

REPORT OF THE REVIEWING COMMITTEE
ON THE
NATIONAL LIBRARY, CALCUTTA

JULY 14, 1969

To

The Minister for Education & Youth Services,
Government of India,
Shastri Bhavan,
New Delhi.

Dear Sir,

I have much pleasure in presenting to you the Report of the Reviewing Committee which was appointed by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, to review the working of the National Library, Calcutta, and to suggest measures for its efficient functioning and future development. The Committee was appointed by order No. F.10-7/68-CAI(2), dated 14th May, 1968, and it consisted of the following members:

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| 1. Dr. V.S. Jha
ex-Vice Chancellor
Banaras Hindu University | Chairman |
| 2. Prof. H.N. Mukherjee, M.P.
14, Indian Mirror Street,
Calcutta-13. | Member |
| 3. Prof. V.K. Gokak,
Vice-Chancellor,
Bangalore University,
Bangalore | Member |
| 4. Shri S.K. Gupta, I.C.S.(Retd.),
P-404/5, Gariahat Road,
Calcutta-29. | Member |
| 5. Shri B.S. Kesavan,
Director, INSDOC,
Hillside Road,
New Delhi | Member |
| 6. Shri P. Gangulee,
Deputy Secretary to the
Government of India,
Ministry of Education,
New Delhi. | Member |
| 7. Shri D.R. Kalia,
Librarian,
National Library,
Belvedere, Calcutta-27. | Member-Secretary |

The Committee held nine sessions on the following dates:

- 1st session - 18th to 20th June, 1968, at Calcutta
- 2nd session - 1st July, 1968, at Calcutta
- 3rd session - 9th to 13th September, 1968, at Calcutta
- 4th session - 2nd to 4th November, 1968, at Madras
- 5th session - 5th and 6th November, 1968, at Bangalore
- 6th session - 26th to 30th November, 1968, at Calcutta
- 7th session - 23rd to 27th December, 1968, at Calcutta
- 8th session - 27th to 30th January, 1969, at New Delhi
- 9th session - 4th June, 1969, at New Delhi.

At the first session the Committee visited the various Sections of the National Library and had discussions with the representatives of the Ministry of Education and, in a general way, examined the functions of the Library.

At the second session the Committee considered and approved a detailed questionnaire for eliciting the views of the different categories of users of the National Library regarding its aims and objectives, its activities, the use of its services, the suitability of the present organisational and administrative set-up, the staffing pattern of the Library, and the adequacy of financial support made available by the Government of India. The Committee also finalised the list of members to whom the questionnaire should be sent, and also the manner in which the replies should be summarised.

The third session generally reviewed the working of the National Library and considered the need for the strengthening of the book collection, especially in the Indian languages, through systematic surveys, and considered the

desirability of having on the staff persons with a scholarly background and research experience for systematic acquisition and interpretation of the resources of the Library to the users.

The Committee met the members of the present Advisory Council of the National Library and Prof. Sher Singh, the then Minister of State for Education. The representatives of the National Library Employees' Association and a number of prominent persons in Calcutta were also interviewed during this session.

The fourth session was held in Madras and the Committee called on Shri C. Rajagopalachari and Shri Arcot Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Madras, for eliciting their valued opinion on the subject under review.

The fifth session was held at Bangalore and the Committee interviewed a number of important citizens and Librarians in Bangalore among whom was Dr. Masti Venkatesha Iyengar. The Committee called on the eminent scholar and President of the Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, Dr. D.V. Gundappa, at his residence in Bangalore.

The sixth session was held at Calcutta where some more eminent individuals and senior members of the staff of the National Library were interviewed. At this session, the Committee determined the broad outlines of the report.

The seventh and the eighth sessions held at Calcutta

and at Delhi discussed the draft of the report which was finally approved and signed at the ninth session held at Delhi on the 4th June, 1969. The Report is unanimous, except that Shri D.R. Kalia, Member-Secretary, has recorded a note of dissent.

The Committee had sent out 4050 copies of the questionnaire to various institutions, individuals and leading foreign librarians. About 250 replies were received and an analysis of the replies shows that of the replies received seventeen were received from distinguished librarians from abroad. A list of the persons who appeared before the Committee is given in Appendix-II.

The Committee wishes to place on record its sense of deep gratitude towards those who responded to the questionnaire and to those who appeared before it to give their views in respect of the work and future development of the National Library. Their suggestions have greatly helped the Committee to formulate its recommendations.

Shri B.S. Kesavan has placed the Committee under deep obligation by preparing the draft of this report. His experience and knowledge of the National Library were of great value to the Committee. The Committee is particularly beholden to our Member-Secretary, Shri D.R. Kalia, who made the resources of his office available to us and helped us by preparing the material and by obtaining the

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information required. He and the members of the staff of the National Library extended to us all assistance which we required and they were unfailing in their courtesy.

I wish to express my personal gratefulness to my colleagues on the Committee with whom it was a privilege to work. Their co-operation and support were throughout unstinted. It is no small tribute to them that, even during the moments of severe strain in dealing with issues involved in vexatious controversies and other irritations, the deliberations of the Committee never lost its calm dignity, detachment and good humour.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- V.S. Jha

New Delhi,
July 21, 1969

P.S. Please see another letter July 21, 1969.

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