

Myanmar Country Report to CDNL-AO 2011

Name of Country: Union of Myanmar

Name of library: National Library of Myanmar

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Introduction

1. The National Library of Myanmar is originated from the Bernard Free Library, the first public library in Myanmar. After Independence, in 1952, it was established as National Library of Myanmar under the Ministry of Culture. Unfortunately, the National Library was moved to several places until 2008. In 2008, the National Library building was destroyed by the Cyclone Nargis. On 8 August 2008, the National Library was moved to current place.

Overview of developments

2. The Vision of the National Library of Myanmar is **“to be the national center of intellectual heritage in Myanmar”**. As it was established as national level institution by the government, the National Library of Myanmar has been repository of printed and non-printed heritage of Myanmar. Apart from the printed materials, it has maintained valuable manuscripts collections that are over 200 years old.
3. To meet the Vision, the National Library performs the following main functions:
 - (a) performing as a bibliographic centre of comprehensive collections on Myanmar published locally and overseas
 - (b) collecting and preserving all national publications
 - (c) acquiring the collections from Southeast Asian countries and disseminate to people
 - (d) providing the interlibrary loan with libraries and institutions within the country and abroad

- (e) promoting and encouraging the library movements by cooperating with internationally
 - (f) compiling and publishing the Myanmar National Bibliography
 - (g) compile and publish the indexes of Myanmar periodicals and subject bibliographies on Myanmar
 - (h) providing the in-service training to profession from other libraries and practical training to students from library school
 - (i) providing the standards on the library profession in order to be equal throughout the country
 - (j) promoting and upgrading the information technology in the library and for participating in the Southeast Asia Regional Network
4. As a national information center on intellectual and cultural heritage of Myanmar civilization, the National Library has undertaken to preserve its rich collections for next generations. To fulfill the information needs of the people, the National Library has provided information services with specific collections. The National Library has developed the National Library Management System to manage the data storage and retrieval of its collection. The National Library has expanded the international relation and participated in the cooperation programmes towards the development of library and information services.

Effectiveness of Legal Deposit

5. The National Library has become a depository library in Myanmar since 1959 by the Printers and Publishers (Registration) Act. Each copy of publications published in Yangon was sent to the National Library through the District Supreme Court. In 1962, the Printers and Publishers Registration Act was promulgated and, as the depository library of Myanmar, the National Library acquires a copy of any printed material published in the country.
6. As the Depository Centre for United Nations Publications, materials from United Nations Organizations such as UNESCO, FAO, ESCAP and others are available for reference and research purposes.

Facts and Figures

7. In fact, there was only one National Library in Myanmar until 2010. In 2010-2011 Fiscal Year, the new building for National Library of Myanmar has been constructed in Nay Pyi Taw, the Capital City of Myanmar. The Government intends the National Library of Myanmar (Nay Pyi Taw) to be a main library of Myanmar with adequate facilities for preservation of national intellectual heritage. Most of the valuable collections in National Library (Yangon) are now managed to store at the National Library of Myanmar (Nay Pyi Taw).
8. As of March 2011, the facts and figures of the National Library (Yangon) and (Nay Pyi Taw) are as follow:

Organization

Particular	National Library (Yangon)		National Library (Nay Pyi Taw)	
	Officer	Staffs	Officers	Staffs
Allowed	10	50	10	50
Appointed	10	25	10	16
To be appointed	-	25	-	34

Collections (as of March 2011)

Sr.	Particular		National Library (Yangon)	National Library (Nay Pyi Taw)	Total
1	Books	Myanmar	113,597	40,350	153,947
		Foreign	49,588	620	50,208
2	Magazine	Myanmar	93,773	28,121	121,894
		Foreign	8,984	19,263	28,247
3	Journal	Myanmar	46,974	14,835	61,809
		Foreign	1,024	-	1,024
4	Newspaper	Myanmar	142,487	34,680	177,167
		Foreign	49,224	15,600	64,824
5	Palm-leaf manuscripts		11,249	6,262	17,511
6	Parabeik (folded paper parchments)		-	1,970	1,970
7	Kamawa (religious text)		-	20	20
8	hand writings mss.		345	-	345
9	Books on Myanmar		-	4,344	4,344
10	Thesis		617	-	617
11	Children books		-	600	600
12	ASEAN collection		110	100	*210
13	United Nations collection		10,550	1,630	*12,180
	Total		528,522	168,395	696,917

Collection Development

- The Library acquires its holdings through legal deposit, exchange with libraries in abroad, gifts, donations from private and organizations, requisitions, and purchase. Materials are added to the collections of the Library at a rate of 5000 volumes per year. The collections of the library are categorized into specific collections as their scopes.

(a) Rare Books Collection

The Rare Books Collection of the library comprises printed books published before and in 1900 including the earliest publication, **Alphabetum Burmanum** published in 1776, and serials published before and in 1948. Originals are prohibited to the users. Digitization of those has been initiated at the National Library.

(b) Books on Myanmar Collection

The collection of Books on Myanmar includes publications on Myanmar (in English version) published locally and oversea. Conversion bibliographic data of this collection from card into machine-readable form has been done. More than 4500 volumes of the collection are available for reference and research purposes.

(c) Printed publications collection

The National Library freely acquires each copy of printed publications in Myanmar as a depository library. It also collects printed books and periodicals by purchasing and acceptance of donation and/ or gift. The library also invites private literature collectors to store their collections at Special Collections Corner at the National Library. The private collections are arranged by their names and maintained by the library.

The printed publications are categorized into their language and subjects as Myanmar Book collection, Foreign Language Book collection, United Nations collection, ASEAN collections, Reference collections, and Government publications collections.

(d) Manuscripts Collection

The Library is proud of her rich collection of rare and valuable ancient Myanmar manuscripts, palm-leaf and folded paper book (*Parabaik*) that are regarded as sacred objects because the majority of them are Buddhist religious texts and commentaries. Some manuscripts contain medical, astrological, mathematical, technical, historical documents and works on customary law. Most of them are at least 100 years old and some of them are about 200 years old.

(e) Serials Collection

A number of local and foreign serials such as journals, bulletins, magazines, newsletters, indexes, government gazettes, acts and enactments, annual reports and current and retrospective newspapers are available for reading and research. A number of magazine articles are indexed for the easy use.

Bibliographic Control Strategy

10. As the National Library is a Depository Centre of the nation, it has preserved all publications in Myanmar using standard bibliographic description with the purpose to compile the national bibliography. The collections of the National Library of Myanmar are systematically managed by international bibliographic standards. Basic bibliographic tools are AACR2, DDC (23rd Edition) and Sears' List of Subject Heading. For the publications in Myanmar language, the library applies the standards adapted and developed from above bibliographic tools.
11. Actually, the National Library of Myanmar has practiced as hybrid library system because library users are more familiar with the card catalogues rather than machine readable catalogues.

Therefore, the library provides both card catalogues and machine readable catalogue. The National Library Management System (NLMS) was developed in 2004 to store and retrieve data of library collections.

12. In 2010-2011 Fiscal Year, the National Library Management System (NLMS) is upgraded to be web-based system (e-Library Management System) intending for all users to access the information on the National Library's collections.

Retrieval Services

13. The National Library of Myanmar is one of the national level institutions under the Ministry of Culture. In fact, it is a kind of public library that opens not only to the researchers and scholars but also to the public during the office hour. For the researchers, scholars and students, the collections of the Library are reference sources while those collections are knowledge bank for the public.
14. Unfortunately, the National Library of Myanmar was in unstable places during the past periods. Though it was moved to several buildings and shared with other departments, the National Library has provided information retrieval service to the users. According to the policy of the Library, the National Library has not practiced for loan service to the public. But it has provided inter-governmental loan service to government departments as their special requests and importance.
15. Apart from the circulation, the National Library has provided reference service and reading room service to the users with its rich collections. The National Library of Myanmar being a reference library offers a variety of services for the library users. Reference and research enquires can be made through telephone, letter, personal enquires and other.
16. The National Library Website has been developed in 2007-2008 FY by kyats 6.79 millions and launched on 18-9-2008 by www.nlm.gov.mm. The information about the National Library and data of library collections can be accessed by the website. In 2010-2011 FY, the updating of the website is now being implemented.

Preservation and Conservation

17. A preservation and Conservation Section has been established in National Library by starting with books binding and repairing. The section has been extended its work to include preservation and conservation for rare manuscripts, palm-leaf and folded paper parchment (Parabaik) by microfilming, repairing, stabilization.

Digitization Project

18. The Digitization of collections in National Library (Yangon) is being started in the mid of 2010-2011 FY. By this project, collections of National Library (Yangon) are now being scanned and transformed to e-books and integrated with upgraded e-Library Management System towards the website for information retrieval. This year, rare collections, Books on Myanmar collections,

printed publications before 1973 including departmental reports and archaeological collections are prior planned to digitize. The project will extend to next fiscal year.

Library Education

19. The National Library of Myanmar actively participates in the library education movements by offering lectures to other institutions and practical training at the library and offering basic courses on library science to the staffs. Basic Library Courses, Training Courses for Preservation and Conservation of Palm-leaf Manuscripts, and Basic Course on Library and Museum were conducted for the library professionals and staffs.
20. Apart from short courses, the National Library of Myanmar has taken responsibility for conducting one year course of Post-Graduate Diploma on Library Management starting in 2010-2011 Fiscal Year. The course provides lectures on current development of library and information field and shares experience of the library professionals. It intends to promote the students by getting practical experience at the library.

Cooperation Activities

21. The National Library of Myanmar establishes the cooperation with the universities and colleges libraries, public libraries and research libraries with the country abroad. It becomes a member of NLG-SEA in 1997 and CONSAL in 2000. The National Library of Myanmar has become a member of IFLA in 1992, but it has discontinued since 1997. Now the National Library of Myanmar is trying to be a member of IFLA again.