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# 9<sup>th</sup> CDNLAO Meeting: Nepal Country Report

## Update on the National Library of Nepal

by Mr Dasharath Thapa, Chief Librarian

### Library Administration

There are about 800 libraries in the country, and five universities have their own libraries along with their affiliated campus libraries. Out of 3,624 higher secondary schools, only a few schools have school libraries. But many higher secondary schools with more than two classes have their own libraries. There are also some private schools, of which 412 with more than two classes have their own libraries. Almost all the government departments and the ministries have their own special libraries. Apart from these, some semi-government institutions, NGOs, INGOs, hospitals and the foreign missions provide library services for their respective users. The libraries run by public funds are the [Nepal National Library](#), [Keshar Library](#) and [Regmi Research Library](#) (a private library handed over to the government after his death). The local community runs other libraries in different parts of the country. Personal libraries like the [Madan Puraskar Library](#) also exist to collect and preserve publications in Nepali language. There are about 15 children's libraries throughout the country. The National Library has 150 visitors a day whereas the academic libraries have large numbers of students and teachers using the library during the academic session. Among the public libraries in the country, the National Library (except in the central development region) assists one public library in each development region. There are five development regions in the county and the National Library is in the central development region. Of the four public libraries, the library of the eastern development region is fully supported by the local municipality.

There is no library council in Nepal, but there is the Nepal Library Association, established in 1980.

There is no authentic record of newly opened libraries but the estimated number of libraries opened during the last fiscal year was about 10. Other public libraries have a good number of newspaper readers but have a small number of users using the libraries collection. None of the libraries have additional features apart from the collection of books and journals.

### The Collection

The largest collection of books is in the [Tribhuvan University Central Library](#) (TUCL) – 240,000. The second largest collection is the collection of Nepal National Library – 76,500. The collection of other libraries does not exceed 25,000 – 30,000. Only a few libraries have collections in electronic and microform formats. The collection of the National Archives consists of rare manuscripts. The collection of the National Archives has been converted into microform for preservation purposes. The National Archives is also preserving the ancient literature written on stone, wood-bark and animal skins. Some libraries including the National Library and the TUCL publish regular accession lists. Apart from this the TUCL publishes the Nepal National Bibliography and the National Library publishes the National Union Catalogue. There are no national electronically accessible databases in Nepal. But many libraries have now started to convert their retrospective collections into electronic databases.

The library network was commenced in 1998 among some 30 libraries of different institutions. The network expired after two years. Now there is no formal network among the libraries in the country except the Health Information Network run by HealthNet.

### Services

The traditional type of reference services are available in all libraries depending upon their resources. The National Library is compiling a users profile to provide current awareness services to respective users. Other services like internet services are also available in some of the key libraries. All libraries have manual lending services except the National Library, Keshar Library and the Madan Puraskar Library. The National Library does promotional activities to motivate people to read through press releases, seminars etc. Interlibrary services are available throughout the country in an informal way. There are no agreed written contracts between the lending and borrowing libraries. Document delivery services are also available in some libraries. Publications are available in exchange to any libraries in the world. The public library in the far-western region of the country is going to start the library services for prisoners. The library authority of the National Library is also considering providing library services to prisoners in the Kathmandu Valley. The National Library is also providing mobile library services in some districts of the country.

### Training

There are 320 professionally trained librarians in Nepal. Most of them completed their Bachelors Degree from Indian Universities. The number of librarians completing Master's Degree does not exceed 25. The Nepal Library Association has a mandate to train middle level manpower. The Association provides training for approximately 30 people each year. They are known as the paraprofessional group. The [Tribhuvan University](#) (the oldest university in the country) opened the department of Library Science in 1995. This department produces an average of 14 professional librarians every year.

### Copyright

The Copyright Act of Nepal was enacted in 1965 and the regulation was formulated in 1989. The government in a notice in the Nepal Gazette appointed the Chief Librarian of the National Library to work as the registrar. Since then the National Library has a separate section for Copyright Protection. There is no separate IP office. The Department of Industry looks after the industrial sector and the National Library is responsible for other concerns. The existing Act did not seem to be very effective and the need for an amendment was felt. The first amendment of the Act took place in 1997 but the Act is still not very effective. The Copyright Society of Nepal came into being in 1997. The president of the Association is doing his best to make the IPR system effective in the country.

There are seven cases on copyright undecided because of the unclear copyright law. The number of works registered at the registrar's office in a period of 11 years shows the effectiveness of the copyright law in the country. The seven cases filed at the registrar's office could not be decided by the registrar's office/court because of the unclear existing Act.

Printed items (book etc.)	326
Audiovisual (Videos)	6
Paintings	66
Music audio cassettes and CD	450
Computer software	6
Total (at 22 March 2001)	854

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