

Editorial

Assalaam A'laikum. Welcome to a new year with MLA and its newsletter meet.learn.acquire. The year 2010 ended well for MLA and 2011 is looking more promising.

I bring you the first issue for 2011 with lots of optimism and enthusiasm for the developments taking place in the library and information service sector of the Maldives. The MLA's first public event for the year, the general meeting, brought new faces to the Council and the calendar of activities for the year was tentatively approved. The second batch of Advanced Certificate in Library & Information Services program at the Faculty of Arts commenced as scheduled. In February we saw the first University of the country being formed in the Maldives, with it a University Library has emerged for the first time; also at the first graduation of the University in March 2011 we saw 15 students graduating from the first long term library course offered in the country. With the MLA Koha pilot project, the libraries of Maldives for the first time is embracing library automation at large. ☺

In this issue, read more on the above and also, we have included a professional profile on our very capable and hardworking Council member Aminath Shiuna, and library feature article on the newly named University Central Library and the prominent Islamic library. Additionally, we have included articles on: web evaluation, NLM's reading campaign, and MNU's *Faithoora* Digital Library project. Also read continuation of classification system series and occupational health & safety measures for librarians.

I take this opportunity to thank all our readers, members, & contributors for the continued support in article contribution and for the encouraging feedback for the newsletter.

Please do let us know how we are doing by leaving a comment on our blog @ <http://infomalias.wordpress.com>

Thank you.

Aminath Riyaz (Editor)



*In this photo:
Library Staff Team of the first University of the Maldives*

Welcome to 2011

Welcome to a new year 2011. May this year bring prosperity and happiness to all our readers and supporters. The start of the year has witnessed several milestones in the history of Library and Information Services (LIS) in Maldives.

Firstly, along with the creation of the National University, a University Library has been born. We wish the University Library team many prosperous years to come and hope that as a team you will be able to reach new heights.

Secondly, the graduation of the first batch of the Advanced Certificate in Library Services (ACLIS) course. This is the first LIS course ever accredited and conducted in the Maldives. A very warm and heartfelt congratulations to all the graduates some of whom are members of this association and I hope will continue to do so, through thick and thin.

I would like to dedicate this issue as a tribute to all those, who took a risk and had the courage to leave their jobs (back in their home islands) to come to Male' and join the ACLIS course. All had high hopes of returning back to their islands equipped with the knowledge on how to improve their libraries. Little did they know that their jobs might not be waiting for them when they go back. It is saddening to hear that some of the graduates who left their jobs are still waiting to get their jobs back.

I hope and pray that all of you get a chance to apply and practice what you have learnt. It is good to know that just by studying in the field of LIS you are making a difference in how LIS is shaping the information culture of our country. Way to go guys!! MLA is with you ☺

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In all the excitement of a new year with new beginnings, it is also important to pay a special tribute to the disaster stricken Japan, due to the earthquake occurred in the Pacific Ocean near Northeast Japan on March 11, 2011. This massive earthquake triggered a tsunami that hit the coastlines of countries around the Pacific Ocean.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to all the families whose lives were affected in many different ways. Having had experienced what a Tsunami does to our lives, we hope and pray for a quick recovery to the Japanese people.

On a happier note, many thanks to all who helped kick start this year by attending our annual general assembly. After a very fruitful 2010, once again a very sincere thanks to the hardworking team behind the MLA. We could not have done it without you. On the same note, on behalf of the MLA members, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the newly elected members for the vacant posts of the MLA Council.

I hope that MLA members and supporters enjoyed last year's events and had the opportunity to learn something new. I sure did have a very eye opening learning experience throughout 2010, as MLA president.

I hope that all of you will join us and take as much advantage as you can from the events organized for this year. Visit our blog for an update on the activities calendar for 2011. Become an MLA member. Help us spread the word. Let's Meet. Learn. Acquire. ☺

~ Aishath Shabana, MLA President ~



EDC Library → ITE Library
 [1984] → Salaahuddeen
 Library → FE Library
 [2001] → FE/FSL Library
 → MCHE Central Library
 [2005] → University
 Central Library [2011]



LIBRARY PROFILE: University Central Library (UCL)

The UCL is the main branch of the Maldives National University Library. The UCL holds almost 60,000 books and caters for a wide subject area of the MNU courses.

The University Central Library (UCL) is a brand new name for a library that has been in existence for almost three decades now. The library has evolved and changed its roles to some extent over the years. The beginnings of UCL can be linked with the library collection held at the Education Development Centre (EDC) in the early 1980s.

"The library ... began with the creation of the Institute [for Teacher Education] (ITE) in March 1984. It started as an offshoot of the library of the EDC. With the separation of the teacher training section of EDC to form the ITE, relevant teacher education volumes were separated [from EDC library] to form the ITE library" (The Library..., 1989, p. [7]). At that time the library had 5,514 volumes and the main role of the library was to cater for the staff and student community of ITE and as a reference library to the education sector in general.

The ITE Library was later referred to as Salaahuddeen Library. It is also evident that this library was the result of uniting the three separate libraries namely EDC Library, Non-Formal Education Centre Library and ITE Library (Haleem, 1997). This library was notably the first library in the Maldives to have utilized library specific software (Inmagic® DB/Text Library Suite®) for its cataloguing work until 2006; and also the first library to have utilized a RFID based security system.

With the creation of the Maldives College of Higher Education (MCHE) in 1998, all tertiary education centers in the Maldives were brought together and ITE was one of them. ITE was later renamed Faculty of Education (FE). During this stage, there were discussions about centralizing the operations of MCHE concentrated in different Faculties and Centers; the library was among one of the units targeted for initial centralization. With the relocation of the FE library (then approximately 33,000 books) from the Salaahuddeen Building to the temporary premises within the Jamaaluddeen Complex of MCHE in 2004, the small library collection of Faculty of Shari'ah and Law (FSL) was also moved to this temporary library premises. At this stage, this combined FE/FSL library was serviced by 7 library staff.

In April 2005, the libraries within the MCHE were formally centralized and the FE/FSL Library became the **Central Library of the MCHE**. With this change, all the other Faculties and Centers within the Jamaluddeen Complex were given direct access to this library.

With the centralization, the 19 library staff in the separate library units became the MCHE library team. Library development projects were accelerated, resulting in the

purchase and implementation of a world-standard integrated library system, easing and modernizing the library operations.

The library was again relocated from the temporary location in November 2007, this time to its purpose built current library building, donated by the Government of Sri Lanka. With this relocation, the MCHE's Faculty of Engineering Library which was in very close proximity to the new building was also amalgamated to the new Central Library. The Central Library collection also got another boost when the Attorney General's Office decided to dispense the National Law Library collection of 2252 books to the MCHE.

In the new Central Library, services are spread over 4 floors of the building which provides seating space for over 100 users at a given time.

With the creation of the Maldives National University on February 15, 2011, the Central Library was renamed the **University Central Library (UCL)**. The UCL caters directly to all the curriculum disciplines for the staff and student community of the MNU's Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Shari'ah and Law, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Engineering Technology, Centre for Open Learning, and Foundation Studies. The UCL is open to the rest of the University community without any restrictions. The library is also open for the general public as a reference library, providing access to its print collection.

The UCL registers an average of 717 new members each year and the collection is heavily used, with an average of 140 items being borrowed each day from the library. The library holds a comprehensive book collection made up of almost 60,000 volumes and offers a vast number of online journal access through HINARI, EBSCO, & Lexis.com

The centralized library staff team is now made up of 24 members and is also responsible for the administration of the rest of the library branches of the MNU.

The UCL's catalogue is available online from MNU's website <http://mnu.edu.mv> ■

~ Aminath Riyaz ~

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FE Library - 2005



Central Library - 2006



Central Library - 2007



ACLIS 2010 shines @ MNU Graduation 2011

The first batch of students from the library course offered at the Maldives National University was awarded their certificates at the MNU graduation ceremony held on March 21, 2011.

The Advanced Certificate in Library and Information Services (ACLIS) offered in 2010 was the first long-term library course offered in the country. The second batch of the course commenced in February 2011. The fifteen students who graduated from the first batch of ACLIS are:

- Ms. Aishath Aroosha
- Ms. Aishath Shiuna Mohamed
- Ms. Aminath Nasiha
- Mr. Azhar Abdulla Saeed
- Ms. Faiza Adam
- Ms. Fathimath Nashfa
- Ms. Fathimath Visala
- Ms. Firasha Mohamed
- Ms. Majida Ali
- Ms. Naseema Anees
- Ms. Nasheeda Mohamed
- Ms. Riyaza Mohamed
- Ms. Sahuzaana Mohamed
- Ms. Thuzuhath Ahmed
- Ms. Zihuna Jabir

The ACLIS-2010 was taught by a team of lecturers from the Faculty of Arts and part-time staff from other institutions. They are as follows:

- Ms. Aishath Shabana
- Ms. Aishath Shaheen
- Ms. Aminath Shiuna
- Ms. Aminath Nasheeda
- Ms. Athyyya Shakeel
- Mr. Jayatunga Amaraweera
- Mr. Mohamed Hussain



PROFILE: Maldives ILS Professionals –

Aminath Shiuna is the Deputy Librarian of the Maldives National University Library, and is the General Secretary of MLA

Aminath Shiuna started her library career at the then Science Education Centre [now the Centre for Higher Secondary Education - CHSE] in 1995 as a Librarian Trainee. She joined the library team at the Maldives College of Higher Education (MCHE) in 2006.

Shiuna is among the few people with a passion for the development of library and information service sector in the Maldives. She is also among the handful of Maldivians who have had the opportunity to gain a library qualification. Shiuna is also the elected general secretary of the Maldives Library Association for the current term and so far has done an excellent job in moving the association forward.

She studied for her Diploma in Library and Information Services at the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), Australia, during June 2004 to June 2006.

According to Shiuna, she had not always aspired to be a librarian. A school teacher, especially an art teacher, was what she had in mind during her early years. The significant factor that made her decide on a library career was her exposure to library studies in India and Australia. "This is also an area for potential growth and learning" is what Shiuna says.

Shiuna's aspirations are high; she says "I still have a long way to go – I want to study for a postgraduate qualification in this field".

She is very grateful for the MCHE [now the Maldives National University] for the scholarship which took her to Australia for CIT's Advanced Certificate in Library and Information Services program.

According to Shiuna, her biggest achievement to date is securing a scholarship from the Australian government to continue her studies for an additional semester and coming back home with a Diploma qualification. The scholarship was offered based on her academic performance during the MCHE sponsored Advanced Certificate year at CIT.

Equally significant she says, is witnessing the [2011] graduation of the first batch of students from the Advanced Certificate in Library and Information Services course offered at the Maldives National University (MNU). **"Especially because they are also MY students" she says very proudly.**

According to Shiuna, one important detriment in the growth of this sector in Maldives is the lack of educational opportunities locally. As such, she participates wholeheartedly in all endeavors in the provision of library related training may it be through MLA, the National Library, the Faculty of Arts, or the MNU Library.

The education Shiuna completed at CIT has been paramount in her capability and achievements so far. The practical and theoretical lessons learnt during that course has been very well applied to her current work environment at the MNU Library, in

the curriculum design as well as teaching for the ACLIS program.

Talking about the struggles she faced in her ambitious journey, she emphasizes the long years she worked in the CHSE Library, managing it, without any training. Also, the not so hostile yet sometimes demeaning, criticism from family and friends about the status of "librarian" has always been a cause of trepidation in going forward in her chosen career as a library professional.

Yet, Shiuna, moves forward and tries to promote librarianship as a profession to the educated people. Her vision for the LIS sector of the Maldives is "to see more library studies graduates in the front line serving the customers and also for LIS sector to be recognized as a professional field by Maldivian citizens".

The message Shiuna wants to give to *wanna* be librarians is:

"Librarians no longer sit back at the counter and read books. We are much more professional and developed. In this information age, we are the information organizers."

Shiuna is a strong advocate of library profession. To the already employed 200 or so personnel in library jobs in the Maldives, she says: "let's all librarians stand up and change the stereotypical [negative] image of the librarian from minds of the general public." ■

~ Aminath Riyaz ~

Web Assessment for Reference Work

Introduction

The World Wide Web (www) was first released on the Internet in 1991 (Cailliau, 1995). The invention of this new technology in the form of Internet has helped make a vast amount of information available on the Internet to users globally. Today, we need not run to a library every time to look up for information. The relevant information could be retrieved with a few clicks on your computer keyboard. What we need to be aware of is that libraries generally collect reliable authoritative information, while the internet is open for anyone to “publish” anything and it is widely available for any user.

Maldives is a small nation which relies on information provided on the Internet. Many people highly rely on web pages as their primary source of information (Riyaz, 2009). Therefore, it is significant for us to be aware of or to learn the techniques to identify reliable web sites or contents from the Internet.

Background

A wide range of information is provided to a large number of users through the Internet. Today we tend to rely more on the Internet as our primary research tool. Hence, we should be aware that all the information provided on the Internet is not evaluated or authoritative. Similarly, many argue that the Web has a negative effect on the research process and information skills of a student (Nguyen, 2000). This could be true if the students do not assess the web sites carefully.

There are a variety of sources where we get information. These include personal testimonials, blogs, and wikis. Therefore, users need to be cautious when assimilating information from the Internet (LaRue, 2008). With this responsibility, people have to learn to evaluate and filter the information for themselves (Dede, 2002, cited in LaRue, 2008). Evaluation processes use broad schemas based on technical measures of the presented information and criterion related to the content.

Criteria

Web evaluation criteria or techniques emerged at the beginning of this century. Standards and guidelines have been able to keep the pace with the fast growth of technology. There are many evaluation criteria. According to Kapoun (1998 cited in Engle, 2005), the five main criteria that need to be considered when referring to a website are accuracy, authority, objectivity, currency, & coverage.

Accuracy: For reference work it is important to collect error-free information. Anyone can publish anything on the Web. Unlike traditional print resources, many web resources do not have editors or fact-checkers. Make sure author provides e-mail or a contact address/phone number. It is important that the reader know the distinction between author and Webmaster. To check the accuracy of the web content you can consider the following points

- Who wrote the page, and can you contact the person or organization?
- Is the author qualified to write this page? If they are, the information is more likely to be reliable.
- Can the accuracy of the factual information presented be verified from other sources?

Authority: Sometimes it is difficult to determine who wrote the page. Some web pages ignore the author’s qualifications. However, a reader needs to know if the author is qualified to write the article. If the information on the webpage is taken from some person’s own work or book, the Web page should then mention whether the author granted permission for publishing that information on the Web.

Sponsorship of the Web page may not be significant for some users. However, if the sponsor of the page is reputable it may be worthwhile checking this information.

Another element you could check, under this criterion, is the URL (Uniform Resource Locator). The domain tells you the nature of the

organization. For example, www.mche.edu.mv. Let’s have a look at the breakdown of the URL:

- www = world wide web
- .mche = name of the organization (abbreviated name in this case)
- .edu = type of the website/organization (education)
- .mv = country of origin (Maldives)

Objectivity: Often, the goals of the sponsors/authors are not clearly stated on the Web site. It is vital for reference sites to have a goal/aim, unlike commercial sites (usually with a domain of .com), which could be biased.

- Why was the site created? was it created to provide information as a public service?; to promote the ideas of a particular political, cultural or religious group? or to advertise a product?
- Is the information free of advertising? if there is advertising on the page, is it clearly differentiated from the information content?

Currency: The publication or revision dates indicate how often or when the Web page was written or last updated. A date provided may have various meanings. For example, it may indicate when the material was first created/written; was first placed on the web; or was last updated.

- When was the page produced and/or last updated? Check for a date on the home page.
- How up-to-date are the links (if any)?

Coverage: It is important to check if the web site provides the full information. You may need to ensure by answering the following questions:

- Is there an indication that the page has been completed, and is not still under construction?
- If there is a print equivalent to the web page, is there a clear indication of whether the entire work is available on the web or only parts of it?
- Is the information that is freely available complete, or is it a sample of something you have to pay for?

Conclusion

Web is a free space and anyone can “publish” any information up there. It is the responsibility of the user to ensure the source and the content is reliable by using web assessment criteria. ■

~ Maha A. Didi ~

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“On the Internet, nobody knows you’re a dog”

Image source: Peter Steiner. *The New Yorker*, 5 July 1993.

Commentary from MLA blog / FB group

[Re. newsletter issue 03, 2010]

Submitted on 2010/12/28

MLA.U CAN DO IT. KEEP IT UP

– suda

[Re. Lib course...] Submitted on
2011/01/13

Dhen emme avahah workshopeh
fashaany kon iraku,,,,,,,,,

Basic course accredit kureytha?
– shafeeq

[Re. Lib course...] Submitted on
2010/1/29 Dear Shafeeq,

The next Basic course is tentatively scheduled for September 2011. Work is underway to get the course accredited. Keep following the blog for updates. Thanks.

– infomalias

Submitted on 2011/02/20 -
Congratulations on a great
general assembly of the MLA
– Fathun

Submitted on 2011/02/20 -

The meeting went very well indeed. Would have loved to see more of our members though.

– AnthuRiyaz

[Re. MLA Koha pilot libraries...]

Submitted on 2011/03/14 -

All the best for MLA projects.

Thanks – maldives best

My library studies students told me that so many people are saying that this is a “kada” profession and why they are enrolled in this course and blah blah... In my opinion this is a very new profession for our country. Though we have more than 50 year old libraries, we don't have enough trained people in this field. We don't know what librarians do or what they are capable of doing. I think we all librarians should hold our hands and move for a change. Let's educate our dear citizens about this field.

– Shiu

aslu Library profession boring
kamaka gina meehuna vanee
ekan hingan thibey

Zinmaadhaaru verin ee kihaa
varege beynun tehrikame kan
raiyythu meehaa ah kiyaa dhevifa
nunun. dhen hama Gud luck

– Ali Shiham

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The first general meeting of the MLA was held on February 19, 2011 at the National Library of Maldives. The main purpose of the meeting was to share the annual report of activities conducted in 2010 with the members. Additionally, election was held for the vacant MLA council posts. Approval of activity calendar for 2011 and certificate awarding for the basic course conducted by MLA in 2010 were among the most central activities. Appreciation awards were also presented to those who taught at the basic course on voluntary basis.

Annual report 2010

The following points were highlighted as achievements for the year.

- Establishment of the MLA blog – February 2010
- MLA personal development program: session on mingling – 27 February 2010
- Introduction and approval of MLA newsletter policy – March 2010
- Adoption of MLA training policy – 15 April 2010
- MLA constitution revision – 15 April 2010
- Lecture on Library as a political institution – 20 May 2010
- Goal setting workshop for LIS workers – 22 May 2010
- Library evening to mark library week – 17 July 2010
- MLA social event – 6 August 2010
- MLA Council visit to Record Library in May 2010, to Hithathoo Public Library & 2 school libraries of South Province in October 2010
- Basic course “Introduction to Librarianship” – 19 September to 7 October 2010

- Participation in SLLA International conference – 6-8 October 2010
- Representation in 2nd REFSALA council meeting – 7 October 2010
- Visit to Muhibbudeen School Library and Hithathoo Public Library – October 2010
- Koha ILS and Greenstone workshop as part of MGN – 28 November to 6 December 2010
- MLA newsletter 3 issues as scheduled – April, August, December 2010

It was also highlighted that 2010 is noteworthy for the record number of personal members who registered for MLA membership.

Financial report for 2010 was also shared at the meeting.

Certificate awarding for basic course participants

Certificates were awarded to the participants of the MLA basic course on Introduction to Librarianship held in 2010.

Twelve participants successfully completed the course and were awarded certificate.

The awardees are:

- Ahmed Niyaz
- Ahmeema Mohamed
- Aishath Afra Waheed
- Aishath Sama Waheed
- Aminath Abdulla
- Aminath Ali
- Aminath Faruzana
- Aminath Fazeela Mohamed
- Aminath Leena
- Fathimath Hana Ahmed
- Mariyam Shifna
- Mariyam Soodha

MLA 1st General meeting 2011

Election for vacant council posts,
awarding of certificates for
course participants 2010...

The following participants were awarded first, second, & third place having achieved the highest marks in the exam at the end of the course.

1st place:

Aishath Afra Waheed

2nd place:

Aminath Ali &
Mariyam Soodha

3rd place:

Ahmeema Mohamed



Council Election

The following vacant posts of the MLA Council were advertised on the government gazette two weeks before the General Meeting.

- Public Relations Officer
- Assistant Secretary
- Additional member
- Additional member

No prior applications were received for any of these posts. Hence, nominations were made at the general meeting with the consensus of the members present.



MLA's first General Meeting 2011: attendees (March)



Ahmed Niyaz
Ahmed Rasheed
Ahmeema Mohamed
Aishath Afra Waheed
Aishath Hussain Maniku
Aishath Shabana
Aminath Abdulla
Aminath Ali
Aminath Nasiha
Aminath Fazeela Mohamed
Aminath Leena
Aminath Mohamed
Aminath Riyaz
Aminath Shazina
Aminath Shiuna
Amman Adam
Athiyya Shakeel
Badhruhnisa Abdulla
Azhar Abdulla Saeed
Fathimath Azeema
Fathmath Nashath
Fathimath Nashfa
Fathmath Risma
Fathimath Shiham
Fazuniya Ali
Hawwa Shiuna
Ibrahim Shiyam
Khadheeja Liusha
Khadheeja Mohamed
Mariyam Ihusana
Mariyam Soodha
Nasreena
Mohamed Nazeer
Nuzula Saeed
Rugiyya Saajidha
Shazra Mufeed Mohamed
Shifna Ali
Siyama Abdul Razzaq

The following members were elected with majority votes.

- Aishath Afra Waheed for the post of *Public Relations Officer*
- Fathmath Nashath for the post of *Assistant Secretary*
- Ibrahim Shiyam for the post of *Additional member*
- Amman Adam for the post of *Additional member*



- Library Day activities – 16 July 2011
- 'Bring a friend social event for MLA members – 30 July 2011
- Basic Course – September to October 2011
- Library training program at the island level – date not identified
- Workshop on development of libraries – targeted at school administrators – date not identified

MLA General Meetings

- Second general meeting for the year: 30 April 2011
- Third general meeting for the year: 17 December 2011
MLA Council for a new two-year term will be elected at this meeting.

MLA Newsletter

- First issue – 10 April 2011
- Second issue – 8 August 2011
- Third issue – 12 December 2011

All in all, the meeting was very fruitful. ■



~ Aminath Riyaz ~

Activity calendar 2011

Based on the experiences of 2010, a tentative calendar of events was presented at the meeting for discussion and approval with modifications where needed.

In addition to monthly Council meetings, the following activities and dates were tentatively finalized.

Major events

- Koha Pilot Project to computerize 4 libraries selected strategically from different parts of Maldives – March to July 2011
- Workshop on publishing guidelines – 12 March 2011
- Workshop on cataloguing & classification – 30 April 2011
- Workshop on Koha ILS – 11 June 2011
- Workshop on media archival, preservation & conservation – 16 June 2011



*MLA Council with the newly elected members at the First General Meeting 2011
Standing (left to right): Fathmath Nashfa, Fathmath Nashath, Athiyya Shakeel, Aminath Riyaz, Amman Adam
Sitting (left to right): Ibrahim Shiyam, Fathmath Shiham, Aishath Shabana, Aminath Shiuna, Aishath Afra Waheed,*

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Commentary from MLA blog / FB group

"The librarian of today, and it will be true still more of the librarians of tomorrow, are not fiery dragons interposed between the people and the books. They are useful public servants, who manage libraries in the interest of the public . . . Many still think that a great reader, or a writer of books, will make an excellent librarian. This is pure fallacy."

– Mariyam Azmila

"LIBRARIAN" The original search engine....

– Shiu

Reading for social development @ National Library of Maldives: Reading Campaign 2011-2012



Reading campaign:
Reading for social development

On the third of February 2011, at a ceremony held to mark the National Day of Maldives, a reading campaign was launched by the National Library. The event was aligned with this occasion as it is believed that reading, writing and the quest for information and knowledge is intertwined with our nationality. The Chief Guest at the ceremony was the education Minister, Ms. Shifa Mohamed. The Campaign was launched by the Minister of Tourism Arts and Culture Dr. Mariyam Zulfu. This campaign is targeted for the whole population of the Maldives.

The philosophy of this endeavor is that an individual, society or a nation's development is pivotal to the information they attain and use. Reading and development are entwined. During an individual's life there are many instances where he or she desires information, getting this information allows the person's information need to be fulfilled and realized. In addition, the campaign slogan "Reading for social development" highlights the importance of social peace. To be aware of the changes taking place in the world and finding the required information becomes a necessity in today's world.

National Libraries take a lead role in this endeavor as they are entrusted with collecting, preserving and giving access to the vast expanse of knowledge and during this course develop the readership of its countries. The National Library of Maldives also plays this role.

The Campaign is divided into three different phases. The first phase is specifically targeted for school children. A total of 70,000 plus students are enrolled in schools throughout Maldives where 50,000 are in the island schools and 20,000 in Malé City. Four sessions take place in both the National and Children's Multimedia Library each day. Activities involve secondary schools in Malé which are given invitation for a library tour, library orientation session and a visit to the National Museum thus providing a means to instill the interest for the quest of information about our history, culture and heritage. Primary school students are given a tour and storytelling sessions at the Children's Multimedia Library.

For school students in the Islands, information on the importance of reading is shared in weekly school assemblies throughout Maldives with the aid of the National Library Newsletter. Reading logs are collected from Island schools and certificates are awarded to the most avid readers.

Phase two is targeted, in addition to school students, to the general public. The person who has visited the library most will also be awarded. Phase three involves outreach services to organizations like jails and rehabilitation centers thus catering for confined people.

We are currently in phase one of the project and feedback from schools have been remarkable. As the library has plans to extend this program, a proposal has been prepared to raise further funds to carry out the campaign till 2012.

We envision a future where information is attained and used by the general public in their daily life leading to a developed, informed, and peaceful society. ■

~ Fathimath Shiham ~

Reading Campaign in pictures...



Students visiting the National Library as part of the Reading Campaign



Students visiting the National Library as part of the Reading Campaign



Book Review:
as part of the Reading Campaign



Students visiting the National Museum as part of the Reading Campaign



Above: Students visiting the National Museum as part of the Reading Campaign
Below: Students visiting the National Library as part of the Reading Campaign





Professional Development

The National Library of Maldives is making preparations to offer library and information services Certificate courses Level 1 to 3 through their Institute of Library and Information Services. The curriculum and teaching material is being derived from the Canberra Institute of Technology, Australia. The National Library is planning to initiate these programs in affiliation with the Maldives Library Association starting from 2011. Advertisement for the course will be forthcoming soon.

Update on MLA activities 2011

• MLA 1st General Meeting 2011

The first general meeting was held on 19 February 2011. All MLA members and interested people were invited to participate.

• Basic course certificates

The 12 participants who successfully completed the basic course "Introduction to Librarianship" in 2010 was awarded certificate of completion at the General Meeting on 19 February 2011.

• Library computerization project

MLA launched its Koha Pilot project 2011 in March this year. The project is offering library computerization solutions for 4 strategically selected libraries from different parts of the Maldives.

Upcoming Events

• MLA Library Workshop Series

Classification workshop is scheduled to be conducted on 30 April 2011.

Workshop on publishing guidelines – scheduled for May 2011.

Koha ILS workshop is scheduled to be conducted on 11 June 2011.

Workshop on media archival, preservation & conservation is scheduled to be conducted on 16 June 2011. Keep following our Blog for more information.

• Library Week

To mark the national library week, the MLA is scheduled to arrange a Library Day event on 16 July 2011.

• MLA Newsletter

The next issue of this newsletter will be coming out in August 2011. Send us your news, feedback/comments, articles relevant to the library association, libraries, and information gathering & dissemination activities in the Maldives.

• MLA Silver Jubilee Publication

We are collecting information to prepare a book to be titled "Quarter of a Century of MLA". We need your support in collecting any available information from the past years. Photos, letters, adverts etc. We would also like your article contributions for this special edition. Write to us at: info.malias@gmail.com or leave a comment on <http://infomalias.wordpress.com> or call us at 7765181.

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Volume 8 Issue 01 April 2011



Maldives Library Association
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