

Country Report
for the 16th Conference of Directors of National Libraries
in Asia and Oceania (CDNLAO)
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The National Library of Thailand

1. General Overview

Through its long history of successive periods of monarchy and independence for nearly 800 years from Sukhothai period to Bangkok period, Thailand has maintained a very rich collection of manuscripts inscribed on stones, palmleaves and papers which made from mulberry and other plants. In the last 100 years, printed materials had been gradually produced in increasing number to promote free flow of information. At the same time the organization and administration of library services have been developed within the last decades in accordance with international standards. As a result library institutions in Thailand now can be considered at par with those in the developed countries.

2. The National Library of Thailand

2.1 Organizational Structure

The National Library is divided into subdivisions as following :

- General Administration Section
- Library Resource Development Group
- Reference and Research Services Group
- Audio-Visual Materials and Library Activities Group
- Manuscripts and Inscription Group
- Library Information Center
- Library Standard and Research Group
- National Library Branches

2.2 Manpower

The National Library employs a total of 163 staffs.

▪ Librarian	42
▪ Assistant Librarian	19
▪ Oriental Language Specialist	13
▪ Others	89
Total	163

2.3 Collection

Total collection	2,903,175	items
Unique and rare collections		
Rare books	153,640	volumes
Manuscripts	355,172	items
Secondary publications		
Indexes	30,510	items
Bibliographies	5,105	items
Digitized materials		
Rare books	53,218	images
Audio-visuals (Music)	618	images
Manuscripts	26,420	images
Microfilms	150,880	images
Audio-visual materials	101,554	items
National and special databases	10	databases

2.4 Services

2.4.1 Reference service

The National Library is opened every days, except national holidays from 9.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. People at all levels, all races, all religions can get into library to receive services. Books, periodicals, newspapers and other tools can be used within the library.

Users can access to information provide by using directly at the main library or the special collections. Searching for materials, they can use IPAC (Internet public access catalogue) at the main library and the branch libraries will give rapid access for users in upcountry areas. Documents needed will be supplied to them by various methods, such as, facsimile service, postal service, e-mail and file transfer service.

The National Library has been linked database into Internet system. The bibliographic records in the National Library database has reached a number of 1,500,000 items. Users who stay at any places of the country or of the world can access to National Library database via www.nlt.go.th.

2.4.2 Lending and interlibrary loan

▪ Library lending

The National Library acts as the reference library. All library materials can be used within the library. Lending is only allowed between two libraries.

▪ Interlibrary loan

As accepted in international library community, interlibrary loan and document delivery is the very good way of resource sharing to serve readers when no library could satisfied all users' need. The National Library cooperates with many libraries to form the interlibrary loan guideline and rules. At present, there

are more than 80 libraries and institutions incorporated in the interlibrary loan program at the national and international level.

2.4.3 National bibliographic services

The National Library is also the National Bibliographic Agency in Thailand. The production of the Thai National Bibliography was started in 1964, which has been done annually. At present, the publication of the National Bibliography is printed out from National Library database in CD-Rom.

2.4.4 Reading promotion

The National Library has a prominent role in the promotion of reading habit in Thailand. The activities are as follows.

- Reading promotion programs for children
- Reading promotion programs for young people and adult
- Talk and panel discussion
- Exhibition for the special occasions
- Warm family day programs

2.4.5 Acquisition, donation and exchange

Setting up and improving collections is one of the main responsibilities of a librarian. The National Library has a number of sources of collection development.

Depository of publications printed in Thailand. The National Library is the only one deposit library in the country with a large collection of stone inscriptions, manuscripts and national imprints. At present there is no Legal Deposit Law in Thailand. There are two ways of achieving the publications printed in the country through the provision of the Press Act B.E. 2550 to deliver two copies of the publication printed in the country without charging the price and cost of delivery to the National Library and the provision of government resolution, the Cabinet resolved that five copies of each title of government publication have to be deposited at the National Library.

Exchange of publications and gifts is also another source of collection development. Acquisition through national and international exchange plays an important role in building up the National Library's collection of foreign publications. Many invaluable items or rare items in the rare book collection are received from individuals.

2.4.6 Digital Library

The National Library plan to set up the digital library in 2011. At present, the digitization project is going on well. The National Library have started to digitize for database services on rare books, Thai traditional books and non-book materials, e.g. microfilm and music since 2001. Sound copying from gramophone records in the Music Library of National Library were processed in the forms of compact disc and mini disc

2.5 Projects

The National Library has set up the important tasks as follows :

1. The National Library of Thailand Development Project, with the Cabinet resolution and a budget of 562,687,600 baht, beginning to build a five storey building located behind the main building within the constructing period of 4 years, between 2008-2011.

2. The New Library Building Project in Sa Kaew Province. Currently the building was completely built. It will be opened in the fiscal year 2008.

3. The Chinese Information Service Room Development Project. According to the Fine Arts Department under the initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, Chinese information should be arranged into the National Library database so that the public can access for Chinese documents. Now, it is in progress.

4. “Window on Dynamic Korea” , the Korean collection is now opened for public. It is the cooperation project among the Embassy of Korea, National Library of Thailand and National Library of Korea

5. Japanese Collection Project. Publications are exchanged with the Diet Library and other organizations in Japan. National Library have got many Japanese books. After consulting with JICA, they sent the Japanese volunteer to classify the publications. At present, users can use those documents.

2.6 Library cooperation

2.6.1 The National Library has cooperated with other libraries and educational institutions in Thailand as follows.-

- Exchange and Interlibrary loan
- Thai National Information System (THAINATIS)
- Union list of serials in Thailand
- Library training

MOU : the cooperation between :

- Fine Arts Department (National Library) & Thailand Knowledge Park (TK park)
- Ministry of Culture (National Library) & Ministry of Education

The objective of cooperation is in order to share about digitized materials and information technology to service in the nationwide.

2.6.2 Membership (local and foreign)

- Thai Library Association
- CONSAL (Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians)
- IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions)
- CDNL (Conference of Directors of National Libraries)
- CDNLAO (Conference of Directors of National Libraries in Asia and Oceania)
- ISBN (International Standard Book Number)
- ISSN (International Standard Serial Number)

3. Library at the national level

3.1 Various libraries in Thailand

Name	Number
Thai Library Association	1
Public Libraries	928
Special library	157
University libraries	118
School library	38,739

3.2 New library being established

Sa Kaew Province Library. It aims to open for the public in the southeastern part of Thailand. The National Library is responsible for acquiring the publications, information technology and other equipments etc.

3.3 Current features incorporated into libraries

At present, many libraries in Thailand incorporate the facilities such as : cafe's conners, book clubs or book shops into the libraries. The book clubs or book shops will cooperate with that library to arrange the activities such as book or reading promotion, etc.

3.4 The digital library initiatives in Thailand

A fast movement of the IT world has caused a threat to “Libraries” or the “Physical Libraries” of being removed and replaced by the “Digital Libraries”. TIAC-Technical Information Access Center represents a new generation of the information service in Thailand. Researchers find their TIAC library to be shrinkable physically but unlimited access of resources – in print and in electronic forms. TIAC also provides similar services to researchers and students in other universities and institutes.

3.4.1 TIAC digital library project

- to develop a prototype of libraries for the future of Thailand
- to design an operational framework for digital libraries at a national level
- to enable fast and effective dissemination of information through digital library network
- to increase the amount of information usage by the administrators from the public and private sectors, decision makers, researchers and the population at large

A study on state of the arts of the digital libraries for Thailand was aimed at the issues on technical operations, organization of content in digital form, types and styles of library and services, budget and intellectual property rights.

3.4.2 TIAC activities

- Developing a full-text retrieval software that handles the Thai and English language database searching. *Thai thesis database on CD-ROM* covers the most complete bibliographic information and abstracts in Thai and in English from 18 Thai universities, and additional information from 5 universities.
- Digitization of hard copy publications especially the professional journals published in Thailand (in Thai and in English).
- Creating the bibliographic and full-text databases for Thai studies on www.Thai List is a bibliographic control of library collections from all state university libraries.
- Initiating the electronic publishing for NSTDA publications.
- An electronic document delivery service. **JournalLink** is a web-based union list of serials in Thai libraries, collects the international S&T journals on the science and technology.

3.4.3 Other activities

- The Royal Gazette on CD.
- Digital theses. TIAC and AIT (Asian Institute of Technology) joined a pilot of digital theses.
- Thai Government Information on web.
- There are several activities in Thailand related to digital library.

Digital Library is new concepts for Thai. TIAC tries very hard to convince and lead the activities in these areas. New courses are being introduced at the graduate level to ensure that new graduates will have sufficient knowledge of the digital world.

4. Infrastructure

4.1 Library network

University libraries have been used computer in their works for many years, especially since 1988 onwards when the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC), Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment had started giving financial support to 11 university libraries to join the academic network. This initiative was very importance in getting the cooperation of libraries to join forces in creating more and larger databases.

Most universities are now going into networking, either to share resources among the different units and faculties within their university by setting up local area networks, or among several universities, such as the academic network called PULINET, THAILNET and ATUNET.

PULINET is the networking of Provincial University Libraries of nine libraries. It aims to have the system that all nine network libraries can share their resources.

THAILINET is directed to connect the twelve government university libraries in Bangkok. It aims to provide a more cost effective, high-tech and highly responsive information service to support higher education and research in Thailand. It is also designed to develop an effective information resource sharing programme for the participating university libraries, to avoid duplication in acquisition of library materials and under utilization of all forms of resources.

ATUNET of AIT-Thailand Inter-University Network was introduced in 1987, the same time as PULINET, by Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) which acts as the host, it aims to promote the transfer of technological advancement, through improved information exchange via university libraries and institutions in Thailand. Participating libraries are also provided access to AIT databases.

5. Preservation

The National Library of Thailand is the leading library in preservation and conservation. Regarding the development of preservation laboratory being made. Rare books, newspapers and manuscripts are microfilming and digitizing as well as physical conservation treatments not yet covered all materials.

Microfilming preservation still uses in many libraries, either in-house or outsourced. In 2009, National Library of Thailand arranges the project for scanning microfilms into digital images.

Most of the libraries in Thailand have to do the risk management manual for library collection, information technology, databases etc. The National Library of Thailand is publishing the manual for preservation and disaster preparedness.

6. Library and information science education

6.1 Undergraduate programs

The first degree for information professionals in Thailand is the bachelor's degree and most of the higher education institutions mentioned previously offer such programs. However, the titles of degrees awarded are different.

The undergraduate program aims at preparing professionals for library and information work. These graduates are expected to have sufficient competency to work in government and private sectors.

Titles of degrees awarded for the bachelor's program

University	Degree awarded
Khon Kaen University	B.A. (Library and Information Science)
Prince of Songkla University	
Thammasat University	
The University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce	
Chiang Mai University	B.A. (Library Science)
Chulalongkorn University	B.A. (Information Studies)
Ramkhamheang University	
Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University	B.A. (Information Science)
Burapa University	B.Ed. (Library and Information Science)
Maharakham University	B.Ed. (Library Science)
Srinakharinwirot University	
Taksin University	B.IS. (Information Studies)
Suranaree University of Technology	B.IS. (Communication)
Walailak University	

6.2 Graduate programs

Since the inception of graduate education in library science in 1964 at Chulalongkorn University, nine universities now offer master's programs. Most of the programs lead to a Master of Arts in Library and Information Science. Two universities, namely Maharakham and Srinakharinwirot University, also offer the Master of Education in Library Science.

Titles of degree awarded for master's program

University	Degree awarded
Burapa University	M.A. (Library and Information Science)
Chiang Mai University	
Chulalongkorn University	
Khon Kaen University	
Prince of Songkla University	
Ramkhamhaeng University	
Thammasat University	M.A. (Library and Information Science)
Maharakham University	
Srinakharinwirot University	M.Ed. (Library Science)

Chulalongkorn University also offers a Ph. D. in library and information science. And the Asian Institute of Technology, a private international higher education institution, offers a master's degree and a Ph. D. in library management.

Curricula for the programs vary in terms of structure as well as components. All programs recognize the need for technology knowledge and skills as underlying competencies for information professionals.

6.3 Training

The Thai Library Association is the main organizer of short training courses in the field of library and information science. Its mandate is to promote the librarian profession and library education. Each year, it organizes on-the-job training for school librarians and for special librarians.

7. Copyright and library act

7.1 Copyright

Copyright in Thailand is under the Copyright Law 1994 or the Royal Decree on Copyright 1994 by the administration of Department of Intellectual Property's Copyright Office, Ministry of Commerce. This Law covers literary works, works on performing arts, visual art, music audio-visual, motion pictures, broadcasting (radio and T.V.) and other works in literary, science and art sections. It's also covered the computer software. The copyright belongs to the author and it lasts 50 years after the death of the author and the last co-author. The copyright is transferable from the present to the next owner.

7.2 Legal deposit act

At present there is no legal deposit act in Thailand. The National Library of Thailand is only the agency responsible for collecting publications published in the country. Anyhow we do have the Press Act A.D. 2007 which the main intention is to govern the press. By the provision of this act, the National Library of Thailand is able to receive 2 free copies of book, newspaper including periodicals. These received copies are the base of Thai National Bibliography.
