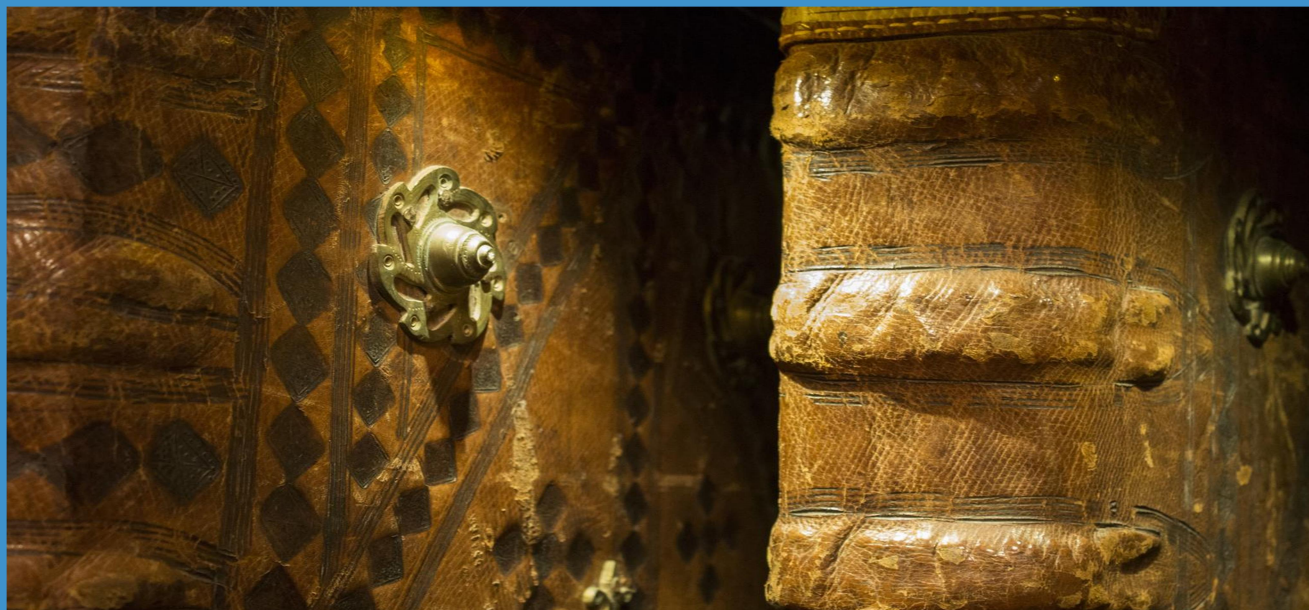




# ILA Newsletter

Organ of the Indian Library Association



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UP Launches Higher Education Digital Library

1,296 digitised books uploaded by Madurai Kamaraj University library online

Karnataka Digital Public Library emerges 'alter ego' of bibliophiles

ILA new website launched and fully functional now.

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Goan in Belagavi wills 4,5000 books to South Goa library.

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**Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality life.**

**Sidney Sheldon**

## Public Libraries in Pune Reopens on Reading Motivation Day on Oct 15

After seven months, the public libraries and reading rooms will see the light of the day on October 15 2020. Incidentally, 15 October is also celebrated as "Vachan Prerna Divas" or Reading Day to pay homage to former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam who loved reading and writing, and also to encourage children to understand the importance of reading and develop it as a hobby. There are 1,000 libraries

in Pune district, of which 90 libraries and reading rooms in the city are registered with the Pune District library. Following a circular Mission Begin Again released on 14 October, 2020, by the department of revenue and forest, disaster management, relief and rehabilitation, the libraries are getting ready to welcome their members again.

*\* Source: The Hindustan Times October 15, 2020*

## UP Launches Higher Education Digital Library

Uttar Pradesh authorities have launched a Higher Education Digital library that will enable students to access the best content free of cost. Students enrolled in higher education institutions in any part of the state or the country will have access to audio and video lectures and best study material prepared by experts for free, just at a click of a mouse. The digital library will offer students a rich collection as around 1,700 teachers from 23 state universities have already uploaded over 35,000 econtent material on 134 subjects.

"The digital library is a unique initiative in higher education. Now, students can access the study material created by experts from anywhere and anytime and hence education will not be confined to the boundaries of campuses and time," Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma, who is also the state's Minister for Secondary and Higher Education, said.

He said students, who cannot afford expensive journals and books for studies and research, will benefit by this initiative that does not cost anything.

The students will have access to study material in English and Hindi prepared by best teachers of the state

universities. The Higher Education Department has also announced a helpline number to assist students in case they have any query related to the e-content available in the digital library.

Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education, Monika S. Garg said: "The digital library is a boon for students, especially during pandemic times. Subject-wise content is available for students to study and download for free." She said the students will get material for various subjects including science, law, management, social science, engineering, agriculture, foreign languages, etc.

She said the portal for uploading higher education study material was launched by the department on September 5 and thereafter, September and October were observed as 'Vidyadan Maah' with the objective of ensuring easy availability of quality e-content, online lectures and study material to students. She said the digital library became possible in less time with the support of officials of the National Informatics Centre. Over 61,500 people have already visited the portal.

*\* Source: The Times of India Education, October, 29, 2020*

## Karnataka Digital Public Library emerges 'Alter Ego' of Bibliophiles

The website of Karnataka Digital Public Library ([www.karnatakadigitalpubliclibrary.org](http://www.karnatakadigitalpubliclibrary.org)) is fast emerging as the alter ego of bibliophiles globally. This can be gauged from the fact that this page of department of public libraries in Karnataka is the most searched for public digital library with 31.51 crore hits worldwide leaving behind Digital Public Library of America ([www.dp.la](http://www.dp.la)) and National Digital Library of India ([www.ndl.iitkgp.ac.in](http://www.ndl.iitkgp.ac.in)).

Launched on February 26, a month ahead of the nationwide lockdown, the portal became a major source of information for students, teachers and researchers alike once physical access to libraries were shut down. With 4.30 lakh titles already included for users to browse, the department has drawn up an ambitious plan to increase this number to 10 lakh and the process of selection of titles to be included will be completed in the next three months.

Outlining this roadmap, Satish Kumar Hosamani, director, department of public libraries, told TOI that it is a thrust given by Suresh Kumar, minister for primary and secondary education and S R Umashakar, principal secretary to the department that has brought about this transformation. The 'e-Sarvajanika Granthalaya' app that the department launched to go with the portal too has become a huge hit with the book lovers with 7 lakh plus users, he said. Links to NDLI, Kanaja, the online encyclopaedia that Karnataka Knowledge Commission has developed, Shodhganga, reservoir of Indian theses in digital repository, archival access to the recordings of Akashvani makes this website a one-stop solution for any digitally inclined book lover, he said. Digital content in multiple languages, offering self-learning facilities to readers and access to e-content makes this portal and app unique, he said. The KDPL portal as on November 19 had

6.76 lakh registered users including 1.21 lakh from Bengaluru Urban, followed by Raichur (69,563) and Yadagir (37,550). It is heartening that the aspirational districts of the state are in number two and three positions respectively in terms of registered users for the portal, said Umashankar. Students who logged in as such numbered in excess of 1 lakh and other users not identifying with any district were 98,961. The app and the portal have content for students, those appearing for competitive exams, books

and titles from reputed journals and authors. Karnataka has more than 7000 libraries and 272 of them have gone digital in the last six months. In all, 100 out of 205 public libraries in Bengaluru will be digitised in the next four months. Process of expanding list of titles on the app and portal to 10-lakh content source will be done shortly, Suresh Kumar noted.

*Source: Times of India, November 20, 2020*

## Goan in Belagavi Wills 4,500 Books to South Goa Library

The South Goa district library in Navelim found its shelves filled up overnight after Shankar Chaphadkar, a Goan settled in Belagavi, Karnataka, left it 4,500 books from his personal collection following his demise.

“Chaphadkar’s collection covers a wide range of topics. He held a unique collection of books on defence, sociology, economy, history, etc. His effort at building his personal library is so diverse that it is difficult to find a collection in Goa to match its standards. What is interesting to note that he has left bookmarks in every book on pages that have subjects of interest,” said librarian Mohandas Naik.

Naik further said that although two other libraries from Belagavi and one in Kolhapur had requested for his

collection, it was donated to the South Goa district library instead.

Owing to his military background – he had worked in the Border Security Force – Chaphadkar had travelled and lived in various parts of India. Following his retirement, he chose to settle down in Goodshed road, Belagavi. His cousin, Vaijayanti Garge, said that it was only after his retirement that he began collecting books and managed to build a personal library. Chaphadkar died in July 2017 at the age of 78 years after suffering a cardiac arrest. Following his death, his family in Goa travelled to Belagavi and brought his books to Goa to be donated to the library.

*Source: Times of India, November 27, 2020*

## Malkangiri Women Set up Roadside Library for Kids

A group of 20-odd tribal women in Malkangiri district have taken it upon themselves to inculcate a reading habit among youngsters, who they feel spend more time engrossed in their phones and less in books. Hoping to wean away the youth from their phones, the women have opened a roadside library near Arts College in Malkangiri. The library, which has been stocked with books that the women donated, as well as those given by local residents, was inaugurated on Diwali. It has been modelled on a similar initiative in Arunachal Pradesh’s Nirjuli, which, in turn, was inspired by the bird-box libraries of Mizoram’s Aizawl. The Malkangiri library was inaugurated by a 70-year-old woman, Puspanjali Choudhury, who contributed a few books herself. Currently, it offers only on-the-spot reading facility.

“A few years ago, we set up a library at the Malyabanta Hostel, which houses orphans of the district. The response was not very encouraging. We decided to move it out as we expect more people to spend the balmy winter evenings reading in the open,” said Jayanti Buruda, a member of Bada Didi, the group behind the initiative. “Reading books builds our patience and influences us in a positive way,” said Buruda.

Agreed eminent writer Dash Benhur. “Book reading sharpens our focus, which is bound to be hampered while reading from a cellphone. The blue light emitted by the screen leads to eye strain. We are traditionally more

attuned to reading from books, as our ancestors would read from palm-leaf manuscripts,” he said.

Currently, the library has 80 books in Odia, English, Bengali and Assamese, neatly stacked on a stand and protected by a shed. The money to build the library has been given by the group members, who have set up two benches for the readers. The women have also started fashioning some seats from used tyres. The library is kept open from 6 am to 11 am and again from 3 pm to 9 pm, and is manned by four girls.

Among the book donors are poet Balaram Pujari, principal of Women’s Higher Secondary School, Malkangiri, Dushmanta Kumar Jena, and teacher of Darlabada School in Chitrakonda, Siva Prasad Sarkar, besides two journalists from Hyderabad and Mumbai. “I have provided some second-hand books of Plus II Arts and CBSE X and XII, 10-year question papers, guides and textbooks as many students cannot afford these. I plan to provide 50 more books on general knowledge, biographies and short stories,” said Jena.

The group, whose members are drawn from the Paraja, Koya, Bhumia, Kui Kandha and Bonda (a particularly vulnerable tribal group) tribes, has also started a social media campaign seeking more books for their library.

*Source: The Times of India, November 17, 2020*

## 1,296 Digitised Books uploaded by Madurai Kamaraj University Library Online

As many as 1,296 books which were digitised have been made available online for free by Dr TPM Library of Madurai Kamaraj University (MKU).

The library initiated digitisation work for rare books in Tamil and English literature published 60 years ago taken from 3 lakh books which are available in MKU Library with the support of Directorate of Public Libraries, Tamil Nadu. The books are about select distance education lessons by MKU publications. Out of the 1296 books that were digitised and released for free online, 791 books were rare books.

“Our aim is to make these rare books are available to common public. The digitised books are available in MKU Library web site -- <http://www.mkulibrary.org/>. The e-books

can be downloaded by users free of cost,” said Dr B Suresh, the university librarian.

As per a press release from the university, on November 19, Dr M Krishnan, MKU vice chancellor, received digitised content of the 1296 books from Dr S Kamatchi, Librarian and Information Officer, Anna Centenary Library, Chennai, in the presence of Dr VS Vasantha, Registrar (i/c). Dr Ramaraja Pandian, head of the department to Tamil, Dr S Santhana Karthikeyan, librarian and information officer, Anna Centenary Library, Chennai, S Yasotha, district library officer, L Muthu, district central library, Madurai were also present.

\* *Source: The Times of India, November 22, 2020*

## Books by Bike: Sri Lankan Man runs Mobile Library for Kids

During his leisure time, Mahinda Dasanayaka packs his motorbike with books and rides his mobile library across mostly muddy roads running through tea-growing mountain areas to underprivileged children in backward rural parts of Sri Lanka.

Having witnessed the hardships faced by children whose villages have no library facilities, Dasanayaka was looking for ways to help them. Then he got the idea for his library on wheels. He started his programme, called Book and Me, three years ago, and it has become very popular among the children.

“There are some kids who hadn’t seen even a children’s storybook until I went to their villages,” he said. Dasanayaka, 32, works as a child protection officer for the government. On his off days mostly during weekends he rides his motorbike, which is fixed with a steel box to hold books, to rural villages and distributes the reading material to children free of charge.

“The children are very keen and enthusiastic, they are eagerly waiting for me, always looking for new books,” Dasanayaka said by phone.

His programme is mainly centred in Kegalle, a mountainous region of the Indian Ocean island nation about 85 kilometres (52 miles) northeast of Sri Lanka’s capital, Colombo, with poor villages scattered among tea plantations. He visits the villages once or twice a week to distribute the books. His collection includes about 3,000 books on a variety of subjects. “Boys mostly like to read detective stories such as Sherlock Holmes, while girls prefer to read youth novels and biographies,” he said.

So far, he said, his program has benefited more than 1,500 children, as well as about 150 adults. He began the program in 2017 with 150 books some of his own and others donated by friends, colleagues and well-wishers. He bought a second-hand Honda motorbike for 30,000 Sri Lankan rupees (\$162). He then fixed a steel box on the bike’s pillion seat.

“I wanted to do something for children who are burdened with an exam-centered education. ... And to change the way kids look at society, to change their perspectives and broaden their imagination,” he said. Apart from giving away books, Dasanayaka also speaks to the children for a few

minutes, usually under a roadside tree, highlighting the value of reading, books and authors. He then conducts a discussion on books the children have read, with the aim of eventually forming reading clubs.

His programme has spread to more than 20 villages in Kegalle. He also has expanded it to some villages in Sri Lanka’s former civil war zone in the northern region, more than 340 kilometres (211 miles) from his home. The long civil war ended in 2009 when government troops defeated Tamil rebels who were fighting to create a separate state for their ethnic minority in the north.

Dasanayaka, who is from the ethnic majority Sinhalese, believes books can build a “bridge between two ethnic groups.” “Books can be used for the betterment of society and promote ethnic reconciliation because no one can get angry with books,” he said. He also has established mini libraries at intersections in some of the villages he visits, giving children and adults a place to share books. These involve installing a small steel box that can be opened from one side onto a wall or on a stand. So far, he has built four such facilities and aims to set up 20 in different villages.

While Dasanayaka spends his own money on his program, he is not wealthy, with a take-home income of 20,000 rupees (\$108) a month from his job. He said he spends about a quarter of that on gasoline for his mobile library. He lives with his wife, who is also a government worker, and their two children. “I live a simple life,” he said. “No big hopes, and I am not chasing after material values such as big houses and cars.”

Nuwan Liyanage, senior deputy general manager of local radio station Neth FM, called Dasanayaka “a hero of our time.” The station has been helping Dasanayaka collect books. “He has set a real example for society,” Liyanage said. “With very little resources, he has done remarkable things, and his project has opened the eyes of many others to do similar things.”

Mohomed Haris Shihara, 48, a nursery school teacher in the village of Kannantota, about 20 kilometres (12 miles) from Dasanayaka’s home, praised the program, saying it has benefited about 100 children in her village. “This is a great thing and it has helped to develop an interest among

the kids to read books,” she said. “Also, the follow-up discussions on books have widened the children’s knowledge.” Dasanayaka said he does not seek any monetary benefit from his programme. “My only happiness is to see that children read books, and I would be delighted

to hear the kids say that books helped them to change their lives,” he said. “And that’s my ultimate happiness.”

*Source: The Indian Express, November 27, 2020*

## Tribute to Pandit Nehru: Kolkata trams’ Latest Feather in its Long History: A Library on Wheels for Kids

Two-century-old tramways in Kolkata on Saturday added another chapter to its glorious past and present for the benefit of the future generation. The West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) in association with Apeejay Anand Children’s Library has launched the “world’s first tram library for children”. The initiative was a tribute to Jawaharlal Nehru whose birth anniversary on November 14 is celebrated as Children’s Day.

Passengers younger than 18 years can travel on the 19th-century tram for free.

The library was virtually launched on the tram routes between Shyambazar and Esplanade, and Esplanade Gariahat - which connect north and south of Kolkata – by WBTC MD Rajanvir Singh Kapur and Director of Apeejay Surrendra Priti Paul. The library, curated by Oxford Bookstore, boasts of an eclectic mix of poems, plays, novels and comic books, and works of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, Chetan Bhagat and others.

“The idea behind the Kolkata Young Reader’s Tramcar is that all children should get access to good books, and what better than the Kolkata trams! Rides for children will be free. Adults above 18 can surely enjoy the ride at normal AC tram fares. We thank the efforts and zeal of Apeejay Anand Children’s Library team to associate with us in this project,

implementing it at a super-lightning speed. It is truly a great Children’s Day gift for Kolkata,” said Kapur.

“Our Heritage Oxford Bookstore Kolkata is proud to have supported the reading habit across generations of readers both across the city and the nation. It now literally, ‘moves ahead’ with the Kolkata Young Readers’ Tramcar... We congratulate our partner WBTC for promoting ‘culture on the move’, which truly reflects the creative persona of the metropolis,” said Maina Bhagat, Director, Apeejay Oxford Bookstores.

Authorities have planned to hold poetry, drama and reading sessions, and book launches on board.

“We believe that a library is essential to every child’s holistic development, and that knowledge and books are game changers enhancing the future of each child. Reading and learning on the move will undoubtedly augment their recreational environment, and we are committed to facilitate this,” said Paul.

The Kolkata tramways have been operating since 1873 when the maiden trip took off with horses. WBTC has taken several initiatives to popularise trams by decorating them with artwork and launching a library on the Esplanade and Shyambazar route.

*Source: The Times of India, November 17, 2020*

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- 57th All India Library Conference Proceedings on 'Knowledge Society : Innovations in Librarianship (ILAKSIL 2012), Edited by Dr B. Ramesha, Sh Sanjeev Dutt Sharma, Dr O.N. Chaubey, Dr N.S. Shokeen, Dr B.K. Vishala, DrAnuradha Gupta, Rs.3000/-, US \$175.
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