

 [Go to the LAP Home Page](#)

[About LAP](#) | [Find a Library](#) | [Browse Directory](#) | [Resources](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Help](#)

9th CDNLAO Meeting: Brunei Darussalam Country Report

Update on the National Library of Brunei Darussalam

Awg. Haji Abu Bakar Bin Haji Zainal, Chief Librarian

General Background

The first library in Brunei was operated in 1953 by the Information Service Department with an attendant to look after it. Its collections were comprised of periodicals, newspaper cuttings, leaflets and some books. The reading room was opened from 2 pm to 9 pm except on Sunday and public holidays.

The reading room was in operation in Kuala Belait district in 1953, Bandar Brunei (now Bandar Seri Begawan) in 1954, Temburong district in 1957 and Seria in 1973.

With the non existence of a National Library, the libraries of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka became one by looking at their development and the tasks they undertook in recent years. The Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Library is the main source of information for the public, researchers, etc.

The Brunei libraries in general are very fast developing institutions. Even though the National library is still non-existence to offer leadership, public libraries are very well developed. Special libraries like the departmental libraries and government libraries are also growing rapidly.

The Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka Library

The [Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Library](#) (DBP) was established in 1963 although at that time it was open only to the staff within the organisation. However due to the lack of public library facilities in the country, the library opened to the public in 1970.

Since its establishment the DBP occupied the same premises as its parent organisation for about 30 years. In 1993, there was a significant development for the library, as it occupied the old building at the city center near the RTB building, at Jalan Elizabeth II.

Currently the DBP library has four District libraries throughout the country and one branch library located in Seria. The Mobile library has 43 service points throughout the country.

The branch libraries were established in Kuala Belait in 1973, Tutong district in September 1975. Temburong district in December 1975 and Seria in February 1977.

All the branch libraries were initially accommodated in temporary premises however, from 1986 onwards they have a new building.

The Library's Objectives

- To promote and encourage the use of books and other materials
And information there/from by the establishment of the lending
And reference libraries as well as mobile service;
- To acquire a comprehensive collection of books and other library
- Materials on or about the state of Brunei regardless of where or when published;
- To collect and preserve all books and non-book materials-received;
- To make books and other library materials available for reference and for loan subject to proper safeguard against loss or damaged
- To compile current national and historical bibliographies;
- To publish a compile bibliography of newly acquire library holdings periodically for the information of the general public.

Human Resource Development

The library is headed by a Chief Librarian who is responsible to the Director. He is assisted by a Senior Assistant Chief

Librarian. During the early establishment of the library, there were only 25 library staff including 2 professionals. The library staff growing rapidly, by now the library has 144 staff comprises of professional and non professionals.

Currently there are 15 qualified trained staff in the library, 35 semi professionals and the remainder clerical and support staff.

Most of the qualified trained staff have diploma in librarianship and bachelor degree from abroad. The chief librarian himself holds a Master degree in Library and Information Management from the United Kingdom.

Services and Facilities

The objective of any library is to provide library facilities and services to the whole community. Likewise the DBF library aims to cater for the needs by providing efficient services and facilities. A full effort has been made to provide satisfactory services.

Basically, the DBF library provide three type of services:

- Loan Facilities
- Reference and Information Inquiry Services
- Technical and Advice Services

Loan Facilities

The DBP Library provides loan facilities to readers who are registered as a member of the library. Loan facilities can be obtained from the central library at the city center as well as at the four district libraries. Loans are also provided by the mobile library service. The terms and conditions of loan facilities are almost similar to any type of library in which readers can borrow four books at one time and other materials for a period of two weeks. However, loans can be extended as long as the books are not required by other readers. In addition to loan facilities, the library also provides inter-library loan facilities within the country.

Reference and Informations Services

Reference and Information Services offered by the library are based on the provision of reference materials and the assistance of qualified trained staff to deal with inquiries from readers. Local studies and general reference library were the most heavily used by readers besides multimedia services offered.

[Reference and Information Services](#) provide seating capacity for approximately 100 readers at one time. The services in this section include:

1. Bruneiiana Collection
2. ASEAN and Southeast Asian Collection
3. General Reference
4. Medical and Health Collection
5. Multimedia Services
6. Quick Reference Service

Technical Services

1. Binding

Technical services offered include binding and book repair services. This is the most popular demand made by various institutions including government departments and private sectors. Most of the University students have used this service for binding their dissertations. Charges are made according to the types of materials that are used.

Photocopy Service

Photocopier services are charged at a reasonable rate. Photocopier services are also heavily used by students. Charges are made at 10 cents per copy. Photocopying is provided at the lending and reference and information services areas.

Acquisition

Acquisition is responsible for ordering library materials such as books, journals and magazines. Most library materials were imported from overseas like Malaysia, Singapore, United Kingdom, United States and other countries.

Most of the library materials are in two main languages namely Malay and English. And the total collection of library material up to June 1999 is 389,700 volumes comprising of English and Malay books.

Advisory and Counselling Service

The advisory services are provided to any library such as school and departmental libraries which needs help to develop and maintain their services or based on a request regarding the formation of new libraries which include management, cataloguing, ordering, staff training etc. Advice is also requested on how to maintain a good quality of library materials and to give motivation

to the library staff.

Staff Training

Training is also conducted regularly by the DBP library which is open to local librarians to participate. Seminars, workshops and short courses are often held to develop the staffs experience and knowledge in library work. Training can be divided into three types namely:

1. Orientation training
2. On the job training
3. Professional Development Training

In addition, the library has always conducted various training courses especially to develop the skills of library staff in certain areas of library work.

Reading Promotion Activities

Reading promotion is also part of the library services to readers, especially to the children. Reading promotion is done mostly by lending services throughout the library and activities are conducted during school holidays. However activities have been extended to the various schools and villagers to promote reading habits among children and young people.

The reading promotion programme held by the library can be divided into two main categories namely for [children](#) and [young people](#). Children Activities include story telling competitions, colouring contest, reading contest, singing and dancing, indoor games, reading club, visit to libraries, stamp collecting club, etc. Activities for young people include book discussions, talks, give us a clue, reading campaign, drama, workshop on traditional music etc.

Exchange Service

Give and exchange service provided by the library to various institutions within the country and abroad. At the moment exchange partners in the country has reach about 65 institutions including academic libraries, school libraries and government libraries. While exchange partners abroad include national libraries, and other institutions comprising 82.

Special Services

The library must take action to provide services to special users in the future like blind people and the disadvantaged. Efforts have already been taken to provide such services by sending staff abroad to conduct surveys and to study the administration of the service.

Collection Development

The DBP Library acquires books and other printed materials in two main languages, namely Malay and English. Emphasis is placed on the collection of Malay books.

The average number of books received by the library each month from various suppliers either from local or broad is approximately two or three thousand volumes. Most library books are imported from overseas especially from the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Singapore and the United States of America. At the end of 1999, the total library holdings for books has reached 389,700 volumes and periodicals holding of 320 titles. Non book media made up to 423 titles including audio visual materials.

The unique collection which remained heavily used by users were Bruneiana Collection located at the third floor of the premises. Bruneiana collection has now reach up to 15.000 volumes comprises of books, journals, magazines, annual reports, government publications, etc. Another special collection situated at the second floor is Medical and Health collection containing materials which relevant to the medical and health. This is to assist readers in solving the various problems of health which are not required to go to the doctor. The collection provides books and other information on how to solve and avoid various health problems.

Membership

Since its inception, membership is free of charge. Registered members may borrow two books for two week periods. Readers can be a member of the library as long as they are Brunei Citizens.

The prerequisites to become registered members are;

1. Children below 12 years old.
2. Teens 12 to 20 years age.
3. Adult 21 years old and above

Registered members in June 1999 were 15,487 comprising of male and female and this excludes district and branch libraries.

Visitors

Since the library was opened to public, the library has recorded visitors comprising of male and female visitors and also Malay and non Malay. Visitors recorded by the library statistics until June 1999 were 342,876.

Library Publication

The library also produces several publication for public use. Among the library publications published since October 2000 are:

1. Directory of Libraries in Brunei Darussalam
2. Directory of Librarian
3. Index to Newspaperarticle 1997–1999
4. Index to Magazines 1997–1999 –II
5. Index to Poetry After Independent
6. Index to Poetry before Independent
7. Bibliography on management
8. Bibliography on Malaysia

The Library Hours

The central library at town center remains open from 8.00 am until 8.00 pm everyday except Fridays and Public Holidays. District libraries and Branch Library at Pekan Seria open from Monday to Thursday and Saturday from 9.00 am till 5.00 pm it also closed on Fridays and Sundays.

The mobile library service's operation from 9.00 am till 9.45 am. Most of its service points are primary schools and small communities in rural areas.

Future Development

In the 7th National Development Plan which was launch by the Brunei Government recently, more branches are to be built especially in resettlement areas like Kampong Lambak Kanan and Kampong Pandan, Kuala Belait. The other areas to be built are Muara and Sengkurong.

In the near future the library will also have a process of acquiring a computerized system for the whole administration. And also recruite more professional librarians.

Library Staff

Chief Librarian	Awg.Hj.Abu Bakar bin Hj.Zainal
Senior Assistant Chief Librarians	Awg.Hj.Md.Yussuffbin Hj.Mumi Awg.Hj.Abd.Talip bin Hj.Tassim Awg.Hj.Md.Daud bin Hj.Hitam Awg.Azhari bin Hj.Suhaimi
Assistant Chief Librarians	Awg.Hj.Kiflee bin Tarsat BA Library Dy.Jusibah binti Hj.Md.Yussuf Awg.Osman bin Hj.Suhaili
Senior Library Officers	Dy.Hjh.Norzainah Awg.Damit Hjh.Rosinah Hj.Jaafar Ismail bin Hassan Hj.Mumin bin Hj.Kadir Hj.Mohammad bin Hj.Md.Yassin Hjh.Isisah binti Hj.Sulaiman Hjh.Anih binti Hj.Simpul Dayang Asmi binti Ladiman Dayang Patmah binti Hj.Yussuf Awg.Hj.Zainal bin Hj.Jaafar
Library Officers	28 Staff, mostly "A" Level
Library Assistants	33 Staff, mostly "0" Level
Library Attendants	35 Staff, mostly 3 "0" Level and below

List of Professional Librarians in Brunei

Library	Librarians
Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka	15
University Brunei Darussalam	47
Ministry of Education	18
Ministry of Religious Affairs	2

Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2
Ministry of Home Affairs	1
Ministry of Defence	1
Institute of Technology Brunei	2
Departmental Libraries	14
Brunei Shell Petroleum Company	2
Secondary School Libraries	5
Primary School Libraries	3
Total	112

[About LAP](#) | [Find a Library](#) | [Browse Directory](#) | [Resources](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Help](#)

[Hosted by the National
Library of Australia](#)

Last updated Thursday 13-Nov-2003
[http://www.nla.gov.au
/lap/2001brunei.html](http://www.nla.gov.au/lap/2001brunei.html)