



# 10th Anniversary

NATIONAL LIBRARY  
AND  
DOCUMENTATION CENTRE





# **10th Anniversary**

**1990 - 2000**

**NATIONAL LIBRARY  
AND  
DOCUMENTATION CENTRE**



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COLOMBO 7, SRI LANKA**



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## Message from HE the President...



கொழும்பு தமிழ்ச் சாலை  
நூலகம்

It is with pleasure that I send this message on the occasion of the 10th anniversary celebrations of the National Library and Documentation Centre (NLDC).

Library, documentation and information services play an extremely important role in development activities of the contemporary world. Hence, the National Library as the apex organisation in the library field should be in a position to collect and conserve national literature and also take the leadership role in bibliographic, documentation and information dissemination activities. Today we live in the midst of an unprecedented development in the field of information technology that has turned the world into a global village. Communication technologies have improved and continue to improve thereby minimising the effects of distance. Computers with vast information storage capabilities and the Internet have revolutionised the traditional role of libraries.

During the past six years our Government has invested heavily to develop the country's telecommunication infrastructure. We have taken a number of steps to spread the access of computer and other IT facilities to every sector of the country. While encouraging new technologies, we have not forgotten the traditional library sector. I have allocated Rs 10 million from the President's Fund for the conservation and preservation of the National Museum library collection, which is the largest in the country. Four thousand school libraries are being developed under the GEP-2 Project of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. My Government has also enacted new legislation, including the National Library and Documentation Services Board Act of 1998 to modernise and strengthen the library services of the country.

The National Library and Documentation Centre while providing reference facilities for researchers, has also successfully carried out a number of bibliographic and documentation projects at national level. Compilation of the current and retrospective national bibliographies, national Newspaper Article Index, Periodical Article Index, National Union Catalogue and Conference Index are of immense value to academics, researchers and students of every discipline. I am glad to note that the functions of the National Library have been largely automated and the public is able to have access to the Internet, CD-ROMs and other IT facilities from its reading rooms.

While appreciating its activities and services during the past decade I wish the National Library and Documentation Centre all the best for the future.

Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga  
President



## Message from the Hon. Prime Minister...



I consider it a pleasant duty to send this message of felicitation on this solemn occasion when we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the National Library and Documentation Centre.

The Ceylon National Library Services Board was established in 1970 and at that time my Government took the initiative to establish the National Library of Sri Lanka under the new Board. As a result of our effort we managed to secure assistance from UNESCO for planning the National Library building. The UNESCO consultant architect, with the assistance of local counterparts, was responsible for the design of the modern National Library building we have today. My government also allocated a prime piece of land from the old racecourse premises and gave the necessary funds for the construction of the building.

I am delighted to note that the National Library and Documentation Centre has established itself as the apex library in the country during the past 10 years. Its reference, bibliographic and documentation services have contributed immensely to education and research activities of the country.

I wish the National Library and Documentation Centre every success in the many activities it presently handles and those to be undertaken in the future.

Sirimavo R D Bandaranaike  
Prime Minister





## Message from the Hon Minister of Education and Higher Education...



National libraries have increasing responsibilities in the library and information field both in developed and developing countries. As a result of the rapid development in the areas of communication and information technology, libraries and information centres have important roles to play in every field including education and higher education.

Therefore, I took the initiative to enact the National Library and Documentation Services Board Act No. 51 of 1998, which gave wider powers and responsibilities to the National Library and Documentation Services Board and for the first time clearly spelled out the powers and responsibilities of the National Library. This legislation also helps Sri Lanka to have one of the most modern national library legislation among the Asia-Oceania region.

The National Library and Documentation Centre (NLDC) in addition to being an excellent reference library has carried out a number of major bibliographic, documentation and information dissemination services during the last 10 years. I must specially mention the compilation of both the current and retrospective national bibliographies which are considered among the best in the Asia-Pacific region. Documentation projects such as the National Union Catalogue, the Newspaper Article Index, Conference Index, Directory of Government Publications and Periodical Article Index which fulfil a long-standing void in information services of the country are some of the other important projects executed by the NLDC.

Through its many services the NLDC attracts researchers, writers, publishers, students, academics and the general public. I am glad to note that the National Library auditorium is in great demand by authors, publishers, government and private sector organisations and hence, is one of the busiest in Colombo. I have already taken steps to build a second much larger auditorium with more up-to-date facilities for the NLDC. I hope that the new auditorium will be available for public use by 2001.

I wish the NLDC and its 10th year celebrations all success.

Richard Pathirana  
Minister of Education and Higher Education  
Member of Parliament for Galle District





## Message from the Chairman, National Library and Documentation Services Board



The National Library and Documentation Centre (NLDC) of the National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) completes 10 years of service to the country on 27 April 2000. Compared to other Asian countries Sri Lanka had a late start in establishing a national library and it took more than four decades after independence to inaugurate this august institution.

During the past decade both in my capacity as the Chairman, NLDSB and as someone who has been closely associated with the activities of the NLDC from its inception, I have witnessed the NLDC to be a hive of activity. The collection development work, bibliographic services, documentation services and information retrieval and dissemination activities are doubtless of international standard. The organisation of the national collection, its tidiness and cleanliness draw praise from national and international visitors. The Sri Lanka National Bibliography published by the NLDC containing details of latest publications in the country is considered to be one of the best national bibliographies in the Asia-Pacific region. The NLDC has also commenced the mammoth task of publishing the Retrospective National Bibliography covering the period 1737 (the year printing was introduced to the country) to 1963 and has already covered the period up to 1900. This is indeed a monumental achievement.

The National Union Catalogue Project covers the collections of 54 major libraries in the country. As a result a researcher is able to scrutinise all these collections from the NLDC. The indexing of national newspapers and government publications, international standard numbering projects, library automation activities and conservation and preservation functions are some of the other praiseworthy services of the NLDC.

In the recent past a number of steps have been taken to improve and expand the activities of the NLDC. The new National Library and Documentation Services Board Act of 1998 has given a legal base to the NLDC and also provides the institution with adequate powers and responsibilities to function as a modern institution.

It is my pleasant duty to thank the professional staff of the National Library and Documentation Centre. My special thanks and appreciation go to the Director General, Mr M S U Amarasiri, Heads of divisions, as well as the rest of the staff for their pioneering and dedicated service to the institution during the last 10 years. This has resulted in not only providing a wide array of services to researchers and the public but, has also given a firm foundation to the NLDC on which future developments can firmly take place.



## Note From the Director General

Finally I wish to thank the Hon. Minister of Education and Higher Education for helping the NLDC in various ways during his tenure as the minister and for the keen interest taken in developing the library and information field. I must also thank the Hon Deputy Ministers of the Ministry as well as the Secretary and other senior officials of the Ministry, the Board of Directors of the NLDSB and the members of the advisory committees of the NLDC for their assistance and co-operation.

Henry Samaranayake  
Chairman



*Na Tree, The National Tree of Sri Lanka*  
Botnical name: Mesua Nagassarium





## Note From the Director General



The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Library and Documentation Centre is an appropriate time to look back at the performance of the institution critically and plan future programmes taking into consideration the national needs and international trends.

When the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board was set up in 1970, establishment of the National Library of Sri Lanka became its principal project. The initial period was spent on preliminary activities, namely obtaining approval of the Cabinet for the project, acquiring the land for the building, planning and construction of the building, taking over some national library functions from other institutions, amending the Legal Deposit Law to build up the national collection, acquiring the necessary library furniture and equipment, obtaining approval for the cadre and recruiting staff. Although the construction of the National Library building took an unexpectedly long period, this can be considered as the time which laid the foundation for the National Library.

During the first decade of its existence the National Library concentrated on two main aspects, viz. obtaining the necessary legal base for the National Library and organising the library and maintaining its services at a high level. I am pleased to state that both these objectives have been successfully achieved.

The enactment of the National Library and Documentation Services Board Act No. 51 of 1998 is a major achievement of this period. In this act the responsibilities and functions of the national library have been clearly spelled out.

A brief account of the organisation and activities of the National Library is found in the following pages of the publication. The difficulties faced by the institution during this period ought to be specially mentioned. The main obstacle was the scarcity of trained professional staff. Due to the disparity of salary scales when compared to a number of other libraries, the National Library failed either to attract or retain senior professional staff. As a result the institution was unable to fill more than 60% of senior professional positions. Although the Government has taken a number of remedial actions in the recent past, due to reasons beyond its control it has been unable to solve the problem in its entirety.



Preservation of the national literature collection is considered to be a primary responsibility of a national library. When national libraries are established or reorganised, it is customary to link the existing main national collections of the country to the national library. When the Indian National Library was established in 1948 the Calcutta Public Library which possessed the largest national collection was named as the National Library and similarly the British Museum library was amalgamated with the British Library in 1974. Contrary to this in Sri Lanka the major national collections were not linked with the National Library when it was established. Though this was a setback for the library this had a positive effect as well. Printing of books was started in the mid 18th century in Sri Lanka and the major national collections are scattered in a number of leading libraries in the country. As most of the material are affected by the tropical climatic conditions and other preservation challenges, had these collections come under the National Library, the entire financial and professional resources of the new institution would have had to be spent on the preservation and conservation of the collections. At present the responsibility of protecting the collections has been decentralised and the National Library only performs an advisory role in the process of drawing attention of the respective authorities on the existing preservation problems.

Consequently the National Library has had the opportunity to establish itself firmly and to concentrate on institution building activities. The major functions of the national library including reference, national bibliographic, documentation, conservation and IT application in library activities have been firmly established. The current and retrospective national bibliography projects and the documentation projects carried out by the National Library have been considered exceptionally successful projects.

At this memorable occasion of the 10th anniversary celebration it is our duty to remember all those who contributed towards the establishment of this institute. Since a considerable number of persons have contributed to this national venture it is somewhat difficult to remember every one by name. Special mention should be made of the former chairmen of the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board Messers W M A Warnasuriya (1971-1976), U D I Sirisena (1976-1977), H P Siriwardena (1979-1981), M J Perera (1981-1982), Sugunadasa Athukorale (1982-1988) and Mrs Ishvari Corea (1989-1994) who did yeomen service in planning and laying the ground work for the library Messers K D Somadasa (1971-1975) and N Amarasinghe (1976-1988), the first two professional Directors of the board contributed immensely to the establishment of the National Library. Professor Michael Brawne, the UNESCO Consultant Architect designed the building. The National Library Legislation Committee of the Board and Mr Stephen Parker, presently Executive Director of the FID helped in formulation the NLDSB Act. The members of the governing board, staff of the institution, Hon. Ministers and senior officials of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in office during the last three decades contributed to the project in numerous ways. The present Minister of Education and Higher Education, Hon. Dr Richard Pathirana took the initiative to enact the new National Library and Documentation Services Board Act and to construct a new auditorium.





## Notes From the Director General

Special mention should be made of the contribution made by the present chairman Mr. Henry Samaranayake and the Board of Directors towards the development of the National Library. Their dedication has enabled the library to be improved and expanded. The professional library community in the country who always extends its helping hand to the National Library should be gratefully remembered. Finally my special thanks and appreciation go to the past and present staff of the institution who shouldered the unenviable task of building this national institution under difficult and trying circumstances.

M S U Amarasiri  
Director General



*Water lily blue lotus, The National Flower of Sri Lanka*  
Botanical name: *Nymphaea stellata*



## ENTRY



*A section of the National Library mural*





**'Knowledge is like light. Weightless and intangible, it can easily travel the world, enlightening the lives of people everywhere.'**

World Development Report 1998/99





## Mission

To plan and co-ordinate library services at national level

To develop a Sri Lanka Information Resource Excellence Centre at the National Library and to co-ordinate and assist other major Sri Lankan collections in the country

To assist and encourage the establishment of Information Resource Excellence Centres in specific fields and inter-link them through a national information network

To facilitate access to national and international databases

To provide learning opportunities to every Sri Lankan and thereby assist the advancement of Sri Lanka

To assist Sri Lanka to become a culturally enriched and intellectually advanced nation





## Aims and Objectives

(Excerpt from the NLDSB Act No. 51 of 1998)



- To make available for the use of all sections of the community a national collection of library and documentation resources appropriate to their needs

- To preserve the national and cultural heritage of Sri Lanka through the establishment, development and maintenance of a national collection of library and documentation materials published in or relating to Sri Lanka

- To receive copies of Sri Lankan publications deposited at the Department of National Archives under the Printers and Publishers Ordinance

- To acquire, by purchase or otherwise, copies of publications published in, or relating to Sri Lanka or foreign publications relevant to the needs of Sri Lanka

- To provide bibliographic services including national bibliographic services





- To establish and create a national bibliographic database of documents and publications published in or relating to Sri Lanka
- To publish the Sri Lanka National Bibliography
- To provide reference, information, referral, reprographic and documentary research services to all sections of the Sri Lankan community
- To facilitate access to the library and documentation resources which are or may in future become available in or outside Sri Lanka to all members of the community
- To promote, advise and assist in the establishment, development and maintenance of library and documentation networks, including networks of public, school, academic, government and other libraries and documentation centres serving all sections of the community in Sri Lanka
- To promote and facilitate co-operation and resource sharing among libraries and documentation centres at national and international levels including exchange of library materials, inter-library lending and document copying and the training and exchange of staff as the Board may from time to time require
- To promote the introduction and efficient application of new information technologies in libraries and documentation centres in Sri Lanka through the application of such technologies in the work of the centre and to provide advice, assistance and training to other bodies regarding the introduction of such technologies and /or promotional activities
- To undertake such projects, and provide such facilities and services in pursuance of the functions of the Board



## The Inauguration



*Opening of the National Library of Sri Lanka*

The National Library of Sri Lanka was inaugurated on 27 April 1990 by HE R Premadasa, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. This event marks a significant step in the country's educational, cultural, library and information fields. A large number of distinguished invitees including cabinet ministers, members of foreign diplomatic missions, delegations from a number of foreign national libraries, heads of government departments, academics, librarians, writers and publishers attended the inauguration.



*Hon. Minister of Education and Higher Education participating at a function at the National Library*

To mark the occasion numerous functions including religious ceremonies, seminars, exhibitions and cultural events were held at the National Library. A number of publications and posters were also published. The art competition and the competition to create the National Library logo were conducted at national level. Ms. Ishvari Corea, a leading librarian in the country, served as the Chairman of the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board at the time.



*Registration of the first two members*

The National Library and Documentation Services Board Act of 1998 initiated by the Hon. Minister of Education and Higher Education is considered to be a landmark in the history of national library services in the country. By this Act of Parliament the powers and responsibilities of the national library were clearly spelled out for the first time and this was a fulfilment of a long felt need. The name was changed from the National Library of Sri Lanka to the National Library and Documentation Centre which is more appropriate considering the functions of the institute. However, in general, it is still popularly known as the National Library. It has become a herculean task to organise and introduce this new institution to the country and to the general public. This publication provides a brief account on how the challenge was met during the first decade of its existence.



## National Library Collection







## National Library Collection



*Basic Reference Collection*

### *Acquisition Methods*

- \* *Legal deposit*
- \* *Purchase*
- \* *Gifts and donations*
- \* *International exchange*



*Sri Lanka Collection*

### *Acquisition Policy*

- \* *Publications printed in Sri Lanka*
- \* *Publications on Sri Lanka published in foreign countries*
- \* *Publications by Sri Lankans in foreign countries*
- \* *Main reference sources*
- \* *Other reference sources which are required for research but could not be acquired by the other libraries*
- \* *Publications on library and information science*
- \* *Other material suited to the objectives of the library*

One can find an exhaustive collection of library materials in the form of print, audio-visual and electronic information in the National Library and Documentation Centre which are available for reference purposes. The collection which is of a high standard both qualitatively and quantitatively reflects the objectives of the National Library. The collection comprises of a number of special collections as indicated below.

### **Basic Reference Collection**

The National Library possesses one of the most comprehensive basic reference collections in the country. It contains encyclopaedias, dictionaries, bibliographies and a large number of other reference materials. While the majority of them are internationally renowned reference materials, the rest is a comprehensive reference collection on Sri Lanka. Reflecting the current trend CD-Roms are gradually gaining importance in the basic reference collection. As Internet is becoming popular among library users necessary facilities for same have been provided at the National Library. The basic reference collection is placed at the ground floor of the library.

### **Sri Lanka Collection**

The Sri Lanka collection is the main collection of the National Library. As the National Library was recently established, its Sri Lanka collection mostly consists of contemporary materials. It has a complete collection of materials published in Sri Lanka since 1976. As a result of collection development activities pursued during the last decade the National Library also possesses a reasonably large collection of old materials published in the country in the past. Presently the Sri Lankan National Collection is scattered in the Department of National Archives, the National Museum library and the British Library largely due to the legal deposit legislation enacted in the 19th century in Sri Lanka. In addition the Royal Asiatic Society-Sri Lanka Branch Library, the Department of Archaeology library, Peradeniya University library and a number of other libraries also possess certain parts of the national collection. The National Library through its many bibliographic projects e.g. National Union Catalogue and Retrospective National Bibliography, attempts to provide bibliographic control to the National Collection. The Sri Lankan Collection of the National Library is located at the first floor.





### **Palm Leaf Collection**

The National Library holds a considerably large and growing collection of palm leaf manuscripts. These indigenous library material cover many fields including medicine, literature and religion. The well organised collection is in special cupboards on the first floor.



*Palm Leaf Collection*

### **Periodical Collection**

This is undoubtedly the best current periodical collection available in the country. In addition to current periodicals a considerable number of periodicals published in the past are also available. The Periodical Article Index compiled by the National Bibliographic Services Division of the National Library is of immense assistance to researchers to locate required articles.



*Periodical Collection*

### **Newspaper Collection**

The complete National Newspaper Collection from 1976 to date deposited in the library attracts a large number of researchers and readers to the library. The collection is being microfilmed at present and the newspapers can be used either in microfilm form or the original form. In addition microfilm editions of a number of leading national newspapers are being acquired to the national collection. The newspaper indices compiled by the Documentation Division help readers to locate required information. A collection of newspaper cuttings of special articles and news items appearing in newspapers are also available for users. The newspaper collection is located on the ground floor of the National Library.



*Newspaper Collection*





*Theses and Dissertation Collection*

### **Theses and Dissertation Collection**

The collection of theses of the Ph.D. and M.Phil. degrees conferred by Sri Lankan universities is part of the national collection. Theses are deposited in the National Library with the concurrence of the University Grants Commission and the respective universities and postgraduate institutions. The theses related to the above degrees conferred by foreign universities to Sri Lankan nationals or on a research on a theme relevant to Sri Lanka are also pursued by the National Library.



*Library and Information Science Collection*

### **Library and Information Science Collection**

The Library and Information Science Collection of the National Library is the largest and most comprehensive such collection in the country. In addition to a large collection of books, it includes all reputed foreign journals in the field. Special facilities have been provided for teachers and students of Library and Information Science Education Institutes to use the collection, which is located at the second floor.



*Martin Wickramasinghe Collection*

### **Special Collections**

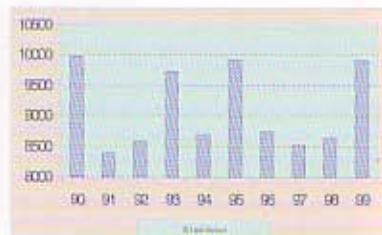
There are a number of special collections deposited in the National Library for use of researchers. The private collection of Martin Wickramasinghe, a foremost writer in the country is one of the largest of such collections. In addition to the library collection, a special exhibition including a number of personal items used by him is located in the second floor of the library. Likewise, private collections of leading Sri Lankan academics, namely, Professors D E Hettiarachchi, M H Peter Silva and Tikiri Abeyasinghe, Drs E M Wijerama and P B Sannasgala, Pandith Gunapala Senadeera and Ms Theja Gunawardena have also been deposited in the National Library. Selected publications of some international organisations, namely, UNESCO, European Economic Community and Asian Development Bank are also deposited as special collections. The science and technology reference collection, the drama manuscript collection donated by the Sri Lanka Art Council and the braille collection are some of the other collections in this category.



## Reader Services

### Deposit Collection

According to the Newspaper Ordinance of 1839 and Printers and Publishers Ordinance of 1885 (amended in 1976) and the NLDSB Act of 1998 the National Library is entitled to receive a copy of every publication published in the country. Publications received under the legal deposit are kept as a special collection on the first and third floors of the library.



*Progress of the deposit collection*

### Map Collection

A large collection of maps relating to Sri Lanka are deposited in this special collection. These maps are kept in special map cabinets on the first floor of the library with adequate bibliographic aids.

### Gazette Collection

The National Library holds a complete collection of gazettes published in Sri Lanka from 1888 to date. This is the only complete Sri Lankan collection deposited in the library at present and was received from the Government Publications Unit. In addition there is a collection of Government circulars covering the period 1970 - 1995 which have been indexed for easy reference. This has been accomplished in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Administration. The gazette collection is placed on the third floor of the library.

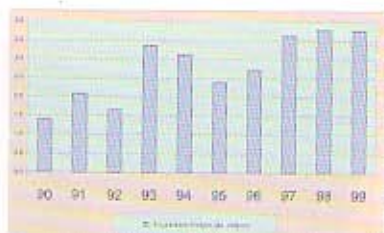


*Gazette Collection*

### Data Bases

There are several computerised databases in the National Library covering a number of important areas. Subjects include publications on the ethnic problem and devolution of power in Sri Lanka, ISBN Publishers Directory and the special collections in the National Library.





*Purchasing of library materials*

## Report Collection

The Report Collection contains various reports submitted by foreign and local experts as part of development projects funded by international donor agencies, reports of banks and other private sector organisations and the administration reports of government departments, corporations and statutory boards. The Report Collection is on the second floor of the library.



*A Sri Lankan mask*

## Folklore Collection

The folklore collection consists of a large collection of manuscripts received from the late Mr Peter Wijesinghe, a well known folklore specialist in Sri Lanka, and other materials and items received from various sources. In addition it also possesses a large number of publications on the subject published with the assistance of the Publishing Division of the NLDSB.

## Acquisition

The Acquisition Division of the National Library is responsible for collection development activities. It involves in selection of publications, search for rare materials, checking, listing, ordering, exchanges and acquiring of the materials. Current local publications are received through the legal deposit system and the publication assistance projects of the NLDSB. Therefore, acquisition funds are mainly used to purchase the basic reference sources, rare books, foreign publications pertaining to the country, periodicals and CD-ROMs. Internet is used for searching for materials as well as for ordering. The National Library acquisition list giving details of the materials acquired is published monthly.



*Acquisition Division*





## Reader Services







## Reader Services



*National Library Card Catalogue*

The Reader Services Division of the National Library is considered the hub of the institution, which facilitates the use of resources of the library. The three reading rooms of the library provide facilities for 320 readers. The information desk placed on the ground floor close to the entrance guides users to the appropriate area of the library and furnishes the basic information. The three main counters located in the main reading rooms, act as service points of the Reader Services Division.

Since users are not allowed to go to the stack area, every attempt is made to maintain the National Library Catalogue as descriptive as possible. Both the card catalogue and the computerised catalogue provide bibliographic information on author, title, subject, translator, editor, etc. of the collection.



*A service counter*

Presently newspapers, periodicals, government publications, publications on Sri Lanka and library and information science materials are in high demand by readers. The initial response from the public to the National Library was somewhat lukewarm due to their lack of awareness. Presently there is evidence of growing public demand for services of the National Library. This may be the result of the extensive propaganda work carried out by the library in the form of booklets, brochures, seminars, group tours and through the media. The friendly and dedicated staff of the Reader Services Division has also contributed to this in no small way.

### Registration



*Exhibition centre and main hall*

Users of the National Library are expected to be serious researchers. However, apart from the ability to prove one's identity no special qualifications are required to become a member of the library. Any Sri Lankan living in any part of the country can become a member of the National Library. Foreigners who visit Sri Lanka are also eligible to obtain short term membership. A temporary membership valid for 7 days can be obtained free of charge for those who require to use the library for a short period. Those who are keen to use the library on a long term basis could obtain membership either for three months, six months or one year. Members are entitled to use the facilities at the National Library free of charge and extra payment is levied only for the use of Internet and photocopying facilities. In addition to personal membership, institutional membership is also available.





## Services

The information desk at the ground floor deals with the preliminary queries of prospective users including membership, details of library collections and services available on each floor. In addition sign boards indicating services and collections of different parts of the library and pamphlets and booklets giving detailed information on the collection and services are also available for users.

The service counter is the main service point of each floor. The counter staff educates users on the collections and services available on each floor and directs them either to catalogues or other bibliographic tools for further information. They also serve users by assisting in surfing the Internet, providing photocopies and familiarising them on bibliographic services.

Besides the three reading rooms, a number of special study rooms and a designated area for the use of multimedia services and the Internet are available. Photocopies and Internet facilities are provided at a concessionary rate.

## Inter-library Lending Services

The National Library strives to serve researchers in all parts of the country through the inter-library lending programme. Accordingly facilities are available to obtain required library material from the National Library if it is not available at a particular library. Clients of the National Library too have the opportunity of obtaining required material from another library. The National Union Catalogue is the source for locating the required material. Inter-library lending service is available both locally and internationally. Since 1995 the National Library uses IFLA vouchers for international inter-library lending activities.



*Consulting the palm leaf manuscripts*



*Reading room on the 2nd floor*



*Surfing the Internet*





## Referral Centre



*Central Bank Library*



*Peradeniya University Library*



*Colombo Public Library*



*National Institute of  
Business Management  
Library*

The function of the National Referral Centre is to direct readers to other appropriate libraries of the country



## National Referral Centre and Referral Services

Referral service is a programme of directing researchers to a appropriate library when the National Library does not have the required library materials. The referral service is based on the National Union Catalogue, which provides information on the holdings of 54 main libraries in the country. In addition the secondary sources compiled by the National Library are also helpful in providing this service.



*Ground floor reading room*

## Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) Service

The SDI Service of the National Library disseminates current and up to date information to researchers, libraries and information centres. The service is rendered through compilation of directories, indices, content page service, quick reference services and a number of other information dissemination activities.

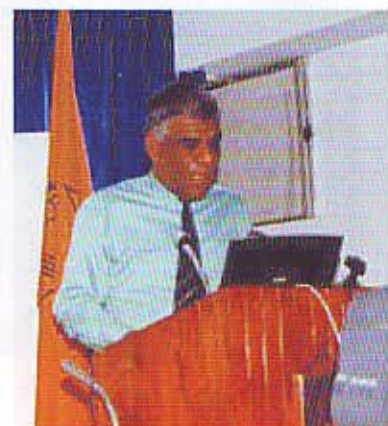


*Microform Collection*

## User Education Services

The National Library educates prospective users on its resources and services through various user education programmes carried out throughout the year. The new acquisitions to the library are displayed in the exhibition halls and acquisition lists are published periodically. National Library tours are conducted regularly for the benefit of school and university students and also for other interested groups. Countrywide lectures and seminars are held as part of the user education programme. Exhibitions displaying resources of the library are a regular feature. Booklets, brochures, posters and newspaper advertisements are published regularly. Special lectures and workshops are conducted for prospective users.

The monthly National Library Lecture series is another significant feature in the user education programme. Themes include Sri Lankan history, culture, literature, library and information science and other topical subjects. These lectures attract both the general public and the intelligentsia to the National Library.



*A lecture in progress at the National Library*





*Ptolemy's map*  
(127 A.D.-151 A.D.)



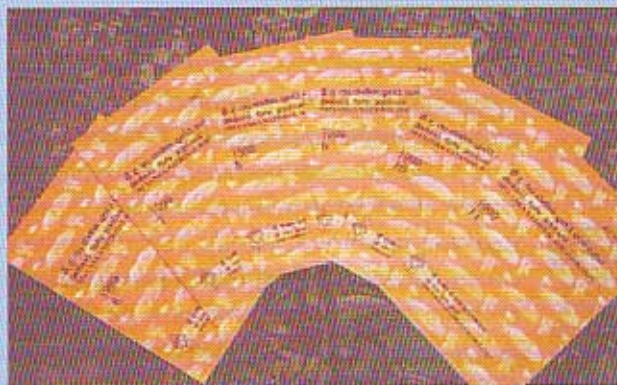
*Cypriano Sanchez's map*  
(1560 A.D.-1566 A.D.)

### *Early Maps of Sri Lanka*





## Bibliographic Services







## Bibliographic Services



*Staff of the National Bibliographic Services Division*

- \* *Compilation of the National Bibliography commenced in 1962 at the Department of National Archives*
- \* *Mr. A J Wells of the British National Bibliography initiated the compilation of the National Bibliography in Sri Lanka*
- \* *Mr. N Amarasinghe was the first Sri Lankan editor of the Bibliography. He later functioned as the Director of the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board (1976 - 1988)*
- \* *Compilation of the Bibliography was handed over to the Sri Lanka National Library Services Board in 1974*
- \* *The retrospective National Bibliography 1737 - 1884 was published in 1997*
- \* *Sri Lanka Periodical Article Index was commenced in 1998*

The main objective of the Bibliographic Services Division of the National Library and Documentation Centre is to facilitate users to obtain information on materials published in and on the country. This includes all published materials in both print and non-print forms which represent the creative and intellectual products of the nation. Knowledge and information have become decisive factors in the current development process. To achieve development goals of the country, it is of paramount importance that the required information is provided to the required person on time. The National Bibliographic Division through its many projects attempts to achieve these goals.

### Compilation of the National Bibliography

Compilation of the Sri Lanka National Bibliography is a successful project of the National Library. This is published monthly and generally reflects the information on publications published during the previous month. In addition publications on Sri Lanka and publications by Sri Lankans published outside the country are also included to some extent. To ensure maximum coverage a number of sources are used to obtain the required information. Acquisitions to the National Library, publications received under the International Standard Numbering projects and publication assistance projects of the Board and deposit publications are the main sources. Internet, trade bibliographies, book lists and the information in the National Union Catalogue are also used.

Being a multi-lingual country, publications in Sinhala, Tamil and English are included in the National Bibliography. In addition first editions of periodicals and newspapers and information on maps are also included. The subject section and indices are the two main parts of the bibliography. The subject section comprises detailed information on publications. Those who seek information by author, title, series or subject could consult the relevant indices.

The National Bibliography is of great assistance to librarians in book selection, organising the library collection (cataloguing and



classification) and reader services activities. Furthermore, the bibliography is the reliable guide for gauging the contemporary publishing in Sri Lanka.

Being a monthly publication the Sri Lanka National Bibliography has acquired a reputation as an up-to-date publication. Taking into consideration that its coverage is in excess of 90% of Sri Lankan publications, timeliness and the structure, the Sri Lanka National Bibliography is considered one of the best national bibliographies in Asia as well as in the international arena.

In addition to the regular monthly issues, an annual cumulative national bibliography is also published. The National Bibliography is popular among researchers, librarians, academic and professional organisations, national libraries and the general public who are interested in latest publications on Sri Lanka.



*Sri Lanka National Bibliography*

### **The Retrospective National Bibliography Project**

As stated earlier one of the objectives of a national library is to ensure an orderly bibliographic control mechanism of the country's publications. Compilation of the Retrospective National Bibliography covering the publications prior to the publishing of the current National Bibliography is considered a challenge for a national library. Though the oldest palm leaf manuscript available in Sri Lanka dates to the 15th century, according to available historical evidence, the tradition of writing in the country goes back about 20 centuries. The present task is to introduce bibliographic control of publications published during a period of 226 years, from 1737 when printing was introduced to the country to 1963 when the publication of the National Bibliography commenced.



*A seminar on the National Bibliography*





*Publications of the National Bibliographic Services Division*

In 1997 the National Library published the first part of the Retrospective National Bibliography covering the period 1737 - 1884. The second part covering the period 1885 - 1900 was published in 2000. The retrospective bibliography for the period 1901 - 1910 is presently being compiled and it is expected to cover the entire period (up to 1962) within the next few years.

### **Sri Lanka Periodical Article Index**

The National Library commenced compilation of the Sri Lanka Periodical Article Index in 1998. This is a quarterly publication and is extremely useful for researchers of Sri Lankan affairs. Bibliographic information on articles in Sri Lankan as well as some foreign periodicals which carry articles pertaining to Sri Lanka are included in the index.

### **Compilation of Special Bibliographies**



*Special bibliographies*

In addition to its National Bibliography and Periodical Article Indexing Project the Bibliographic Services Division publishes a number of special bibliographies. Compilation of a Bibliography of Bibliographies on Sri Lanka has already commenced. In addition to its own activities in the bibliographic field the National Library attempts to co-ordinate bibliographic projects undertaken by professional librarians and researchers in different fields and students attached to library educational institutes in the country.

The Children's Bibliography published annually furnishes details on children's literature published in Sri Lanka. The cover pictures of the publications are also included along with bibliographic details. A Bibliography on Translations giving information on books translated from foreign languages to vernacular languages during 1948-1998 was published recently.



## Documentation Services

### Compilation of the National Library Catalogue

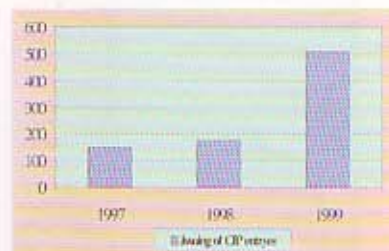
Organisation of the material acquired for the National Library is another important task carried out by the Bibliographic Services Division. Books, periodicals, newspapers, audio cassettes, video cassettes, microfilms, microfiche, maps, CD-ROMs, palm leaf manuscripts and other library materials received by the library through purchases, donations, exchange and deposit are scientifically catalogued and classified. As users are not permitted to visit the stack area of the library the National Library Catalogue is of special significance. Readers are able to find the required publications by author, title, translator, editor, series or subject. In addition to the traditional card catalogue the computerised library catalogue is also available for users.



*Preparation of the National Library Catalogue*

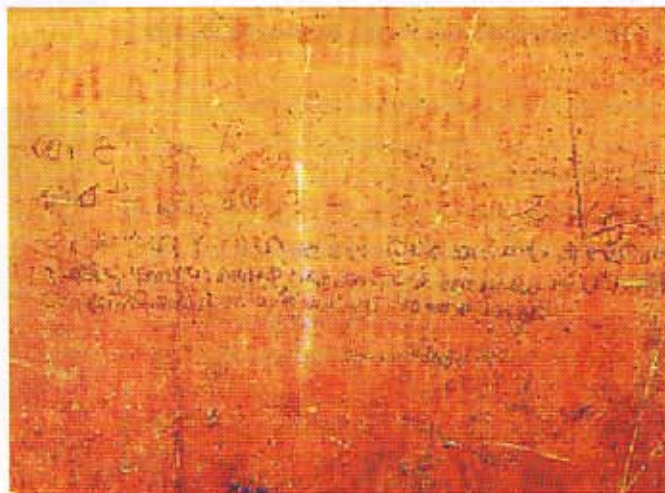
### Cataloguing in Publication (CIP)

Providing CIP entries for authors and publishers is another new service introduced by the National Library. The CIP entries are given free to be included in publications. The CIP entry with the bibliographic details of the publication proves to be extremely useful for small and medium sized libraries. While helping libraries in their cataloguing and classification work, it also assists in maintaining a national standard in cataloguing.



*Issuing of CIP entries*





*A painting and a graffito from Sigiriya  
(5th century)*



## Documentation Services







## Documentation Services



*Activities of the Documentation Services Division*

Documentation service is considered to be one of the most important activities of National Library. It provides easy access to information resources available in the library as well as scattered among other libraries in the country. To this end the Documentation Services Division conducts a number of projects including compilation and maintenance of the National Union Catalogue (NUC), compilation of directories, indices and bibliographies and creating databases on various subjects. While acting as the focal point of the Social Science Library Network in the country it also co-ordinates the activities of other library networks. Publishing the NATNET LANKA Newsletter and managing the International Standard Numbering Projects are some other functions of the division.

### The National Union Catalogue

Compilation and maintenance of the National Union Catalogue (NUC) is a major responsibility of a National Library. The NUC contains bibliographic details of collections of leading libraries in the country thereby providing users an opportunity to get a knowledge of the types of library materials available in the country and their locations. The membership of the NUC has been increasing gradually during the last few years and presently stands at 54 libraries. Computerisation of the NUC commenced in 1996 and by mid 2000, 27 libraries were able to provide entries in diskette form. The database of the NUC has been published in printed form in three parts.



*Publications of the Documentation Services Division*

While the NUC is used extensively by researchers and postgraduate students, general users too have shown an interest in it. Member libraries could also obtain information on the NUC holding in diskette form. The NUC which is still in its formative stage can be described as a joint project with major libraries in the country rather than a National Library project.

### Sri Lanka Newspaper Article Index

The Sri Lanka Newspaper Article Index published in Sinhala, Tamil and English contains indices of articles that have appeared in national newspapers. Indices for newspapers of 1993 and 1994 have already been published. Required articles can be found in newspapers deposited at the library. In future the newspaper index will be maintained as a database in the National Library.



## The Institutions and Libraries of the National Union Catalogue Project







## Publications of the Documentation Services Division

ශ්‍රී ලංකා පුස්තකාල ලිපි අනුක්‍රමණිකාව - 1993, 1994

ශ්‍රී ලංකා රජයේ ප්‍රකාශන නාමාවලිය - 1990, 1991-1992, 1993-1994, 1995-1997

ශ්‍රී ලංකා පුස්තකාල නාමාවලිය - 1993

මහින්දාගමයා පිළිබඳ ග්‍රන්ථනාමාවලිය - 1993

இலங்கை புதினத்தாள் கட்டுரைச் சுட்டி - 1993, 1994

Directory of Social Science Libraries, Information Centres & Data Bases in Sri Lanka 1987, 1995

Selected Bibliography on SAARC - 1991

Directory of Libraries in Sri Lanka - 1994

Selected Bibliography on Kataragama - 1994

Sri Lanka Newspaper Article Index - 1993, 1994

Sri Lanka (ISBN) Publishers Directory - 1987, 1991

Sri Lanka Conference Index - 1976-1986, 1987-1990, 1991-1992, 1993, 1994-1995

Directory of Social Scientists in Sri Lanka - Parts I & II

National Union Catalogue - Parts I, II & III

University of Peradeniya Library - Sri Lanka Collection - Vols. 1 & 2

NATNET LANKA Newsletter

## Social Science Documentation Activities

Two parts of the Directory of Social Scientists in Sri Lanka have been published and the rest of the volumes have been prepared for publication. The Directory of Social Science Libraries, Information Centres and Data Bases is updated regularly.

## Sri Lanka Conference Index

Information on conferences and seminars held in Sri Lanka during the past 25 years can be found in the Sri Lanka Conference Index, which is no doubt an important source of information for researchers. This too will be maintained as a database in the future.

## Publication of Catalogues of Major Libraries

Publication of library catalogues of major and important libraries in the country is a responsibility of the National Library. Accordingly publication of the catalogue of the Peradeniya University library, the biggest and oldest university library in the country, has already commenced. The National Library has published two parts of the Peradeniya University library catalogue and has plans to publish the catalogues of a number of other notable libraries.

## Database on the Ethnic Problem of Sri Lanka

This database contains information on literature related to the ethnic problem of Sri Lanka which have appeared in books, periodicals, newspapers, etc and includes entries in excess of 10,000 items.

## Directory of Government Publications

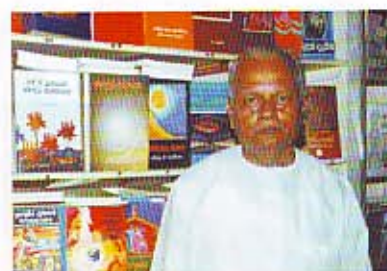
The objective of this publication is to provide bibliographic control of government publications including publications of the Parliament of Sri Lanka, ministries, departments and other government agencies.



## Library Networks

## International Standard Book Numbering Project (ISBN)

The NLDC is the ISBN national centre and issues ISBNs free of charge for books published in Sri Lanka. Information on publishers registered with the ISBN centre is sent to the data base maintained by the ISBN International Centre in Berlin. 3,189 Sri Lankan publishers have been registered at the ISBN centre during the period 1986-2000. During this period 22,976 ISBNs were issued for Sri Lankan publishers and over 90% of locally published books presently obtain ISBNs. Consequently Sri Lanka's ISBN project is considered the best in the South Asia region and one of the best in the Asia - Pacific region.



*ISBN has become popular among publishers*

## Barcode numbers

Issuing of ISBN barcode numbers commenced on August 1995 and 147 barcode numbers have been issued by mid 2000.

## Database on Publishers of Sri Lanka

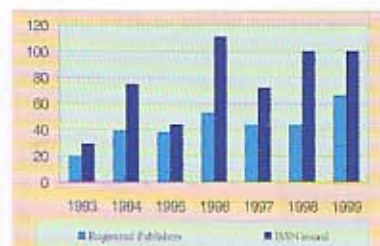
This database contains information on Sri Lankan publishers who have been registered with the ISBN national centre in Sri Lanka. They have been categorised as commercial, government, non-governmental and author/private. Information on 2,920 such publishers are included in the database.



*Progress of ISBN in Sri Lanka*

## International Standard Serial Numbering (ISSN) Project

The ISSN project commenced in Sri Lanka in 1993 when the ISSN International Centre in Paris named the National Library as the National ISSN Centre for Sri Lanka. The centre issues ISSN for



*Progress of ISSN in Sri Lanka*



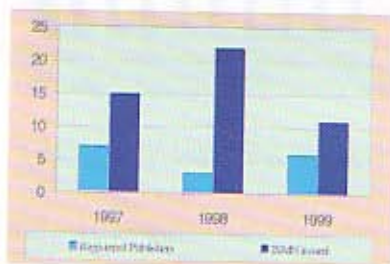


*Seminar on ISMN*

periodicals, newspapers, reports etc free of charge. 304 publishers have been registered with the centre and 582 ISSNs have been issued by mid 2000.

### International Standard Music Numbering (ISMN) Project

The ISMN project, which was started in 1997, is the third international standard numbering project conducted by the National Library. The ISMNs are issued for music publications published in the country. By mid 2000, 21 publishers were registered and 56 ISMNs have been issued. Information on publications is conveyed to the ISMN international office in Berlin where the international database of music publishers is maintained.



*Progress of ISMN in Sri Lanka*

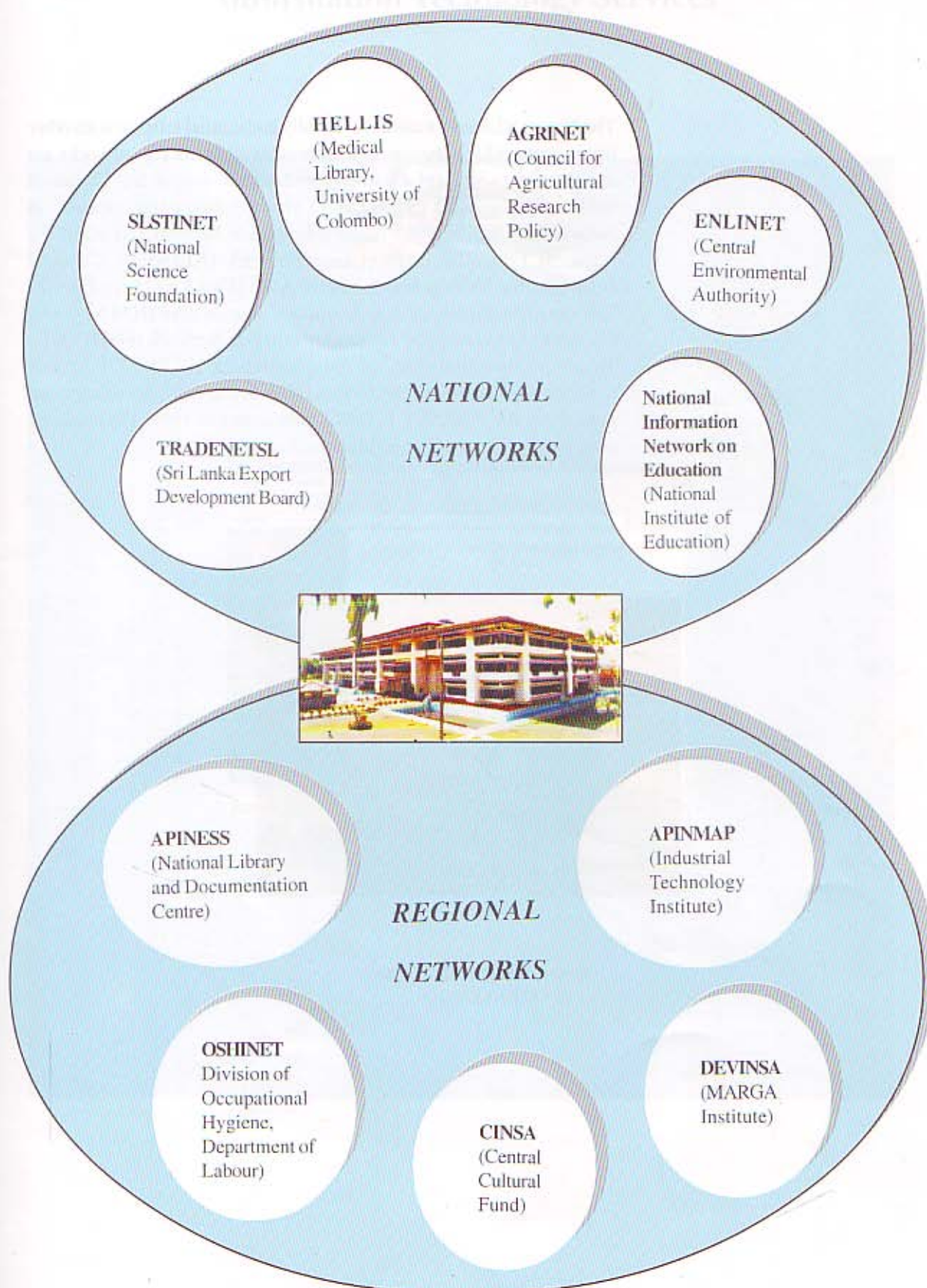
### Links with National and International Library Networks

The National Library acts as the national focal point of the Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences (APINESS). The centre of APINESS is in Bangkok, Thailand. The objective of the national centre is to act as the co-ordinator of library and documentation activities related to social sciences, assist researchers and libraries in the social science field and undertake bibliographic control activities in the field. The national network consists of 31 libraries in university, higher educational, research, special and public library sectors. The APINESS National Advisory Committee advises and monitors the functions of the focal point and the network.



## Library Networks

Information Technology Services







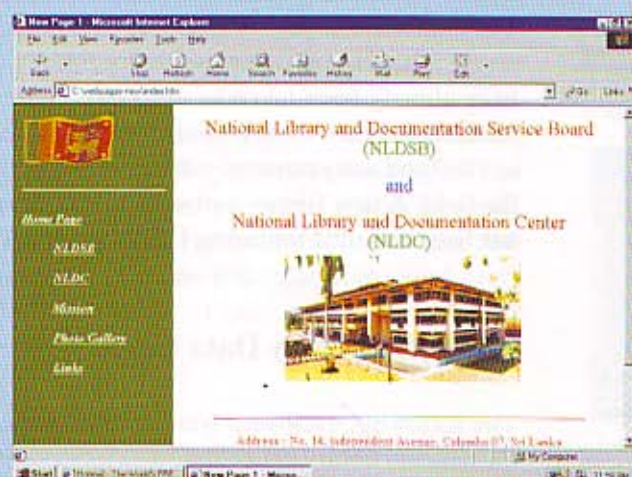
The National Library maintains friendly and cordial relation with other library networks in the country. At present eight library networks are in operation in Sri Lanka, namely, Sri Lanka Scientific and Technical Information Network (SLSTINET), Health Library and Information Network (HELLIS), Agriculture Information Network (AGRINET), National Education Information Network (NEINET), Cultural Information Network for South Asia (CINSA) Asia-Pacific Information Network on Aromatic Plants (APINMAP) and Occupational Safety and Health Information Network (OSHINET). To co-ordinate activities of these networks NATNET LANKA network was formed by the National Library in 1996. It commenced publishing the NATNET LANKA newsletter in 1997, six issues of which have been published to date.



*Bronze Elephant Lamp*  
(11th century)



## Information Technology Services







## Information Technology Services



*National Library Web page*

The emergence of powerful computers at affordable prices, the unprecedented expansion of telecommunication facilities and the vast improvement in computer software programmes make information technology (IT) a powerful change agent of the modern world. Benefits of the vast investments made in the fields of telecommunication, computer education and information technology are gradually showing results in Sri Lanka. The development and expansion of telecommunication and IT facilities have created a favourable atmosphere for the country's library and information services. It is the responsibility of the library sector to use this opportunity to derive the maximum benefit.

The National Library strongly advocates maximum usage of IT to create a better and dynamic library and information service. Steps have already been taken to introduce IT to various services of the National Library. The IT Division of the National Library was set up in 1993 and was entrusted with the implementation of IT activities in the field. A new library software programme - Alice for Windows - has been installed replacing CDS/ISIS programme.

### National Library Data Bases

The following databases were created as part of the automation of the national library collection.

- LCAT - National Library Book Collection
- UCAT - National Union Catalogue
- SCAT - Periodical Collection
- LIS - Library Science Collection
- LSPAI - Library Science Periodical Index
- AVCAT - Audio-visual Collection
- ISBNL - ISBN Book Collection



*Multi-media centre*

Activities of the National Library have been co-ordinated through a Local Area Network (LAN). The National Union Catalogue and a number of other library activities have been computerised. Internet, e-mail and desktop publishing facilities contribute immensely to improve the activities of the library.



தமிழ் தந்தை

நிலகம்

The National Library web site ([www.slt.lk/nlib](http://www.slt.lk/nlib)) was launched in 1998 and has been updated regularly. To commemorate 50 years of independence of Sri Lanka in 1998, a special exhibition was mounted at the web site displaying important publications on Sri Lanka. A dedicated telephone line (64 kbps) was installed recently with a view to providing Internet facilities more effectively for the staff and users.

### IT Projects at National Level

The IT Division has taken a number of initiatives to popularise information technology among libraries in the country. The necessary technical advice, assistance in the preparation of preliminary project reports, limited financial assistance for obtaining required IT equipment and training facilities for staff are some of these initiatives.

The project to introduce Internet facilities for public libraries and the library automation project are the leading projects presently carried out by the National Library. In addition, providing assistance on IT activities for library education institutes in the country, conducting in-service training programmes for librarians and organising introductory seminars and lectures on IT for heads of local authorities are some of the other functions of the division.



*Presentation of a computer to the Library Science Department of Kelaniya University (1998)*



*Introduction of Internet services to public libraries in the Western Province (1999)*



*In-service training programme (2000)*





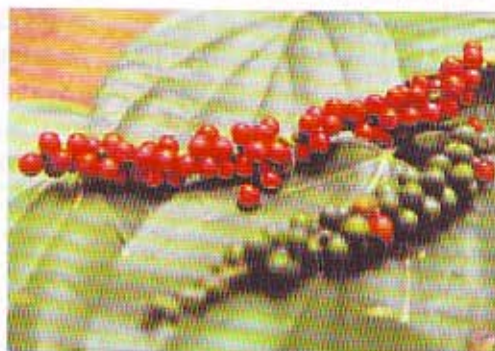
Tea



Flowers (Orchids)



Gems

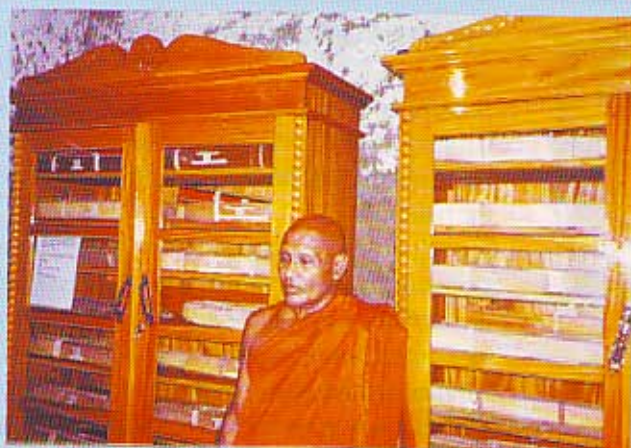


Spices (Pepper)

*Some traditional exports*



## Conservation and Preservation Services







## Conservation and Preservation



*Library materials to be preserved*

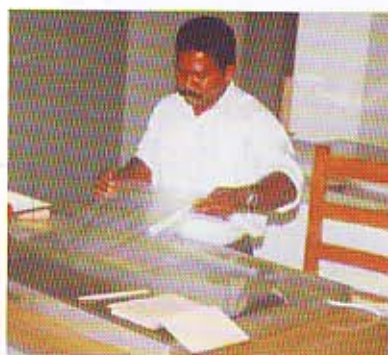
Conservation, preservation and taking other necessary steps for the protection and well-being of the library collection are considered important responsibilities of a professional librarian. As old and rare collections are accorded a special place in the National Library and taking in to consideration the library's role as the deposit library, special attention has been paid to conservation and preservation.

In addition to looking after its own collection the National Library also assists other libraries in the country in conservation and preservation activities. Most of these libraries do not have the required technical know-how or other facilities to carry out suitable conservation and preservation programmes.

### Special conservation measures

A number of special measures have been taken to protect the National Library collection. The collection is deposited in a secure, air-conditioned and humidity controlled place in the middle core area of the building.

Deposit materials, newspapers and periodicals are kept in special boxes while maps and micro films/fiche are stored in protective covers. The collection is regularly cleaned for dust and insects. The National Library purchases three copies of publications pertaining to Sri Lanka. One copy is used for reference purposes and the second copy is for photocopying and inter-library lending services while the third copy is retained as a protected copy. Only the staff of Reader Services and Conservation Divisions are allowed to visit the stack area and readers are required to request material through the counter staff.



*Conservation of damaged paper*

### Conservation

A number of measures are taken for conservation of the collection. The bindery and the conservation centre take necessary steps to protect the library collection and to keep it in a healthy condition. Both trained as well as trainee binders are attached to the well-





equipped bindery. In addition the services of outside expert binders are also obtained when required.

The conservation centre has facilities for deacidification and repair of damaged papers. These facilities are to be expanded in the future.

Fumigation has been widely used to prevent damage caused by insects and fungus. Thymol fumigation is generally used while vacuum fumigation is used on special occasions. Fumigation chambers and implements required for this purpose are available in the Conservation Division. Microfilming is another conservation method used by the National Library and the project for microfilming the newspaper collection needs special mention. Conservation staff are trained both locally and abroad. Plans are also underway to use digitisation as a conservation method in the near future.

### Library Conservation Project at National Level

Conservation and preservation of library materials is a monumental task in the majority of libraries in Sri Lanka. The situation is aggravated by the country's tropical climate.

Inferior quality of paper used in early printing, inadequate space and trained staff, insufficient attention to basic conservation practices and financial constraints faced by libraries are some of the major causes for aggravating conservation issues in libraries. In addition ignorance of the problem and of remedial measures by non-professional librarians who run the majority of small libraries are also significant causes.

The National Library and Documentation Centre conducts a number of projects to help these libraries in scientific conservation methods. Educating librarians and library authorities on the problem and remedial measures is one such step. For this purpose workshops and seminars are conducted for the benefit of librarians. Furthermore special training programmes are conducted for librarians and for officers in-charge of conservation units of larger libraries.



*Work in progress at the bindery*



*Vacuum fumigation*



*Thymol fumigation*





*Paper cutting*

The National Library has published a number of books on conservation and preservation as a measure of disseminating knowledge on the subject. Experts in the field have authored some of these monographs while some are translations of internationally renowned works.

The National Library is closely associated with the Memory of the World programme of UNESCO and the conservation forum of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. The National Library also maintains close rapport with the Diet Library of Japan, which was designated by IFLA to co-ordinate conservation activities of part of the Asia-Oceania region including Sri Lanka, and with a number of leading conservation centres in India.

### **Library Conservation Centre Project**

The Library Conservation Centre project which was introduced by the National Library with the intention of popularising conservation activities among libraries at national level is another landmark in this field. This can be considered the first national campaign on library conservation. Through this programme participant libraries are able to obtain necessary theoretical and practical know-how on the subject. These libraries also receive a set of bindery and conservation equipment from the NLDC, which will enable them to start a small conservation centre in the library and put the newly acquired knowledge and skills to practice.



*Deacidification*

About 30 libraries from different library sectors are selected for the project annually. The National Library provides training and equipment for the centres while the authorities of the selected libraries are expected to provide adequate space from the library for this purpose, and an officer to be trained in the subject and assurance of providing annual funding for the sustainability of the project. By mid 2000, 115 conservation centres were set up in public, school, temple, departmental and higher educational libraries. Most of these centres perform satisfactorily and some have even extended their services beyond the respective libraries.

Special assistance is given to those libraries which house library collections of national significance. Library furniture in the form of book racks and special cupboards for palm leaf manuscripts and

fumigation cupboards are provided after assessing the requirements. Padeniya Temple library, Kelaniya Vidyalankara Pirivena library, the library of the Royal Asiatic Society, Sri Lanka Branch and the Archeological Department library are some of the libraries which received such assistance recently.

The National Library intervenes in drawing attention of the respective authorities on restoring the collections of national significance by agitating on their behalf. The present National Museum Library restoration project can be cited as an example. The National Museum Library, which is the largest library in the country, with about 900,000 volumes, is presently faced with a serious conservation problem. As a result of the intervention of the National Library the Ministry of Cultural and Religious Affairs appointed a special committee to investigate and make suitable recommendations. Subsequently the Minister of Cultural and Religious affairs presented the committee reports to HE the President. After a study of recommendations by HE the President an allocation of Rs 10 million from the President's Fund was made available for conservation and restoration of the National Museum library collection. Presently preservation and microfilming work is in progress under the supervision of a special committee on which the National Library is also represented.

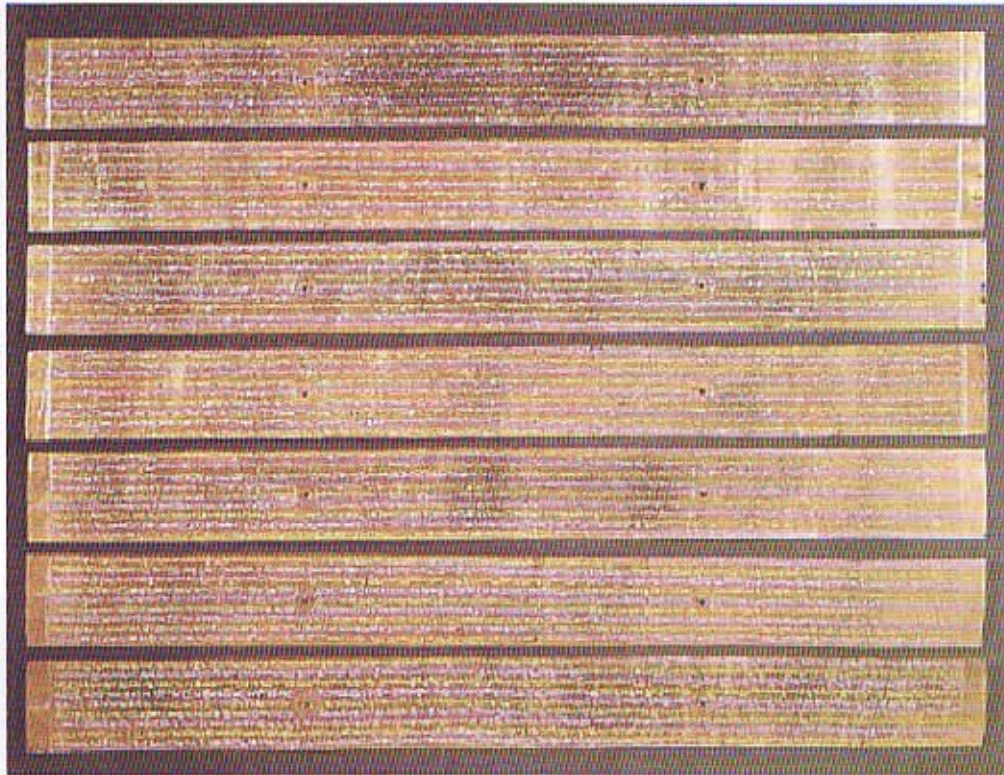


*Padeniya Temple Library*



*National Museum Library*





*Sanskrit text in gold sheets; size 67 x 6 cm each  
(10th Century)*



## External Relations







*Sri Lanka and Asia-Oceania region; Asiasat photo*

National libraries lay great emphasis on regional and international relations. As the apex library in a country it is expected to have cordial relationships with other national and major libraries particularly in the region and also with main regional and international organisations connected with the library and information field. Accordingly the National Library and Documentation Centre also maintains special relationships with national libraries of a number of countries and regional and international organisations in the field.

### Regional Forum

Conference of the Directors of National Libraries in Asia and Oceania (CDNLAO) is the main regional forum in the national library field in this region. This conference is held once in three years. The CDNLAO was formed in 1979 as the regional body of the Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL). The 3<sup>rd</sup> CDNLAO conference was held in Colombo in 1985 and the conference for the year 2000 was held in Singapore. Challenges faced by National Libraries in the region and improving co-operation and resource



*CDNLAO conference; 1992, Malaysia*

sharing among them are the general themes of the meetings. A number of resource sharing projects in the form of exchange of experts, library materials and providing training facilities are presently in operation.

The NLDC acts as the national centre of the Asia Pacific Network of Social Science Libraries (APINESS). This is the major regional library network in the social science field.





## Cultural Activities

Relationship with Other National Libraries

The National Library and Documentation Centre (NLDC) has been actively engaged in various cultural activities, including the distribution of books, the establishment of school libraries, and the provision of training opportunities for school librarians, library trainers and staff of the NLDC.

### International Relations

Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL) is the main international forum which represents national libraries throughout the world. The meetings are held annually during the IFLA general conference. The NLDC is the national member for the International Federation of Documentation (FID) and also maintains close rapport with the International Federations of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the premier international organisation in the library and information field.

As mentioned earlier, the NLDC acts as the national centre of the International Standard Book Numbering (ISBN), International Standard Serial Numbering (ISSN) and International Standard Music Numbering (ISMN) projects. Due to the successful implementation of these projects Sri Lanka has been recognised as the leader in the region in standard numbering projects. Accordingly the NLDC has assisted Bhutan to inaugurate the ISBN project by providing necessary training and guidance.

UNESCO assisted Sri Lanka by providing the initial thrust for the establishment of the National Library and also providing the architect to design the library building. The United States Information Service (USIS), the British Council and Book Aid International too assist the NLDC in providing expert services, training opportunities and library materials.

Through the GEP-2 Project the World Bank help is available to improve the school library sector in the country and to establish the National Institute of Library and Information Science (NILIS). The project also provides training opportunities for school librarians, library trainers and staff of the NLDC. The National Library took an active part in formulating the project and at present is assisting the authorities in its implementation.



*Information technology expert sponsored by the US Information Agency (1998)*



*Distribution of books donated by Book Aid International (1997)*



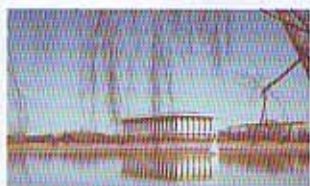
*World Bank School Library Development Project (2000)*





## Relationship with Other National Libraries

The following are some of the National Libraries with whom the National Library of Sri Lanka maintains close ties in the form of exchange of library materials, inter-library lending, expert assistance and training facilities.



*Australia*



*Britain*



*Canada*



*China*



*France*



*India*



*Indonesia*



*Japan*



*Korea*



*Malaysia*



*The Philippines*



*Singapore*



*Thailand*



*USA*







## Cultural Activities







*National Library Auditorium*

### **National Library Auditorium**

The National Library Auditorium is considered one of the busiest as well as one of the most popular auditoriums in Colombo. The auditorium with 125 seats is equipped with modern conveniences. It is used for lectures, seminars, workshops, book launching and other literary, artistic and cultural activities. To meet the increasing demand a second auditorium with a seating capacity of 250 has also been planned in the National Library complex. In addition the National Library has a seminar room which is used for seminars and training courses.



*The Picture Gallery*

### **The Picture Gallery**

Portraits of leading figures who contributed significantly to language, literature, art and library fields in Sri Lanka are exhibited in the National Library. This was inaugurated in 1998 and it is expected to be developed as a separate gallery in the future. In addition the NLDC is collecting paintings of leading artists in the country.

### **National Library Bookshop**

The National Library Bookshop is a popular bookshop in the capital. The objective of the bookshop is to provide quality library materials to libraries and the general public at a reasonable price. National Library publications, publications of the special book development projects of the NLDSB and publications of a number of state organisations and author publishers are available at the bookshop. Library stationary including catalogue cards, book labels, book cards and acquisition registers are also available in the bookshop.



*National Library Bookshop*





*The staff of the National Library and Documentation Centre and the National Library and Documentation Services Board-1998*

## Staff Activities

The National Library is proud to have a competent staff in the fields of library and information science, information technology, conservation, management and a number of other disciplines.

In addition to their professional work the staff is actively engaged in cultural activities throughout the year not causing impediment to their official duties. The year commences with a religious ceremony and a get together of the staff. The New Year Festival in April is a very important occasion for the institution and it is celebrated in customary fashion. To commemorate the establishment of the National Library a religious ceremony and a number of cultural and educational activities are held at the end of April each year.

The annual excursion organised by the Staff Welfare Society takes the staff to various parts of the country. On special occasions dramas and concerts are held either with leading artists or harnessing the talents of the staff.

Family members of the staff also participate at these special occasions. These cultural and religious activities have helped to create an impression of a 'National Library Family' thus developing a strong relationship between the staff and the institution.



*A religious ceremony*

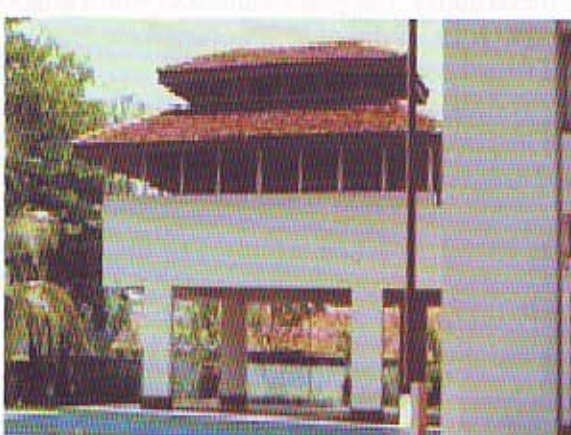


*A new year festival*



*A scene from a play produced by the staff*

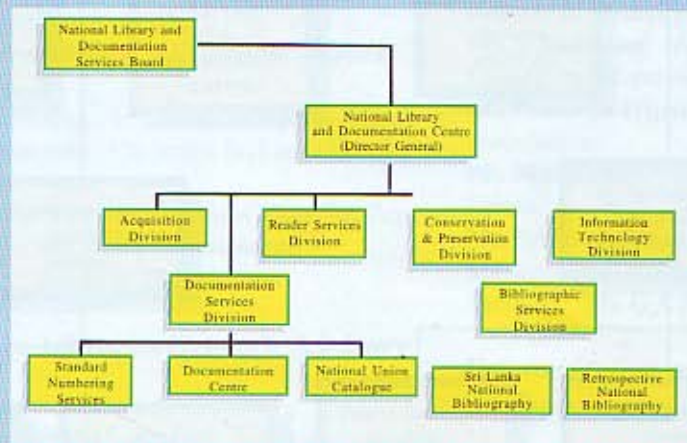




*National Library building*



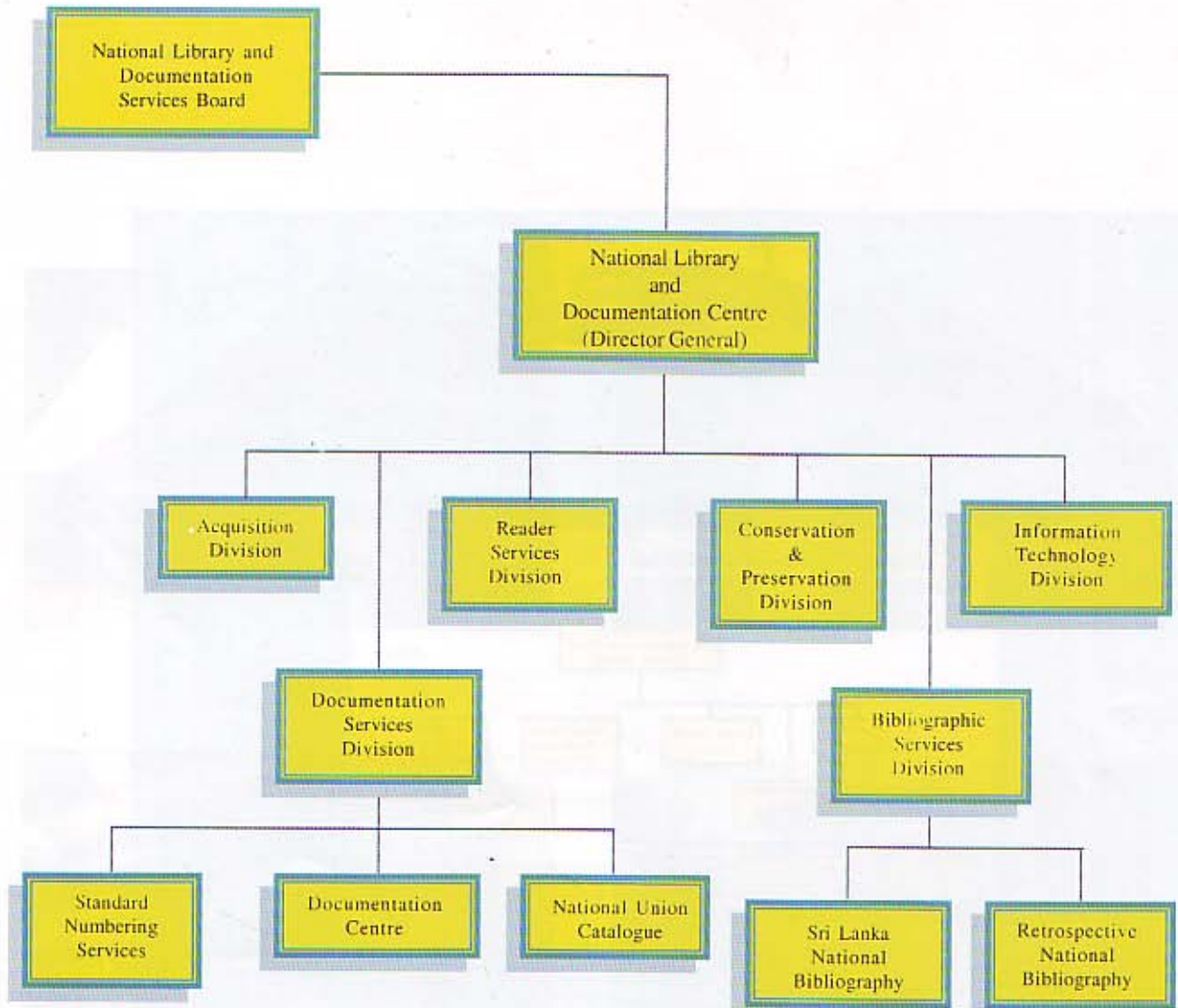
## Organisation Structure







## Organisation Structure of National Library and Documentation Centre



Senior Executive Staff of the National Library and Documentation Centre

**Left to right:** Mr UP Alahakoon, Head, National Bibliographic Services Division; Ms GA Nanayakkara, Head, Information Technology Division; Ms DM Thilakaratne, Head, Acquisition Division; Ms MBJ Senevirathna, Head, Reader Services Division; Ms HNJ Fernando, Head, Documentation Services Division and Mr MSU Amarasiri, Director General. Ms Padma Bandaranyake, Head, Conservation and Preservation Division (not in the photograph).





## Advisory Committees

The Hon Minister of Education and Higher Education has appointed a number of advisory committees for the National Library and Documentation Centre on the advice of the National Library and Documentation Services Board. The main functions of these advisory committees are to advice and assist the respective divisions of the NLDC in their professional activities.

### National Library Advisory Committee

**Professor W I Siriweera** (Chairman) - Vice-Chancellor, University of Rajarata

**Professor Chandra Wickramagamage** - Dept. of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Sri Jayawardanapura

**Mr. G Vidanapathirana** - Librarian, University of Sri Jayawardanapura

**Mr. M D H Jayawardane** - Chief Librarian, Colombo Public Library

**Ms. W M Seneviratna** - Sri Lanka Library Association

**Mr. G S B Senanayake** - Chairman, Sri Lanka Literary Panel

**Ms. S Akarawita** - Librarian, National Museums Dept.

Joint Secretaries: **Ms. M B J Senevirathna**

**Ms. D M Thilakaratne**

### Social Science Libraries Network Advisory Committee

**Mr. G Vidanapathirana** (Chairman) - Librarian, University of Sri Jayawardanapura

**Dr. Jayadeva Uyangoda** - Senior Lecturer, Dept. of History and Political Science, University of Colombo

**Secretary General**, Sri Lanka UNESCO National Commission

**Mr. S M Kamaldeen** - Consultant, Islamic Cultural Centre

**Ms. S C Jayasuriya** - Librarian, University of Colombo

**Ms. S M Wijewansa** - Director, Documentation and Information, Sri Lanka Standards Institute

**Ms. Deepali Thalagala** - Director/Information, National Science Foundation

Secretary: **Ms. H N J Fernando**

### Conservation and Preservation Advisory Committee

**Dr. (Ms) N S Melagoda** (Chairman), Dept. of History and Political Science, University of Colombo

**Mr. S M Aberatne** - Senior Assistant Librarian, University of Kelaniya

**Mr. J A Sumith** - Asst. Director, Office of the Registrar of Pesticides

**Ms. Geetha Yapa** - Sri Lanka Library Association

**Mr. H Thilakabandu** - Advisor, Department of External Resources

Secretary: **Ms. Padma Bandaranayake**

### Information Technology Services Advisory Committee

**Mr. N U Yapa** (Chairman) - Librarian, International Irrigation Management Institute

**Mr. S T Nandasara** - Senior Lecturer, Institute of Computer Technology, University of Colombo

**Mr. T D D Gunasekara** - Librarian, Post Graduate Institute of Medicine

**Ms. Y Maharroof** - Assistant Director/Information, Council for Information Technology

**Ms. Predeepa Wijetunga** - Sri Lanka Library Association

**Ms. M Karunanayake** - Director, American Resource Center

**Mr. Priyantha Weerabahu** - Information Technology Manager, IDM Computer Education Institute

Secretary: **Ms. G A Nanayakkara**

### Documentation and Bibliographic Services Advisory Committee

**Mr. Piyadasa Ranasingha** (Chairman) - Head, Dept. of Library and Information Science, University of Kelaniya

**Ms. S C Jayasuriya** - Sri Lanka Library Association

**Professor Kalinga Tudor Silva** - Dept. of Sociology, University of Peradeniya

**Ms. Mangalika Lewke Bandara** - Publishing Consultant

**Mr. J A Amaraweera** - Librarian, University of Buddhist and Pali

**Ms. Nalinie de Silva** - Librarian, Central Bank of Sri Lanka

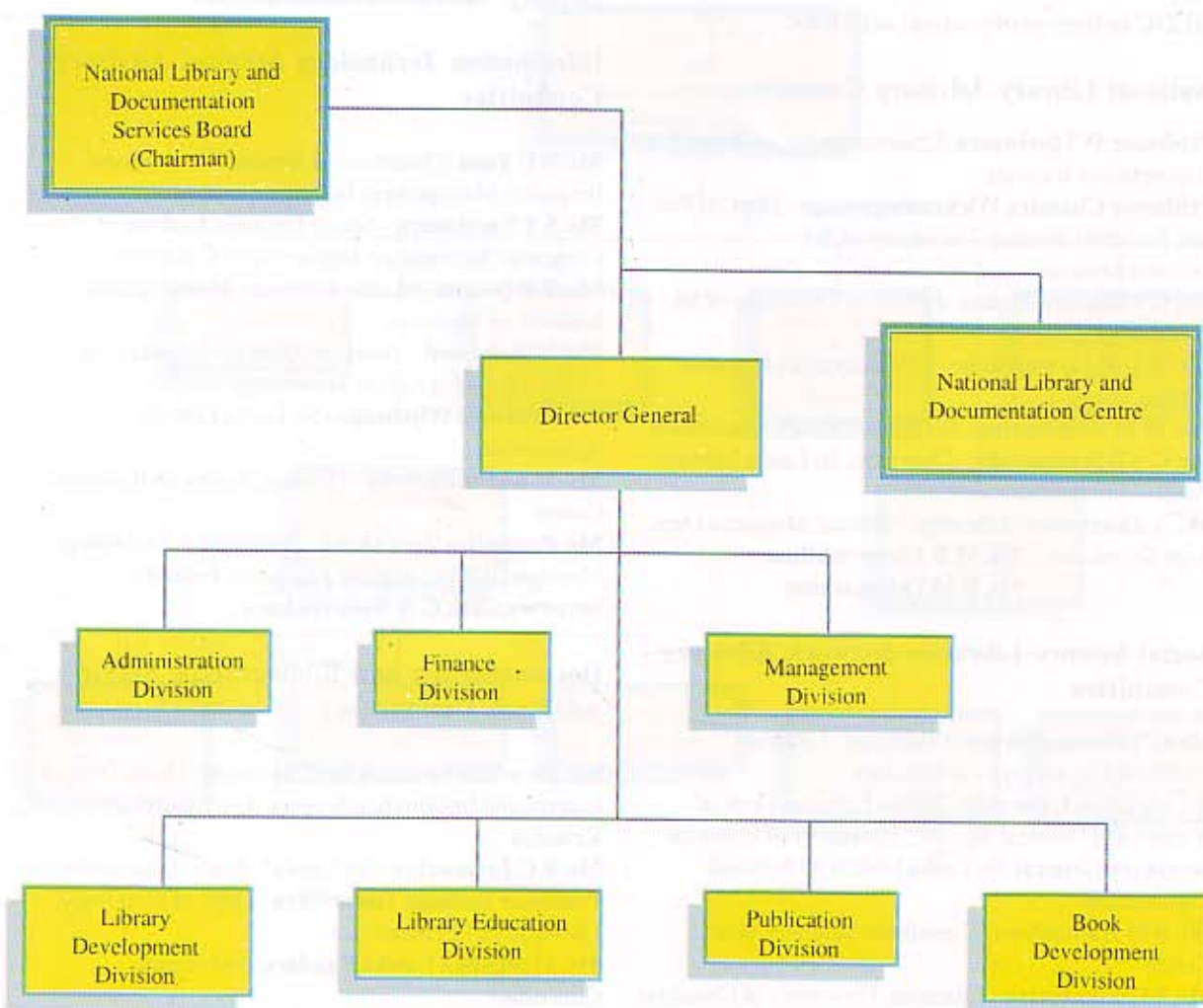
**Mr. L A Jayatissa** - Senior Assistant Librarian, University of Kelaniya

Secretary: **Mr. U P Alahakoon**





## National Library Services - Organisation Structure





## Library Services at the National Level

There is a strong link between the activities of the National Library and Documentation Centre and other managerial and professional services of the National Library and Documentation Services Board. According to the provisions of the NLDSB Act, the Board enjoys the powers to establish and manage documentation centres including the National Library and Documentation Centre. The NLDC was established and the functions and services of the National Library were organised under these provisions.

When the National Library Services Board was established three decades ago, a number of services and projects were introduced at the basic level. The objective of the Library Services Division was to advise, assist and direct libraries in the country while the Library Education Division dealt with training and continuous educational activities of library personnel. To fulfil its obligations toward the publishing and book development fields the Publication Division was formed in the early 1980s.

The National Library Services Board while engaged in the above services and activities had to step into fill the vacuum created by the absence of a National Library. Compilation of the National Bibliography was taken over from the Department of National Archives and necessary legislation was enacted to make the Board a recipient of a deposit copy. A number of other National Library functions including collecting materials for the library and undertaking numerous documentation activities were carried out prior to the inauguration of the National Library.

Collecting and maintaining the national literature output, acting as the legal deposit library, being the centre of national bibliographic and documentation services and co-ordinating countrywide library activities are generally considered the core functions of a National Library. A difference of opinion exists regarding other services to be performed by a national library. Messers K W Humpreys, Maurice Line and Greham Cornish as well as a number of other internationally reputed academics have been engaged in this debate for sometime. It is important to note here that providing assistance to other libraries, library education and publishing too have been identified as relevant though not fundamental functions of a national library.

When the National Library was inaugurated in 1990, all library functions hitherto carried out by the Board were transferred to the new institution. This step was taken after careful consideration of expert opinion and after discussions with leading library professionals in Sri Lanka.

This arrangement was found to be unsatisfactory due to several factors. The enactment of the national library legislation which provide the legal base for the library took nine long years. During this period the Board was required to carry out all national library functions. Therefore, it became apparent that transferring all library functions to the National Library was not practical or functional. Accordingly while the main National Library functions were retained under the National Library other functions were re-established under the Board. This position was further confirmed at the formulation of the new act where steps were taken to spell out the functions of the Board and the National Library. Acquisition, reader services,





bibliographic services, documentation, conservation and information technology divisions came under the National Library. While library development, education, publication and book development divisions and financial and establishment units were placed under the Board.

### **Library Development Division**

Maintaining standards and engaging in other services which help the development of the library field are the main responsibilities of the Library Development Division. Accordingly the division assists in planning library service, advising on library matters, assisting libraries and formulating library standards.

#### **Main Activities**

- \* Advise on library buildings, equipment and furniture
- \* Guiding the organising of the collection and services
- \* Provincial council library development project
- \* Formulation of library standards
- \* Evaluation and grading of libraries
- \* Preparation of the school library policy
- \* Assist in the preparation and implementation of the World Bank Library Development Project
- \* Educating leaders of various sectors on the library field
- \* Assist the librarians in their professional issues
- \* Supply books for libraries both free of charge and at concessionary rates
- \* Supply furniture and equipment for selected libraries
- \* University user education video project
- \* Book exhibitions
- \* Conducting examinations for recruitment of librarians

### **Library Education Division**

Developing library educational activities in the country in general, assisting library educational institutions and conducting short term training programmes, seminars and workshops in the field are the main responsibilities of the Education Division.

#### **Main Activities**

- \* Conducting short term and continuing educational programmes
- \* Organising workshops, in-service training programmes and lectures
- \* Identifying trainers and providing further training
- \* Development of the library and information science curricula
- \* Co-ordinating activities of library educational institutions



- \* Publishing library science literature in vernacular languages
- \* Assisting other national and local organisations to organise training programmes
- \* Assist in the establishment and functioning of NILIS

## **Publication Division**

Editing and publishing the nation's old classics, reprinting out of print new classics, translation and publishing of important books published in English on Sri Lanka and publishing National Library publications and library science literature are the main responsibilities of the Publication Division.

### **Activities**

- \* Editing and publishing of old classics
- \* Publishing of out of print modern classics
- \* Translation and publishing modern classics in indigenous languages
- \* Publishing National Library publications
- \* Formulation of national standards in publishing and printing fields

## **Book Development Division**

Due to the expansion of activities of the publication division during the last few years, a new division was created in 1999 splitting the activities and responsibilities of the Publication Division. The responsibilities of the Book Development Division are helping the publishing industry in the country and assisting authors.

### **Activities**

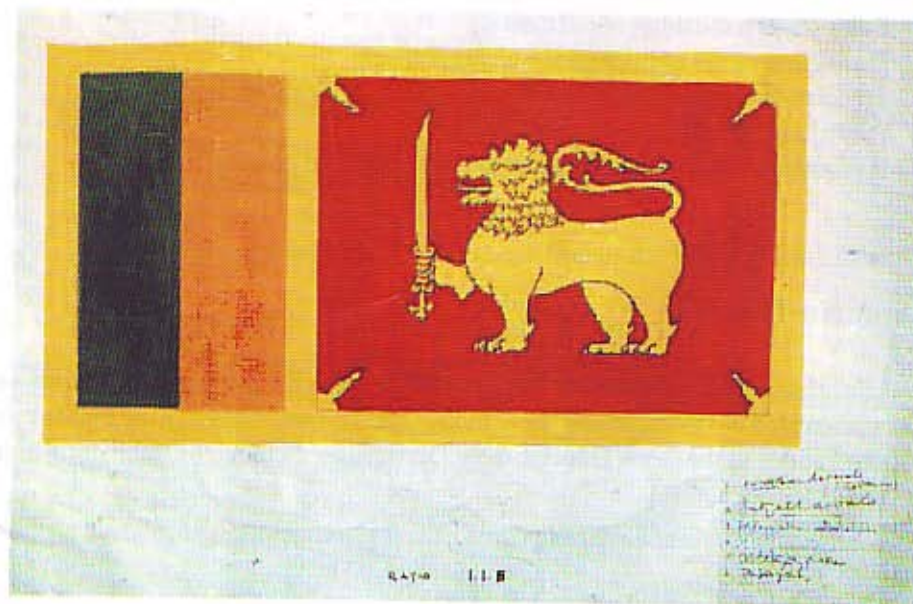
- \* Publication Assistance Project
- \* Educating authors and publishers
- \* Book sales on behalf of author-publishers





## Administration, Finance and Management Divisions

Both the National Library and Documentation Services Board and the National Library and Documentation Centre are under a common management. The Administration Division is headed by a Deputy Director and the Finance Division is headed by an Accountant. The Management Division and the Internal Audit Division come under the direct supervision of the Director General. Preparation of short and long term plans and evaluating progress are the main responsibilities of the Management Division.



*The document with the original painting of the National Flag of Sri Lanka by S.G. Charles. After a long deliberation by the National Flag Committee (1948-1950) the above flag was recommended. It was approved by the Parliament on 2nd March 1951. Signatures of the committee members are also on the document. Minor modifications were effected to the original flag in 1972, when Sri Lanka became a republic. (Courtesy of the National Museum Library)*



**Board of Directors of the National Library and Documentation Services Board**  
(September 2000)

<b>Mr. Henry Samaranayake</b>	<i>(Chairman)</i>
<b>Mr. M D Bandusena</b>	<i>(Member), Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs</i>
<b>Prof. Kapila Dahanayake</b>	<i>(Member), Chairman, National Science Foundation</i>
<b>Prof. R P Gunawardena</b>	<i>(Member), Secretary, Ministry of Education and Higher Education</i>
<b>Mr. K Jayatileke</b>	<i>(Member), Author, Chairman, Sri Lanka Arts Council</i>
<b>Mr. S M Kamaldeen</b>	<i>(Member), Consultant, Islamic Cultural Centre</i>
<b>Mr Dayaratna Lankapura</b>	<i>(Member), Associate Editor, Silumina</i>
<b>Ms. G A A S Perera</b>	<i>(Member), Deputy Director, Centre for Development Information, Ministry of Finance and Planning</i>
<b>Mr. R A A Ranaweera</b>	<i>(Member), Secretary, Ministry of Cultural and Religious Affairs</i>
<b>Ms. D Ratnayake</b>	<i>(Member), President, Sri Lanka Library Association</i>
<b>Prof. S Sandarasegaram</b>	<i>(Member), Faculty of Education, University of Colombo</i>
<b>Mr. E Satharasinghe</b>	<i>(Member), Chairman, Council of Information Technology</i>
<b>Mr. A Sivanesaselvan</b>	<i>(Member), Editor, Thinkkural</i>
<b>Mr. M S U Amarasiri</b>	<i>(Secretary), Director General, National Library and Documentation Services Board and National Library And Documentation Centre</i>









