

Course : - Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS)

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Topic : - National Library of India

### NATIONAL LIBRARY

The **National Library of India** on the Belvedere Estate in Alipore, Kolkata, is the largest library in India by volume, and India's library of public record. It is under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The library is designated to collect, disseminate and preserve printed material produced in India. The library is situated on the scenic 30-acre (12 ha) Belvedere Estate. It is the largest in India with a collection in excess of 2.2 million books. Before independence, it was the official residence of Governor-General of India.

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#### 1. Historical Background

The National Library of India is the country's largest library and the library of public record. The library "operates under the national government's Department of Culture and is designated to collect, disseminate, and preserve all printed material produced in India, and all foreign works published about the country—where 'every work about India...can be seen

and read" (Murray, 2009). The National Library is a result of the merging of the public library with the Imperial Library—several government libraries. The National Library (1953), then the Imperial Library housed several foreign (British) and Indian titles and was open to the public. Of further note, the National Library of India collects book, periodicals, and titles in "virtually all the Indian languages, with Hindi, Kashmiri, Punjabi, Sindhi, Telugu, and Urdu" maintaining the largest stacks (Murray, 2009). The Special Collections in the National Library of India house at least fifteen languages including "Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati and Tamil with many rare works (Murray, 2009). The Hindi department has books that date back all the way to the nineteenth century and the first ever books printed in that language. The collections break down and consist of 86,000 maps and 5,800 manuscripts.

## **2. The National Library of India**

The history of the National Library began with the formation of the Calcutta Public Library in 1836.

That was a non-governmental institution and was run on a proprietary basis. People contributing Rs300 (US\$4.20) in subscription became the proprietors. Prince Dwarkanath Tagore was the first proprietor of that Library. Rs300 at that time was a significant amount, so poor students and others were allowed free use of the library for some period of time.

Lord Metcalfe, the Governor General at that time, transferred 4,675 volumes from the library of the College of Fort William, Kolkata to the Calcutta Public Library. This and donations of books from individuals formed the nucleus of the library.

Both Indian and foreign books, especially British, were purchased for the library. Donations were regularly made by individuals as well as by the government.

The Calcutta Public Library had a unique position as the first public library in this part of the world. Such a well-organized and efficiently run library was rare even in Europe during the first half of the 19th century.

Due to the efforts of the Calcutta Public Library, the present National Library has many extremely rare books and journals in its collection. In 1954 accordance to Delivery of Book Act every publishers have to submit 4 copy of their publication for growing up the collection of information sources in library and to preserve it for upcoming generation. Each 4 copies goes into respectively in - 1. Kolkata, 2. Tamil Nadu, 3. Mumbai and 4. Delhi public libraries.

### **2.1 The Imperial Library**

The Imperial Library was formed in 1891 by combining a number of Secretariat libraries in Calcutta. Of those, the most important and interesting was the library of the Home Department, which contained many books formerly belonging to the library of East India College, Fort William and the library of the East India Board in London. But the use of the library was restricted to the superior officers of the Government. Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee was appointed as the president of imperial library council(1910) to which he donated his personal collection of 80,000 books arranged in a separate section.

## 2.2 Amalgamation of CPL and Imperial Library

In 1903, Lord Curzon of Kedleston, the Viceroy of India, conceived the idea of opening a library for the use of the public.

He noticed both the libraries—Imperial Library and Calcutta Public Library—were under-utilized for the want of facilities or restrictions. He decided to amalgamate the rich collection of both of these libraries.

The new amalgamated library, called Imperial Library, was formally opened to the public on 30 January 1903 at Metcalfe Hall, Kolkata. Metcalfe Hall had earlier been the home of the Governor-General; Wellington, Cornwallis and Warren Hastings had lived in the building, and the last-named had fought a duel with a member of his governing committee on its grounds.

The *Gazette of London* reported, "It is intended that it should be a library of reference, a working place for students and a repository of material for the future historians of India, in which, so far as possible, every work written about India, at any time, can be seen and read."

## 2.3 Declaring the Imperial Library as the National Library



The National Library of India

Formal opening of the National Library, 1 February 1953. Among those present are (from left to right) B. C. Roy, Maulana Azad, H C. Mukherjee, S S Batnagar, Humayun Kabir, and BS Kesavan.

After independence the Government of India changed the name of the Imperial Library to the National Library, and the collection was transferred from The Esplanade to the present Belvedere Estate. On 1 February 1953 the National Library was opened to the public by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

## 2.4 Discovery of hidden chamber

In 2010, the Ministry of Culture, the owner of the library, decided to get the library building restored by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). While taking stock of the library building, the conservation engineers discovered a previously unknown room. The secret ground-floor room, about 1000 sq. ft. in size, seems to have no opening of any kind.

The ASI archaeologists tried to search the first floor area (that forms the ceiling of the room) for a trap door, but found nothing. Since the building is of historical and cultural importance, ASI has decided to bore a hole through the wall instead of breaking it. There are speculations about the room being a punishment room used by Warren Hastings and other British officials, or a place to store treasure.

In 2011, the researchers announced that the room was filled entirely with mud, probably in an effort to stabilize the building.

### **3. Visiting**

The National Library is located on Belvedere Road in Alipore, Calcutta. It is open between 9 am and 8 pm on all working days and between 9.30 am and 6.00 pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Government of India holidays. It remains closed on three national holidays, 26 January \*(Republic Day), 15 August (Independence Day) and 2 October (Birthday of Mahatma Gandhi).

Access to the National Library main reading room (Bhasha Bhavan) is strictly controlled. Visitors need to have an approved Reader's pass to enter it. For that they need to fill in an application form (available on the National Library website) and get it attested by a Government Gazetted officer. The reader's passes are issued only between 11.00 am and 1.00 pm, and between 3.00 pm and 4.00 pm, from Monday to Friday, excluding a string of National and State holiday.

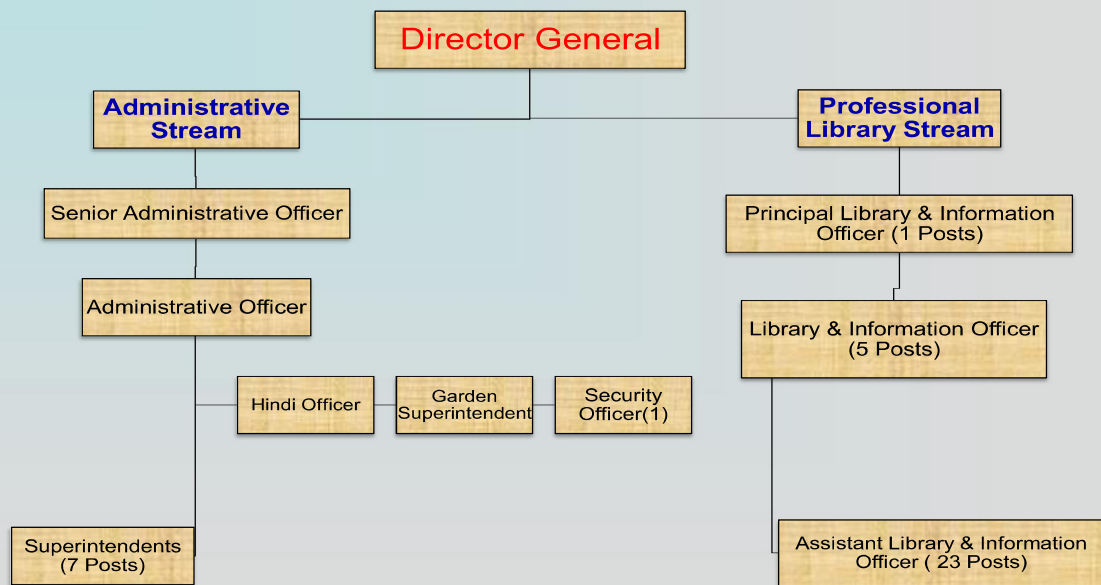
### **4. Library statistics**

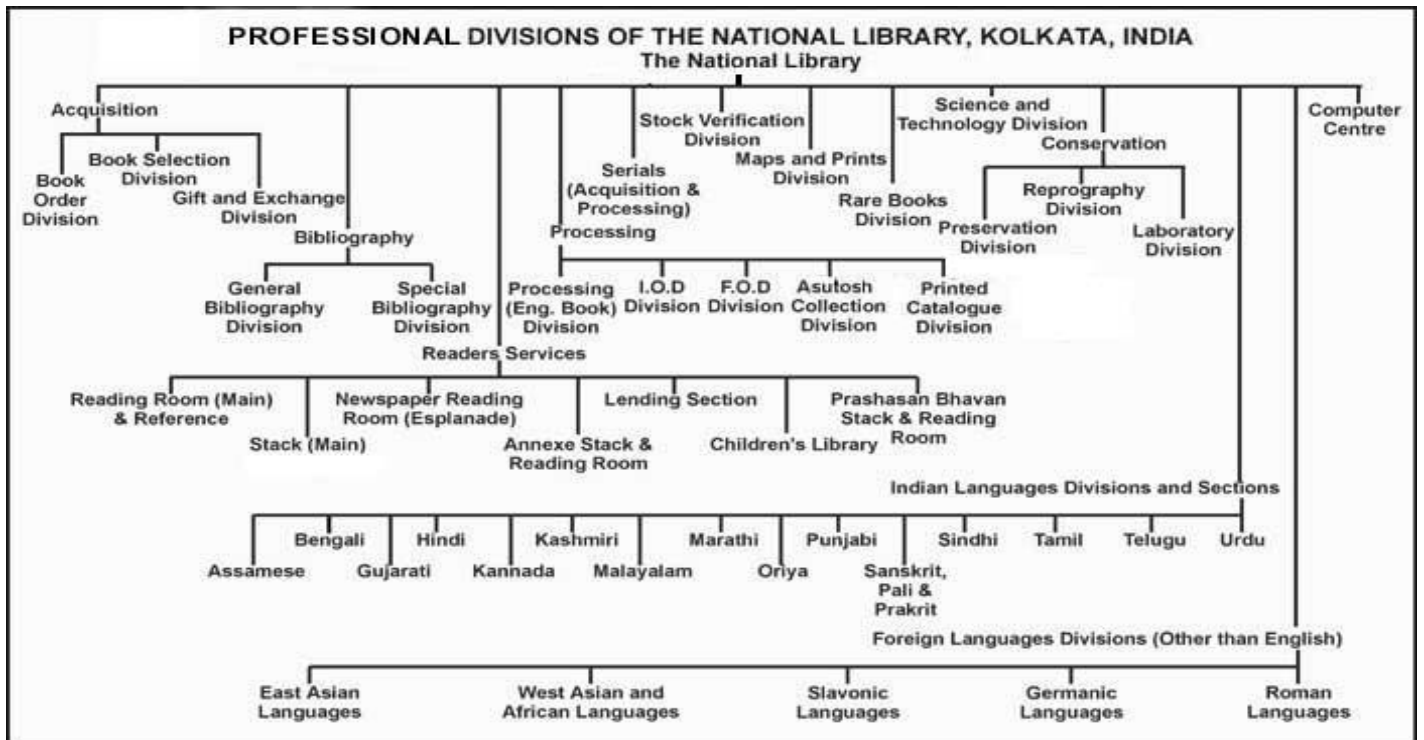
- Over 22,70,000 books
- Over 86,000 maps
- Over 5,800 manuscripts
- Over 45 kilometres of shelf space
- Reading rooms can accommodate over 550 people

### **5. Organisational Structure of National Library of India:**

#### **Organisational Chart**

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





6. **Department/ Section** :-Total 56 Division/Section presently working Details as below-

**A) PROFESSIONAL DIVISIONS**

**i) General Professional**

1. Acquisition(Book Order)	2. Acquisition(Book Selection)
3. Annexe Reading Room & Stack	4. Bibliography(Special)
5. Bibliography(General)	6. Asutosh Collection
7. Children's Library	8. Computer Centre
9. English Periodicals Reading Room	10. English Processing
11. English Serials	12. Exhibition Section
13. Foreign Official Documents	14. Gift and Exchange
15. Indian Official Documents	16. Lending Section
17. Main Reading Room and Reference	18. Main Stack
19. Maps and Prints	20. Old Newspaper Reading Room
21. Processing (English Books)	22. Rare Books
23. Science and Technology	24. Stock Verification

ii) Indian Languages:- Total 14 Indian Language details as below



iii) Foreign Languages

1. East Asian Languages	2. West Asian & African Languages
3. Germanic Languages	4. Romance Languages
5. Slavonic Languages	

**B) CONSERVATION DIVISIONS**

1. Chemical Laboratory	2. Preservation
3. Reprography	

**C) ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS**

1. Accounts Section	2. Cash & Bill Section
3. Central Registry Section	4. Establishment Section
5. Garden Division	6. General
7. Hindi Cell	8. Public Relation Section
9. Security and Conservancy Division	10. Store and Supply Section

**7. Collection Development Policy**

Legal Deposit

Legal deposit, under the Delivery of Books (Public Libraries) Act 1954 (commonly known as the D. B. Act) is the main source of the National Library collection. Under the provision of this Act, all publishers of the country, including Government agencies have to deposit one copy of their publications to the National Library and obtain a certificate of legal deposit. Newspapers and periodicals published in India are also to be deposited with the National Library.

### **Purchase**

“Every Library collection is established for one or more definite purpose. A collection development and management programme organize and directs the processes of acquiring materials and integrating them into coherent collections, managing their growth and maintenance and deselection when appropriate in a cost and user beneficial way”. In May 1968, the Government of India, Ministry of Education and Youth Services, set up a seven (7) member Reviewing Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. V.S. Jha to review the working of the Library and to suggest measures for its efficient functioning and future development.

### **Dr. V S Jha Committee of (1969) recommendations**

**The categories of materials to be regularly acquired as recommended by the Committee are:**

- Book and journals on India in any language published anywhere in the world;
- Indian Publications published before 1954 and not available in the Library;
- Books by Indian authors published abroad (including synopsis);
- Standard reference books;
- Books on Library Sciences;
- General histories, outlines and reference works on scientific and technical subjects;
- Books on education, agriculture, planning and development;
- Replacement of brittle and mutilated volumes already available in the library;
- Filling in of gaps in the Library collection;
- Volumes of important research journals;
- Books in foreign languages as demanded by readers;
- Acquisition of microfilm and photocopies of rare and out of print books;
- Biographies of eminent personalities of the world;
- Standard works of history, geography, sociology etc.

The Reviewing Committee's guidelines for acquisition did not envisage national Library as a specialized subject library. Its recommendations for scientific and technical subjects was for general histories, outlines, and reference works.

### **Dr. Nihar Ranjan Roy Committee (1979) recommendations:**

As far as publications on Science and Technology are concerned the Committee of Management (1979) under the Chairmanship of Dr Nihar Ranjan Roy recommended the



Library should not acquire highly specialized books in any branch of Science and technology. National Library follows below recommendations:

1. History of Science and Technology;
2. Science and Society;
3. Science Culture and Civilization;
4. Scientific Research and Policy and Environmental pollution

**In 2009-10, a revised policy was put in place. New vendors were enlisted by advertisement, e-correspondence with vendors was introduced, and lists were obtained through e-mail.**

## **8. Services**

There are different types of membership.

### **Membership**

There are three types of members:

1. Reading Room Member [Download Reading Room Rules](#)
2. Lending Member [Download Lending Rules](#)
3. Daily Card Member [Download Lending Form](#)

[Download Admission Form](#)

### **Reading Membership**

The library has separate reading rooms in all the four buildings. Apart from these, each Indian and foreign language division, Foreign Official Documents, Rare books, Maps and Prints, Science and Technology division, and Asutosh Collection are divisions that provide reading facilities. Special seats are provided to accredited scholars in the Main Reading Room.

Any person above 18 years can use the reading rooms. An applicant needs to fill a prescribed form with a recommendation. Annual Membership is free. A reader wanting to use the library for a day or two may ask for a daily membership card at the Reading Room. No formal membership is needed for the children to use the Children's Library.

### **Lending Services**

#### **Local Membership**

A limited number of books are lent out to readers under certain terms and conditions. To make use of this facility one has to become the member of the Lending division, applying on a prescribed lending form. Two books can be borrowed at a time for a period of 14 days, which can be extended for another 14 days either by phone, or by post or

by personal visit. Membership of the Lending division is free, but the borrower has to deposit the amount equal to one and half time of the price of the book. A fine of Re.1/- is charged per book per day for late return. When the borrower wishes to cancel the membership, he/she gets back the money, through a cheque, without any deduction.

### **Outstation Membership**

Outstation members can borrow the books through post. The lending rules of local membership apply to outstation memberships. But postal charges both ways are to be borne by the borrower. The books are sent by V.P.P. for postal charges and the borrower is expected to send them back by registered post only. Books are lent out for a period of 21 days, which can be extended for another 21 days.

### **Inter Library Loan**

Selected libraries of the country and abroad may borrow the books from the National Library through the inter library loan facility. Four books are lent out for a period of 21 days for Indian libraries and two months for foreign libraries. Both ways postage is to be borne by the borrowing library.

### **Bibliographic Services**

Research scholars, Government agencies, universities and national level institutions may make use of this facility. Selected lists of reading materials or bibliographies are prepared by the library on request. Special bibliographies are prepared to augment the exhibitions, which the National Library holds. Compilation of exhaustive bibliographies on special topics are under way. The library provides bibliographies and / or bibliographic statistics to national and international organisations. The library provides support to the Central Reference Library, Kolkata, in compiling the Indian National Bibliography.

### **Reprographic Services**

Members of both the reading room and lending division may use reprographic facilities against payment. The photocopies, microfilms and microfilms printout / photocopy will be provided within the limits of the International Copyrights Act.

### **Services for Children**

The National Library has a separate division for children. Equipped with books in English, Bengali & Hindi languages, the division provides children with reading material for information and fun.

No formal membership is required to use this section. Any child can enter the Children's Library, sign in a register and use the books. Books from the Children's Library are not lent out. At present the Children's Library hold about 30,000 books and many periodicals.

In an equal time interval, this division organises Juvenile Film shows, different types of competitions like Quiz, Debate etc. for school children's. Creative writing & Story telling's works helps for children's, organises by this division.

**9. Present Status**

**National Library Staff Strength**

Group	Post	Sanction Strength	Present Position	For Advert.
A- Gazetted	Director General	1	01	
	Principle Library & Information Officer	1	-	1
	Library & Information Officer	4	02	
	Library & Information Officer( S& T)	1	-	1
B- Gazetted	Assistant Library & Information Officer	23	17	4
B-Non- Gazetted	Library & Information Assistant	84	59	22
	Library & Information Assistant(Display)	01	01	
	Superintendent	07	07	
	Stenographer	03	03	
	Junior Hindi Translator	01	01	
	Sr. Assistant	15	11	
C- Non- Gazetted	Driver	01	01	
	Caretaker	01	01	
	Assistant	16	11	
	Lower Division Clerk	49	15	30
	Library Clerk	66	28	31
	Multi-Tasking Staff	151	120	30
	Canteen Staff	19	06	3
	Trainee	03	03	-
	<b>Out Source</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>94</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>541</b>	<b>285+94=379</b>	

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