSB

Dr. Rathna Sri Wijesinghe officially assumed duties as the 20th Chairman of the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) on 16th December 2024. The occasion also marked the appointment and commencement of duties of six new Board members.

The appointment letters were ceremonially presented by the Hon. Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs, Dr. Hiniduma Sunil Senevi, at the Ministry premises. Following this, Dr. Wijesinghe formally assumed duties at the NLDSB.

The newly appointed Board of Directors are Mrs. Sunethra Rajakarunanayake, Mr. Abdul Razak Abdul Karim, Mr. Sivasamy Rajasingham, Prof. Wasantha Subasinghe, Dr. Ananda Tissa, Mr. P. Hemachandra

Dr. Rathna Sri Wijesinghe is a renowned poet, lyricst, author and educator. He is widely admired for his inspiring poems, memorable song lyrics and valuable contribution to sinhala literature. He was Born on 2nd June 1953, in Nakiyadeniya Galle, Thellambura in the Southern Province. He began his educational journey at Nawala Government School, and later attended Thellambura Vidyakanti Vidyalaya, Dutugemunu Vidyalaya, and Hikkaduwa Sri Sumangala Central College. He completed his A/Ls in science at Richmond College, Galle, and went on to earn an Honours Degree in Sinhala from the University of Peradeniya, followed by a Master's Degree from the University of Kelaniya.

Dr. Wijesinghe began his professional career as a teacher, eventually serving as Head of the Sinhala Language Unit at the Southern Provincial Education Department, and later as a lecturer at Amarasuriya Teachers' College, Unawatuna. Subsequently, He served as a Senior Assistant Secretary in Several Government ministries making significant contribution to the public administration.



Chinese Delegation from Yunnan Institute Visits National Library

On 10th December 2024, a five-member delegation from the Yunnan Institute of Culture and History, China, paid a courtesy visit to the National Library of Sri Lanka.

During the visit, the delegation met with Mr. W. Sunil, Director General of the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB), to discuss opportunities for cultural exchange and future collaboration.

Mrs. Padma Bandaranaike, Director of the National Library, along with a group of officials, also participated in the meeting.

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Short Course on Academic Writing for New Researchers



The Library Research Division of the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) successfully conducted a Short Course on Academic Writing for New Researchers from 10th –12th December 2024.

The course, delivered in both Sinhala and English, attracted a large number of participants and was facilitated by experienced lecturers in the field. It focused on enhancing participants' understanding of academic language and the key methods and structures used in scholarly writing.

This initiative is part of the NLDSB's ongoing efforts to support early-career researchers and promote high standards in academic communication.

Creative Writing Workshop Empowers School Children



As part of the "10,000 Books – A Book Worth the Country" national initiative, the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) organized a special training programme on 5th December 2024, to nurture the creative writing and documentation skills of school children in the Western Province.

The workshop was designed to support students whose works were selected among the 600 outstanding and winning entries submitted to the national programme.

The training featured an inspiring lineup of expert facilitators:

Prof. Rathnasiri Arangala, Senior Professor at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, spoke on the importance of language in creative expression.

Ms. Sumithra Rahubadda, award-winning writer, guided students on how to develop a theme or "seed" idea into a compelling narrative.

Mr. Saman Indika Lokukaluge, professional page designer, discussed the role of layout, design, and visual planning in producing a complete and engaging book.

Ms. Senani Bandara, Director of Library Promotion, Standardization and Publications at NLDSB, addressed the common strengths and weaknesses found in novice writers, providing valuable insights for improvement.

This initiative reflects NLDSB's commitment to cultivating the next generation of creative writers, empowering them with the tools and mentorship to bring their stories to life.

Professor Wimal G. Balagalle's Birth Centenary Celebration and Donation of Works to the National Library





The Birth Centenary Celebration (1924–2024) of Professor Wimal G. Balagalle was held on 28th November 2024, at the National Library and Documentation Services Board Auditorium, under the patronage of the Dr. Hiniduma Sunil Senevi (Hon. Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs).

During the event, a valuable collection of works used by Professor Balagalle was officially handed over to the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB), preserving his academic legacy for future generations.

The centenary lecture was delivered by Senior Professor Ratnasiri Arangala of the Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, who reflected on Professor Balagalle's enduring contributions to literature and scholarship.

The ceremony was attended by Professor Balagalle's family, including his beloved wife and son, alongside university academics, literary figures, journalists, avid readers, the Director General of the NLDSB, and its staff.

This commemorative event honored a distinguished scholar whose work continues to inspire Sri Lanka's literary and academic communities.







Participation in Bharat-Sri Lanka Maithri Week 2024 Exhibition

The National Library of Sri Lanka proudly took part in the Bharat-Sri Lanka Maithri Week 2024 exhibition, organized by the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, the cultural wing of the High Commission of India.

The exhibition was held from 15th to 18th August 2024 at Independence Square, Colombo 07, celebrating the deep cultural and historical ties between India and Sri Lanka.

At the event, the National Library showcased a wide range of its special publications, allowing visitors to explore and purchase unique books that reflect the rich literary heritage in Sri Lanka.

This participation emphasizes the National Library's commitment to fostering cultural exchange and strengthening bilateral relations through literature and knowledge sharing.











National Library Hosts Programme to Enhance Sri Lanka–Iran Cultural Relations

The Sri Lanka–Iran Cultural Relations Programme, jointly organized by the National Library of Sri Lanka, the University of Kelaniya, and the Iranian Cultural Center, was successfully held on 11–13th November 2024, at the National Library of Sri Lanka.

The three-day event featured a range of cultural and academic activities, including a book exhibition on Iranian science, a display of Iranian crafts, a panel discussion, and an Iranian film screening, fostering deeper mutual understanding between the two nations.

The inaugural ceremony was graced by several distinguished guests are Dr. Alireza Delkosh, (Ambassador of Iran to Sri Lanka), Dr. Bahman Moazami (Cultural Advisor to the Republic of Iran), Dr. C.C. Jayasundara, Mr. Mahinda de Lanerol (Lawyer and Joint Secretary of the Iranian Society of Sri Lanka), Senior officials from the National Library of Sri Lanka

A highlight of the programme was the panel discussion titled "Some Ancient Iranian Leaders and References of Interest to Sri Lankan Studies," featuring insights from Professor Nirmal Ranjith Dewasiri, (Department of History, University of Colombo), Professor Nadeesha Sharmalee Gunawardena (Department of History, University of Kelaniya)





Reading Camp at the Hakmana Public Library

The reading camp organized by Hakmana Public Library with the sponsorship of the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) was held on 23.10.2024 at the Hakmana Pradeshiya Sabha Auditorium.

More than 100 students from four schools participated in this reading camp and the Director Mrs. Senani Bandara, Assistant Director Mrs. Iromi Wijesundara, Project Officer Mr. G. H. Mangala and Assistant Librarian of the University of Ruhuna, Mrs. Sakunthala Seneviratne as well as the Secretary, Librarian and Community Development Officer of the Hakmana Pradeshiya Sabha were associated with this event.

Lecture on Emerging Technologies for Libraries at the National Library

The 13th lecture in the series of Digital Library Lectures, held on the theme "Technologies used in libraries" on December 9, 2024, at the National Library and Documentation Services Board.

The session attracted a large audience of library professionals, researchers, and enthusiasts eager to explore technological advancements in the field.

The lecture was delivered online by Dr. Neluka Madhuranga Karannagoda, Senior Assistant Librarian at the University of Colombo, who shared valuable insights into innovative tools and digital solutions shaping modern libraries.











Honoring Two Decades of Promoting Reading
National Reading Month Awards Ceremony 2024

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of National Reading Month, which has been celebrated every October since 2004, the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) held a special Awards Ceremony on 19th December 2024, at the Duncan White Auditorium of the Ministry of Sports.

The event was held under the distinguished patronage of the Hon. Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs, Dr. Sunil Senevi, and the Hon. Deputy Minister, Mr. Gamagedara Dissanayake.

The occasion recognized and celebrated the outstanding contributions of individuals and institutions toward fostering a culture of reading across Sri Lanka.

As a highlight of the event, National Library Commendation Awards were presented to honour significant efforts in promoting reading at the national level. Among the awardees were Mr. Mahinda Dassanayake, Mr. R. B. K. Bandara, Mr. Mahinda Karunarathne, the Anagarika Dharmapala Memorial Library (Matara Bodhi Security Council), and the Randiya Literacy Centre each recognized for their dedication and impactful initiatives.

Libraries that implemented exemplary programmes during National Reading Month 2023 were also evaluated and commended. In addition, long-term contributors who had consistently supported the National Reading Month campaign over the past six years were acknowledged.

The ceremony was attended by a host of distinguished guests, including Hon. Deputy Minister Mr. Gamagedara Dissanayake, Ministry Secretary Mr. A. M. P. M. B. Atapattu, Secretary to the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs Mr. A. H. M. U. Aruna Bandara, Chairman of the NLDSB Dr. Rathna Sri Wijesinghe, Director General Mr. W. Sunil, Director Mrs. Senani Bandara, Commissioner General of Prisons Mr. Thushara Upuldeniya, and Professor Sasanka Perera of the University of Colombo and South Asian University in India.

This milestone event not only celebrated two decades of literary advocacy but also reaffirmed the NLDSB's commitment to nurturing a nation of readers.

Staff Training at Horana Zonal Education

The School Library Staff Training Workshop for the Horana Education Zone was successfully conducted on 7 and 8th October 2024, at the Horana Education Zone Office.

A total of 87 school library staff officers participated in the two-day workshop, which aimed to strengthen school library services and improve professional practices. Resource support was provided by officers from the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB), furthering the NLDSB's commitment to enhancing school library development across the country.







Reading Camps for Students of Monaragala Madulla Schools and Inginiyagala Ratmalgaha Ella Maha Vidyalaya

On 24th July 2024, the NLDSB successfully conducted a reading camp for the students of Monaragala Madulla Secondary School and Madulla Primary School. This initiative aimed to foster a love of reading and enhance literary skills among the participating students.

The highlight of the camp was a literary lecture delivered by the distinguished literary figure, Mr. Sandaruwan Lokuhewa, who engaged the students with insightful discussions on literature and creative expression. Throughout the event, officers from the NLDSB facilitated various activities designed to promote reading habits and encourage active participation.

As part of the event's commitment to supporting local education, the National Library also donated a collection of books to the libraries of Monaragala Madulla Secondary and Primary Schools. Additionally, book donations were extended to Rathugala Primary School and Nelliliyidda Primary School, further supporting the development of library resources in the region.

This reading camp exemplifies the NLDSB's ongoing dedication to nurturing literacy and learning among Sri Lanka's youth, particularly in underserved communities.

In addition, on 23 July 2024, a reading camp was successfully held at Inginiyagala Ratmalgaha Ella Maha Vidyalaya, with valuable resource support provided by officers of the NLDSB.

The event featured a special literary lecture delivered by the eminent literary scholar Mr. Sandaruwan Lokuhewa, engaging nearly 120 students from the school.

In addition to the educational activities, the National Library generously donated a selection of books to the school library, further enriching its resources and supporting the students' academic growth.





Book Donation to the Rathugala Tribal Community Library

On 24th July, 2024, officials from the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) conducted an inspection of the library building constructed by the Madulla Pradeshiya Sabha to serve the Rathugala veddha tribal community. During this visit, guidance was provided regarding the future development of the facility.

In conjunction with this, a formal donation of books was made to the Cultural Center Library established for the Rathugala people. The event was attended by several dignitaries, including the Secretary of the Madulla Pradeshiya Sabha and the Rathugala Veddha Chief.

National Library Celebrates International School Library Day with an Educational Programme



To mark the International School Library Day, a special programme was organized by the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) on 22nd October 2024, focusing on promoting information literacy and literary appreciation among school children.

The event featured two insightful lectures:

- Mrs. Padma Bandaranaike, Director of the National Library and Documentation Services Centre, delivered a lecture on "Developing Information Literacy in School Students."
- Mr. Dayapala Jayaneththi, Administrative Secretary of the Martin Wickramasinghe Board of Trustees, presented a lecture on "Role Models from the Life of Martin Wickramasinghe," offering students inspiring lessons from the life and legacy of the renowned Sri Lankan writer.

As part of the day's activities, students were also given the opportunity to visit the Martin Wickramasinghe Folklife and Documentation Museum, established by the Martin Wickremasinghe Trust at the NLDSB, enriching their understanding of Sri Lankan cultural heritage.

The event was attended by key dignitaries including Mr. W. Sunil, Director General of the NLDSB; Mr. Malin Wickramasinghe, Secretary of the Martin Wickramasinghe Board of Trustees; Mrs. Senani Bandara, Director (Library Promotion, Standardization and Publications, NLDSB); Mrs. Anoma Wijesinghe, Deputy Director (Reader Services); officials from the Extension Services Division, and other NLDSB staff.

This programme highlighted the NLDSB's continued commitment to enhancing literacy, education, and cultural awareness among students across Sri Lanka.



Inaugural Ceremony of the National Reading Month- 2024





The Inaugural Ceremony of National Reading Month 2024 was held on 1st of October 2024, at the Kalaliya Hall of the Kandy Public Library, jointly organized by the Kandy Public Library and the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB).

The event was held under the distinguished patronage of Professor Sarath Abeykoon, Governor of the Central Province, with the keynote address delivered by Dr. Mangala Kesawa Dissanayake of the Department of Sinhala, University of Peradeniya.

As part of the celebration, the NLDSB donated books to 43 libraries across the Central Province, promoting literacy and access to knowledge.

Key attendees included Mr. W. Sunil, Director General of the NLDSB, Mrs. Senani Bandara (Director), Mrs. Iromi Wijesundara (Assistant Director), and several NLDSB officials.





Fifth Provincial Library Services Board Conference



The Fifth Provincial Library Services Board Conference was convened on 12th July 2024 at the Uva Provincial Library Services Board Auditorium. This event was jointly organized by the NLDSB in collaboration with the Uva Provincial Library Services Board.

Distinguished representatives from the NLDSB, as well as the Provincial Library Services Boards of Uva, Sabaragamuwa, and North Central provinces, participated in the conference, fostering inter-provincial cooperation and the advancement of library services.

Sign a MoU with the Asia Foundation to Extend "Let's Read" Programme



On 22nd July 2024, the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Asia Foundation to continue the successful ongoing "Let's Read" programme for an additional year.

The MoU was signed by Mrs. Dinesha de Silva Wickramanayake, Local Representative of the Asia Foundation, and Mr. W. Sunil, Director General of the NLDSB.



On 24th October the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) conducted an awareness seminar and book donation programme for public librarians in the Matara District.

Held with the goal of enhancing professional knowledge and strengthening library services in the region, the program brought together 40 librarians representing public libraries across the district.

The event included an informative training session and the donation of valuable books to enrich local library collections. Resource contributions were made by several NLDSB officers, including Mrs. Senani Bandara, Director (Library Promotion, Standardization and Publications).

This initiative reflects the NLDSB's ongoing efforts to support the professional development of librarians and to improve access to quality reading materials throughout Sri Lanka.

Training and Book Donation for Librarians in Matara District





Series of User Awareness Programmes on National Library Resources and Services











The Reader Services Division of the National Library of Sri Lanka launched its series of user awareness programmes on 6th November 2024, with the first session held at the National Library Auditorium. This series aims to introduce the wealth of information resources and services available at the National Library to researchers and the reading community. Organized by the Reader Services in collaboration with the Library Research Division, the inaugural session focused on the subject area of "History and Archaeology."

The keynote lecture, titled "Scholarly Information Sources to Meet the Research Needs in the area of History and Archaeology," was delivered by Senior Professor Anura Manatunga of the Department of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya. His presentation emphasized the value of supplementary and lesser-known resources for academic research in these fields.

Presentations on Information Sources and Services available at the National Library of Sri Lanka and Research tools and services were also conducted by Mrs. Padma Bandaranayake, Director - National Library and Documentation Centre, Mrs. Anoma Wijesinghe, Deputy Director - Reader Services, Mrs. Nimmi Deshapriya, Assistant Director – Library Research Division

This programme marks the beginning of a broader initiative to enhance awareness and accessibility of the National Library's collections among researchers, academics, students and the wider public.

Two-Day Workshop on Research Methodology for Novice Researchers

A two-day workshop on research methodology for novice researchers, organized by the Library Research Division of the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB), was successfully held on 28 and 29th October 2024, at the NLDSB premises.

The workshop was designed to address common challenges faced by emerging researchers and to provide a solid foundation in research design, data handling, and academic writing. Expert facilitation was provided by Dr. Wathmanel Seneviratne (Librarian, Sir John Kotelawala Defence University), Dr. Nimal Gunathilaka (Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, University of Colombo), Mrs. Padma Bandaranayake (Director, NLDSB)

The participants included academics experiencing challenges in their research work, officials from public, government, and semi-government libraries, and undergraduate and diploma students in Library and Information Science. They showed great enthusiasm in attending the workshop, which was designed to strengthen their research skills.





Reading Skills Programme Inspires Young Readers at Soma Jayakody Model Library

On 26th November 2024, the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) conducted a special programme for the children of the Soma Jayakody Model Library's Reading Society, aimed at fostering a deeper interest and enjoyment in reading.

The session was led by Assistant Director Mr. Mihira Aravinda, who provided engaging and insightful resource support tailored to young readers. Over 40 students from the Reading Society enthusiastically took part in the activities.

In addition to the reading-focused programme, certificates were awarded to participants of the art training programme held in June 2024, recognizing their creative efforts and participation.



All coordination and on-site arrangements were efficiently managed by Mr. Upul Jayantha (Librarian/Documentation Officer) of the Soma Jayakody Model Library.

This initiative reflects the ongoing commitment of the NLDSB to nurture a culture of reading and creativity among children at the community level.

Reading Camp Held at Sri Rathanapala Maha Vidyalaya, Wattala

The National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB), with the support of the Mabola Urban Council, organized a Reading Camp on 25th October 22024, at Sri Rathanapala Maha Vidyalaya, Wattala.

The event aimed to promote reading habits and literacy skills among school children and was enthusiastically attended by around 85 students. Through interactive reading activities



and educational engagement, the programme encouraged students to explore the joy of reading and develop a lasting interest in books.



Workshop on Documenting Intangible Cultural Heritage of Central Province



From 3 to 6th December 2024, a focused workshop on the documentation of the intangible cultural heritage of Sri Lanka's Central Province was held in Kandy.

This important initiative was organized by the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) in collaboration with the Department of Cultural Affairs, Central Province, and funded by the International Training Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in Asia-Pacific under UNESCO (CRIHAP), China.

The workshop was attended by key stakeholders, including Mr. W. Sunil (Director General of the NLDSB), Dr. Udaya Cabral (Assistant Director) alongside cultural officers and librarians from the Central Province.

The programme aimed to strengthen local capacity for preserving and documenting intangible cultural traditions, ensuring that these valuable heritages are safeguarded for future generations.





Christmas Carol Programmme Celebrates the Spirit of the Season

In celebration of the Christmas season, the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) hosted a joyful and heartfelt Christmas Day programme on 20th December 2024, at the NLDSB Auditorium.

The event commenced with a special benediction by Rev. Father Gamini Perera of the Yohan Muni Church in Nugegoda, setting a warm and reflective tone for the festivities. A highlight of the celebration was the Christmas Carol Programme performed by NLDSB staff members, which beautifully showcased themes of peace, joy, and religious harmony.

The event was graced by the presence of Dr. Ratna Sri Wijesinghe, Chairman of the NLDSB, Director General W. Sunil, members of the Board of Directors, and staff from across the institution.

The celebration not only marked the festive occasion but also reflected the unity and goodwill that define the spirit of the season.





National Library Celebrates Deepavali with Cultural Festivities

The National Library of Sri Lanka marked the occasion of Deepavali, the Festival of Lights, with a celebration held on 30th October 2024.

The event featured traditional dance performances and Hindu religious blessings, creating a vibrant and inclusive atmosphere that reflected the spirit of the festival.

The celebration was attended by Acting Chairman Dr. Nishad Handunpathirana, Director General Mr. W. Sunil, along with Directors and staff members of the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB).

This event highlights the NLDSB's commitment to honoring cultural diversity and promoting interfaith harmony within its institutional community.

"Meet an Expert 38" Inspiring New Habits for 2024

The 38th session of the Meet an Expert programme series, themed "Atomic Habits: New Habits for 2024," was successfully held on 23rd December 2024, at the National Library and Documentation Services Board.

This inspiring session featured a thought-provoking lecture by Dr. Priyanwada Wanigasuriya, Head of the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of Kelaniya. Drawing from the principles of habit formation and productivity, Dr. Wanigasuriya encouraged attendees to reflect on their personal and professional growth as they prepare for the year ahead.