meet.learn.acquire

Editorial

Assalaam A'laikum.

Welcome to the final issue of MLA newsletter meet.learn.acquire for the year 2011.

The most significant achievement of the MLA to date is agreeably the library automation and digitization project launched in partnership with the National Library of Maldives and the Education Development Centre. The practical component of this project commenced in September 2011 with the provision of training and technical support. Read in this newsletter, more on these workshops and also on the development of the project to date.

Also we have included a profile on our very capable LIS professional Ms. Athiyya Shakeel; and a profile on MNU Library, the largest academic library in the country.

LIS, being a newly emerging discipline as a profession, has promising avenues for career advancement. As such, I've included information on the TAN Moeson Fellowship that I was lucky enough to obtain from USA. Also read heart warming feedback from ACLIS lecturer, Ms. Dilara Begum. Random news and other information also included!

Getting this newsletter out to you three times a year, for the last two years, has been a challenging and a rewarding one. The shortage of professionals in this field limits the number of contributors ready to write and share news and articles regarding activities in the field. Nonetheless, the support from the LIS community (no matter how small) has been more than cheering. I hope the newsletter will continue to be published regularly.

I take this opportunity to thank all our readers, members, and 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 writing to us. You can leave a comment on our blog @ http://infomalias.wordpress.com

Thank you.

Aminath Riyaz (Editor)

Note from the MLA President

The year 2011 has come to an end and what a fruitful year it has been. Many appreciation and thanks goes to the MLA team and members for their support and commitment. As the year ends we continue to work towards our common goal of establishing and sustaining the library network of this country.

The Koha pilot project is in progress now. After the Koha and Greenstone workshop held during September 2011, many a libraries have started the work on the first phase of the automation of their libraries. This is a work that takes time and effort. Therefore, good luck to those who have started the hard work of computerizing & digitizing their data and we hope that you will continue to do so. We @ MLA assure you that we will provide all the support you need, to the best of our abilities. I hope to see a Digital Library and a union catalogue coming into existence during 2012.

It is indeed with great pleasure I congratulate the Faculty of Arts, Maldives National University on starting the Diploma in Library Studies course in 2012. I hope that through this milestone, LIS moves one step higher up the ladder and those of you who had completed the ACLIS programmes would definitely consider participating in this diploma programme. The end of this 2011 has also seen the completion of the 2nd course of Advanced Certificate in Library Studies. We all look forward to your graduation and wish you well as you go back to your old/new jobs with new knowledge. The MLA team is with you at all times.

As the year has come to an end, so has my term as the MLA president for the past couple of years. On a very personal note I wish to thank the extraordinary MLA team who has stood by me through thick and thin. We have created many milestones together. Without their extra effort, commitment and support MLA would not have been able to achieve so many milestones over the years, especially the past two years. I would like this issue to be a tribute to the editor of MLA Newsletter, Ms. Aminath Riyaz who provided MLA with so much more than her 100% ☺ . She gave us the push when needed and pulled us along when we were stuck at times. Therefore, many thanks Anthu! personally and on behalf of MLA team and members. We hope that MLA continues to receive your support in the years to come.

May the coming year 2012, bring you, our readers and supporters all the joy and prosperity you need. It is my pleasure to announce that MLA will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2012. We hope that you enjoyed your collaboration with us in 2011 and continue to do so in the following years to come. We hope you enjoy reading this issue and look forward to the MLA silver jubilee issues and activities in 2012. Just as this year we hope that you will stay with us and continue to take the rough and tough ride with us. Visit our blog for an update on the activities calendar for 2012. Become an MLA member. Renew your membership. Help us spread the word.

Let's Meet.Learn.Acquire ☺

~ Aishath Shabana ~

Maldives Library Association
meet.learn.acquire

LIBRARY NEWS

Staff Development Workshop 2011 – MNU Library

The Maldives National University Library held its annual staff development event during 25-27 December 2011.

The generic skill sessions covered in this year's workshop included "Work Productivity and Professional Attitude" and a session on customer care titled "Lose your Customer …". These two sessions were received very well by the participants.

In addition to the generic skill sessions, one whole day was dedicated to the fine tuning of standard operating procedures used in the library in relation to: the processing of library material, user registration, & cataloguing and classification of library material.

These workshops provide an opportunity for the library team, stationed in its different branches throughout Malé, to come together for exchange of ideas and also are a great opportunity for team building.

The MNU Library (earlier knows as the MCHE Library) has been conducting similar sessions annually from 2006 onwards.

The first of its kind was offered in 2002, followed by another workshop in 2003; these were prior to the centralisation of the library unit.

More information about MNU Library is available on http://mnulibrary.wordpress.com

LIBRARY PROFILE:

The Maldives National University Library

Photo credit: Naxief Ismail

The Maldives National University (MNU) Library caters to the academic requirements of the University community. The library is made up of a number of branch libraries located on different campuses of the University. All its operations are centralized, and equal service is provided from the branch libraries to all students and staff members of the University.

The MNU Library consists of the following branches:

- University Central Library, Malé
- Business Studies Library, Malé
- Health Sciences Library, Malé
- Maritime Studies Library, Villimalé
- Kulhudhuffushi Campus Library (regional)
- Thinadhoo Campus Library (regional)
- Hithadhoo Campus Library (regional)

The MNU Library accommodates approximately 250 users at a given time.

Library collection

The library consists of a combined collection of approximately 86,000 monographs across all the MNU library branches. This includes books as well as CDs and other AV media. In addition to the physical collection, the library offers access to several online journal databases.

Library membership

Library membership is offered to all MNU staff and students who hold a current MNU identification card. Membership is also offered to other researchers and academics at an "external membership" level through a special application process. Membership is free. There is no charge for borrowing items or for using reading material in the library.

Online library catalogue

MNU Library offers an Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) to facilitate an easy platform to search for monographic material held at the library. The OPAC can be accessed from any computer with internet access via http://www.mnu.edu.mv/opac or through the "library" link on http://www.mnu.edu.mv. It searches across all the branch libraries of MNU.

Library journal databases

In addition to the print collection, the Library provides access to a number of online journal databases with full-text access to thousands of journal articles. These include:

- HINARI—Contains mostly health specific journal literature. Also includes a collection of eBooks on a variety of disciplines.
- EBSCO—aggregates a number of multi-disciplinary journal databases
- Lexis.com—Law specific journal database

Computer facilities

The library provides computers for the users, for the purpose of Internet browsing, searching library databases, and for any study related work.

Information literacy sessions

The MNU Library offers Information Literacy Sessions for interested users. The sessions can be organized via the respective Faculties/Centres. The specific sessions on offer are:

- Searching Library Databases (HINARI, PubMed, EBSCO, Lexis.com)
- Effective Internet Searching Skills
- Search Strategy
- Searching OPAC

Photocopying Services

Photocopying service is offered in all MNU Libraries at a subsidized fee, and on self-service mode.

MNU Library Blog

The MNU Library blog provides an interactive online venue specifically for staff and students of the University; and generally to anyone interested in MNU Library services. It is the venue for news, information, and updates on library services.

This could be accessed at
http://mnulibrary.wordpress.com

LIBRARY PROFILE: *(... continued from p. 2)*

① University Central Library (UCL)

The MNU Library is administered centrally by the UCL located in Malé. The UCL is the largest branch library among the University Libraries and holds a collection of 54,000 monographic items spread over three floors of the building. The library is housed in a separate building unit within the Central Administrative campus of the University. The origin of this library dates back to 1975, to the time of the establishment of the Institute for Teacher Education.

The individual branches in the various libraries started to operate on the same rules and regulations across all the libraries (of the then College, now the University) in 2003, and its operations were consolidated as a centralized unit in April 2005.

② MNU Health Sciences Library (HL)

The Health Sciences library is the second largest collection within the University library system and holds a collection of about 12,000 monographic items. The library is located within the building of the **Faculty of Health Sciences** and the origin of the library dates back to 1973 when the Allied Health Services Training Centre was formed to train health personnel to meet the health care needs of the country.

③ MNU Business Studies Library (BL)

The Business Studies Library located within the building of the **Faculty of Management and Computing** caters for the disciplines related to the courses offered on the areas of management, computing, accounting, hospitality and tourism industries. The library holds a collection of over 11,000 monographic items.

④ MNU Maritime Studies Library (ML)

The Maritime Studies Library located within the **Centre for Maritime Studies**, in Villimalé, caters for the disciplines related to the courses offered on the areas of maritime, shipping, navigation and related areas. The library holds a collection of 1,500 books.

⑤ MNU Kulhudhuffushi Campus Library (KCL)

The Kulhudhuffushi Campus Library Located in H.Dh. Atoll Kulhudhuffushi, is a small library collection consisting of 3,500 books. The library is heavily utilized by the students and faculty of the allied health courses and the management courses.

⑥ MNU Thinadhoo Campus Library (TCL)

The Thinadhoo Campus Library Located in G.Dh. Atoll Thinadhoo, is a small library collection consisting of 1,700 books. The library is managed by one of the administrative staff of Thinadhoo Campus. The lack of a dedicated staff is highly felt as a major constraint in the development and delivery of its service.

⑦ MNU Hithadhoo Campus Library (HCL)

Hithadhoo Campus Library is the largest regional campus libraries within the University, in terms of space and the collection; and holds a collection of 3,200 books. The library is housed in a temporary space with a purpose-built new building coming up. The library is managed by one library staff.

The campus libraries are administered on a decentralized mode in terms of daily servicing; however, all the MNU library branches are administered on a centralized mode in terms of collection management and cataloguing.

The University library branches are serviced by twenty four library staff in the branch libraries in Malé and two library staff, one each in Kulhudhuffushi and Hithadhoo Campus libraries. The main difficulty faced by the MNU Library in the further advancement of its services is highlighted as the shortage of qualified and service oriented people in the area of information and library management. The current MNU Library team is made up of one staff with a post-graduate qualification, one staff with an undergraduate qualification, two staff with a diploma qualification, and two others with a Certificate IV level qualification in LIS, and the rest of the MNU library staff team possess general secondary and higher secondary education with limited on-the job experience & training. ∎

MLA Koha Pilot Project progressing in full speed

The MLA Koha Pilot Project was announced in January 2011 and was received favourably by a number of libraries throughout the country. It was announced as a 'no obligation' pilot project with no financial requirements from the participating libraries. As planned, the MLA selected four libraries among the nine applicants and commenced the practical component of the project in April 2011. Along the line, we lost one library as the follow-up tasks were not completed and due feedback was not received. This is understandable given the shortages and limitations faced by the libraries of the Maldives as well as the limited administrative support mechanisms of the Maldives Library Association.

In the efforts in securing funding to carryout this project, the National Library of Maldives committed to partner in with MLA. The development of Maldives' libraries and the creation of a national union catalogue fall under their mandated work.

Through the efforts of the National Library, the Education Development Centre, of the Ministry of Education, joined the project in August 2011, conditioning the inclusion of eight school libraries in the Koha Project and also the creation of a digital library of their textbook collection.

With the financial backing from EDC, the MLA pilot project changed focus as a "Digital Library" project with a library automation component and a digital content creation component.

Technical hands-on training to the staff of the eleven libraries in the project was provided in September 2011 in Male'. The creation of the library databases on Koha for the project libraries were completed prior to the training.

The data was hosted on a temporary PC server provided by the library association and later transferred to a standard server held in EDC. In October 2011, the project faced delays and difficulties in server maintenance due to firewall issues.

The last two months of 2011 was spent on following up with issues in stabilizing the server.

The MLA hopes to have a secure and stable server within the first few

Athiyya Shakeel is a very active member of the LIS volunteer organization, Maldives Library Association. She has been a member for some time now and also has been an elected member of the MLA Council for two consecutive terms.

She is also one of the most active professionals working in the teaching sector of Library and Information Services (LIS); helping educate emerging library professionals.

The first long-term library course to be offered in the Maldives came into existence with the MNU (earlier known as MCHE) Library Team's effort and was launched in 2010 as the "Advanced Certificate in Library Services"; another year of studies leading to a Diploma is to be launched in January 2012. Athiyya is **one of the key members in the curriculum development team for this course, and has been actively contributing to the teaching load at the Faculty of Arts** where they are experiencing difficulty in finding a full-time, qualified local lecturer to take up the position.

Athiyya completed a Diploma of Library and Information Services course offered at the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), Australia, in 2006 and as she states this was the stepping stone that has enabled her to contribute to the introduction and replication of a similar program in the Maldives.

Talking about her experience during her time in Australia, Athiyya says that **"the road to success comes with hard work and determination!"** She fondly highlights the important role the Student Support Scholarship **offered by CIT** to complete her studies played in her career development. If not for the generous scholarship from CIT the chances of her getting a Diploma in LIS would have been bleak, given the lack of any similar courses offered locally.

PROFILE: Maldives LIS Professionals

Athiyya Shakeel is the Deputy Librarian at the Maldives National University Library and holds the Training Officer post at the Council of the Maldives Library Association

The editorial of MLA, along with the rest of the professional body of Maldives, feels very indebted to Australia and CIT for this kind gesture. In a sense, the LIS sector in Maldives is being shaped by Australian assistance.

Talking about the decision on choosing LIS sector as her career option – Athiyya says she did not always aspired to be a librarian. She, as many of us, possessed a love for books starting from a young age. One special book she recall is the "Beauty and the Beast". **The depiction of Belle, going to the library to read books has stayed with her down the years of her memory lane.** As she puts it: "It was always amazing to see the stack of books piled on the shelves as high as the ceiling – the thing which got me really interested was how passionately Belle talks about the characters in the books."

According to her, LIS as a professional career was only thought of while working as a Librarian Trainee at the Maldives Institute for Technical Education in the early 2000s. She says that all she knew was she wanted to do something important; something that will make a difference to the nation.

"I decided to choose this as my career with my colleague Maha's encouragement and advice that I could do higher studies in this area."

Athiyya currently works as a **Deputy Librarian** at the Maldives National University Library and is in charge of its information literacy initiatives. It is her passion for imparting knowledge to others that drives her active involvement in the teaching role at the University's Faculty of Arts.

Athiyya aspires, to serve the Faculty of Arts as a teaching staff. For now, her biggest challenge is

securing the necessary education to meet the requirements for the formal employment as a faculty member. With the lack of educational opportunities in the Maldives to study for a Bachelor Degree in LIS, her career very much depends on the availability of a scholarship to study overseas.

Until that happens, she is happy serving the Faculty and LIS students in her capacity as a part-time lecturer. The Dean of the Faculty speaks fondly of Athiyya's dedication and contribution to the teaching load; the students think highly of "Athiyya Miss".

Another of Athiyya's aspiration is to write a book on library studies in Dhivehi language. This certainly will be a much needed guide for the library staff working throughout the scattered islands of the Maldives. MLA wishes her all the best in this endeavour.

Among her biggest achievements to date, she considers successfully securing the MCHE scholarship in 2004 to go overseas for the Certificate course in LIS and the CIT scholarship in 2006 to continue with the additional semester required to finish off with a Diploma at CIT, as life changing accomplishments.
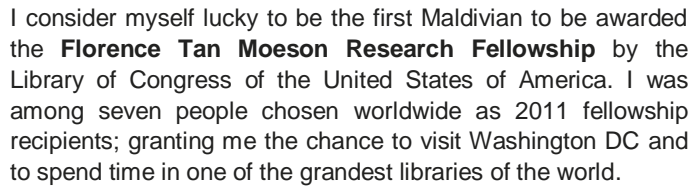
Athiyya has high hopes for the library and information service sector of the Maldives. **"I want to see the libraries develop, especially in the Atolls. My vision is to see educated and dedicated people working in libraries."**

To "want-to-be" librarians, she says: "before choosing this field, take some time to explore your options; learning what is involved and how librarians generally spend their time can help you decide if this is the field for you. Volunteering to work in a library would definitely help you." ∎
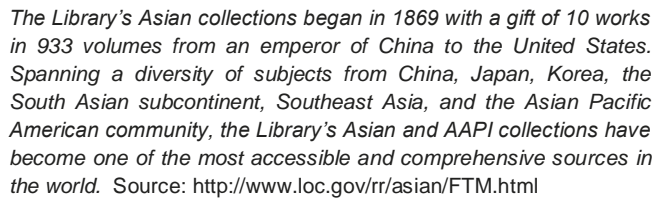
~ Profiled by Aminath Riyaz ~

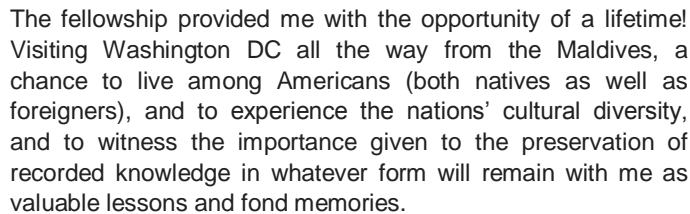# Visit to the Library of Congress, in USA: Reflections

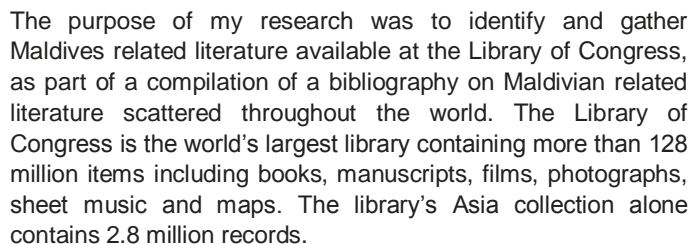*Jefferson Building, Library of Congress, Washington DC*

Corridor leading to the Asia Division Reading Room (on the left) and Congressional Reading Room (on the right) reserved for members for U.S. Congress
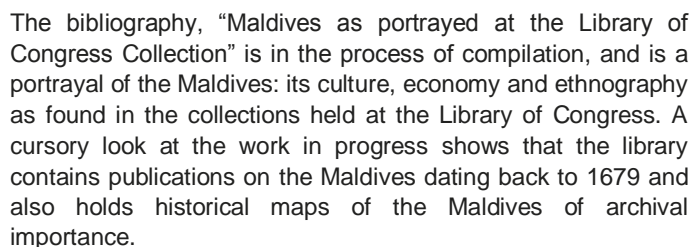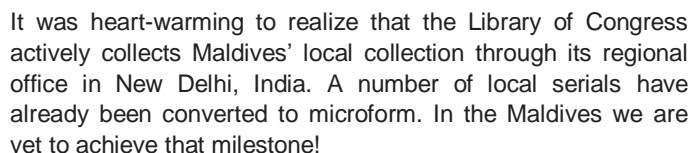
Geography Division of LOC
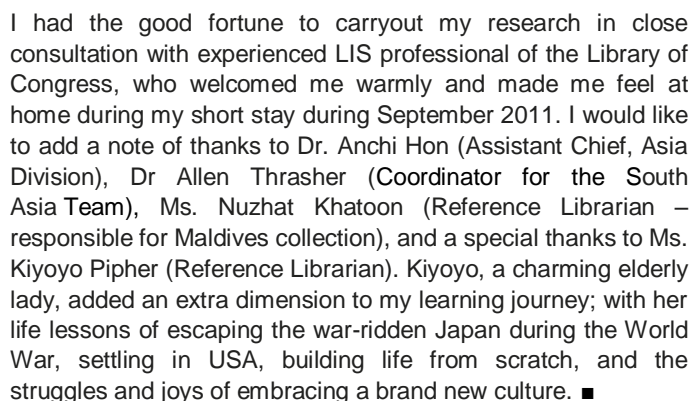
With Dr. Allen Thrasher and Ms. Nuzhat Khatoon

Dhivehi Sarukaaruge Gazetu: 1972 to 1984 – on microform

Arabic & Middle Eastern Reading Room at the LOC

With Dr. Anchi Hon at the Asian Reading Room of LOC

LOC Card Catalogue

I consider myself lucky to be the first Maldivian to be awarded the **Florence Tan Moeson Research Fellowship** by the Library of Congress of the United States of America. I was among seven people chosen worldwide as 2011 fellowship recipients; granting me the chance to visit Washington DC and to spend time in one of the grandest libraries of the world.

The purpose of the Fellowship Program as stipulated on their website, is to give individuals the opportunity to use the Asian and Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI) collections in the Library of Congress to pursue scholarly research projects.

The Library's Asian collections began in 1869 with a gift of 10 works in 933 volumes from an emperor of China to the United States. Spanning a diversity of subjects from China, Japan, Korea, the South Asian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and the Asian Pacific American community, the Library's Asian and AAPI collections have become one of the most accessible and comprehensive sources in the world. Source: http://www.loc.gov/rr/asian/FTM.html

The fellowship provided me with the opportunity of a lifetime! Visiting Washington DC all the way from the Maldives, a chance to live among Americans (both natives as well as foreigners), and to experience the nations' cultural diversity, and to witness the importance given to the preservation of recorded knowledge in whatever form will remain with me as valuable lessons and fond memories.

The purpose of my research was to identify and gather Maldives related literature available at the Library of Congress, as part of a compilation of a bibliography on Maldivian related literature scattered throughout the world. The Library of Congress is the world's largest library containing more than 128 million items including books, manuscripts, films, photographs, sheet music and maps. The library's Asia collection alone contains 2.8 million records.

The bibliography, "Maldives as portrayed at the Library of Congress Collection" is in the process of compilation, and is a portrayal of the Maldives: its culture, economy and ethnography as found in the collections held at the Library of Congress. A cursory look at the work in progress shows that the library contains publications on the Maldives dating back to 1679 and also holds historical maps of the Maldives of archival importance.

It was heart-warming to realize that the Library of Congress actively collects Maldives' local collection through its regional office in New Delhi, India. A number of local serials have already been converted to microform. In the Maldives we are yet to achieve that milestone!

I had the good fortune to carryout my research in close consultation with experienced LIS professional of the Library of Congress, who welcomed me warmly and made me feel at home during my short stay during September 2011. I would like to add a note of thanks to Dr. Anchi Hon (Assistant Chief, Asia Division), Dr Allen Thrasher (Coordinator for the South Asia Team), Ms. Nuzhat Khatoon (Reference Librarian – responsible for Maldives collection), and a special thanks to Ms. Kiyoyo Pipher (Reference Librarian). Kiyoyo, a charming elderly lady, added an extra dimension to my learning journey; with her life lessons of escaping the war-ridden Japan during the World War, settling in USA, building life from scratch, and the struggles and joys of embracing a brand new culture. ■

~ Aminath Riyaz ~

MLA Koha Pilot Project progressing in full speed
… Continued from p. 4

weeks of the new year; thereby stabilizing the project library automation and digitization of local collections.

The MLA has plans for the technical team to visit the project libraries in the early part of 2012 to follow up with the practical work of data entry and execution of the tasks. It will also be an attempt for the enforcement of the tasks and a follow-up of the software training held in Male'.

The MLA takes this opportunity to thank the National Library of Maldives for the tremendous effort and support in the administration of the project. Due thanks is also extended to the Educational Development Centre for the much needed financial backing and support in carrying this project forward. ■

~ Aminath Riyaz,
Project coordinator ~

From the Koha/GSDL training closing ceremony, 15 September 2011

From the Koha training, 11-13 September 2011

Technical Team for the Digital Library Project 2011

MLA workshop series 2011: Workshop on Koha ILS

Training of personnel from the libraries participating in the MLA Koha Pilot Project later consolidated with the Maldives Digital Library Project was carried out in September 2011. One to two staff members from each of the eleven libraries participating in the project were given the opportunity to join the training on Koha Integrated Library System (ILS). Additional participants from other interested libraries were also given the opportunity as there were remaining seats. The program was conducted in Malé from September 11 to 13, 2011, at the National Centre for Information Technology (NCIT) with generous technical assistance from them.

The libraries represented in this training are from:

1. Aminiya School, Malé [sponsored by EDC]
2. Baa Atoll School, B. Dharavandhoo [sponsored by MLA]
3. Dhaalu Atoll Education Centre, Dh. Kudahuvadhoo [sponsored by MLA]
4. Dharumavantha School, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]
5. Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll Education Centre, G.Dh. Thinadhoo [sponsored by EDC]
6. Gnaviyani Atoll Education Centre, Gn. Fuvah Mulah [sponsored by EDC]
7. Hamadh bin Khalifa Al Thaani School, L. Gan [sponsored by EDC]
8. Jalaaludheen School, H.Dh. Kulhudhufushi [sponsored by EDC]
9. Lhaviyani Atoll Education Centre, Lh. Hinnavaru [sponsored by EDC]
10. Maafushi School, K. Maafushi [sponsored by EDC]
11. Maldives Customs Service, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]
12. Maldives Polytechnic, Malé [sponsored by MLA]
13. Malé Health Cooperation (IGMH) [self-sponsored by the institution]
14. Muhibudheen School, S. Hithadhoo [sponsored by EDC]
15. National Library, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]
16. President's Office, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]
17. Villa Collage, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]

The training programme was conducted as a partnered event with the National Library of Maldives; fifteen staff from eight of the libraries were funded through the Education Development Centre, and four staff from three libraries were funded by the Maldives Library Association. The training was conducted by the lead resource person Mr. Nitesh Rijal from Nepzilla Solutions, Nepal, assisted by Ms. Fathmath Nashfa (from MLA/MNU Library) and Mr. Ahmed Rasheed (from NLM).

The program was conducted on intensive mode stretching from 9:00am to 4:00pm for the three days of the training. The topics covered include Koha overview, Koha administration preference setup, MARC bibliographic framework, System preferences, OPAC, Patrons, Tools, Circulation, Cataloguing, general reports and Custom Reports, and Added features in Koha. A general introductory background to cataloguing and MARC was given at the beginning of the three-day Koha training. This session was conducted by MLA training officer, Ms. Athiyya Shakeel.

The three day training was positively received by the participants, with requests for follow up hands-on sessions and more time for practical work. Sample Koha databases were prepared by the MLA technical team for the 11 libraries in the MLA/EDC project.

Workshop on Greenstone Digital Library

The second training program offered in conjunction with the Maldives Digital Library Project, was the training on Greenstone Digital Library (GSDL) software.

Following on from the GSDL training in 2010, the MLA initiated a digital library project where EDC showed interest in digitizing their school textbook collection. The participants of the KOHA training, as detailed above, were given the opportunity to continue on the GSDL training conducted from 14 to 15 September 2011 at NCIT.

The GSDL sessions were conducted by the lead resource person Ms. Fathmath Nashfa from MNU Library, assisted by Mr Nitesh Rijal from Nepzilla Solutions and Mr. Ahmed Rasheed from the National Library of Maldives.

The participating libraries are as follows:

1. Aminiya School, Malé [sponsored by EDC]
2. Baa Atoll School, B. Dharavandhoo [sponsored by MLA]
3. Department of Heritage, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]
4. Dhaalu Atoll Education Centre, Dh. Kudahuvadhoo [sponsored by MLA]
5. Dharumavantha School, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]
6. Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll Education Centre, G.Dh. Thinadhoo [sponsored by EDC]
7. Gnaviyani Atoll Education Centre, Gn. Fuvah Mulah [sponsored by EDC]
8. Hamadh bin Khalifa Al Thaani School, L. Gan [sponsored by EDC]
9. Jalaaludheen School, H.Dh. Kulhudhufushi [sponsored by EDC]
10. Lhaviyani Atoll Education Centre, Lh. Hinnavaru [sponsored by EDC]
11. Maldives Customs Service, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]
12. Maldives Polytechnic, Malé [sponsored by MLA]
13. Malé Health Cooperation (IGMH) [self-sponsored by the institution]
14. Muhibudheen School, S. Hithadhoo [sponsored by EDC]
15. National Library, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]
16. President's Office, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]
17. Villa Collage, Malé [self-sponsored by the institution]

This included the same group of participants from the Koha ILS training, with the exception of Maafushi School Library staff. Also, because of the importance of digital library collection for the Heritage Department, their technical staff was given the opportunity to participate.

MLA believe that the know-how of GSDL will be an important area for the school library staff who, later will be expected to coordinate with the NLM/EDC/MLA in the setup and running for the EDC digital library collection. Furthermore, creation of other digital collections will go a long way in the preservation of the limited local material made available to the public.

The GSDL training also was positively received by the participants. However, it was strongly felt that an overview of HTML in future training will be useful as none of the library staff were familiar with it.

For both trainings, it was recommended that a technical staff along with the library staff should join for a meaningful outcome of the training and practical application of the knowledge in the respective libraries. This approach was taken with the libraries sponsored through EDC; where possible a library staff and an IT staff participated.

Certificates of participation for these two programs were held on September 15, 2011 at the EDC seminar room. The participants were also given a CD by the NLM on how to run a library. ■

MLA Workshop on Koha ILS

MLA Workshop on Koha ILS: participant list

Ali Naail,
Lhaviyani Atoll Education Centre

Aminath Ali,
Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani School

Aminath Sukuma,
Maafushi School

Badhuriyya Ibrahim,
Jalaaludheen School

Fathimath Ismail,
Lhaviyani Atoll Education Centre

Fathimath Shiham,
National Library

Fathmath Mauroof,
Muhibudheen School

Hussain Ali,
G.Dh. Atoll Education Centre

Hussain Fayaz,
Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani School

Hussain Muwazzin Adam,
G.Dh. Atoll Education Centre

Ibrahim Hisaan,
Gnaviyani Atoll Education Centre

Ismail Safhath,
Muhibudheen School

Jannath Abdul Samad,
Dharumavantha School

Mariyam Abdul Gadir,
Gnaviyani Atoll Education Centre

Mariyam Shazla,
Maldives Customs Services

Mariyam Shifa,
Dhaalu Atoll Education Centre

Mariyam Shifaya,
Aminiya School

Mohamed Shifan,
Maldives Polytechnic

Naaiz Abdulla Jamal,
Aminiya School

Nadhira Hassan,
Jalaaludheen School

Nasheedha Saeed,
Malé Health Cooperation

Riyaza Mohamed,
Dhaalu Atoll Education Centre

Salwa Kareem,
Villa College

Shahuzana Mohamed,
Baa Atoll School

Shareefa Ibrahim,
President's Office

MLA Workshop on GSDL Software: participant list

Abdulla Nahee Mohamed,
Department of Heritage

Ali Naail,
Lhaviyani Atoll Education Centre

Aminath Ali,
Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani School

Badhuriyya Ibrahim,
Jalaaludheen School

Fathimath Ismail,
Lhaviyani Atoll Education Centre

Fathimath Shiham,
National Library

Fathmath Mauroof,
Muhibudheen School

Hussain Ali,
G.Dh. Atoll Education Centre

ACLIS 2011

The second batch of students from the Advanced Certificate in Library and Information Services (ACLIS) course completed their studies in November 2011.

The one-year ACLIS program was first offered in 2010, at the Faculty of Arts of the Maldives National University.

The Maldives Library Association recognizes the importance of this program for the advancement of the library and information profession and also the service provision from Maldivian libraries. Information is a basic right for the advancement of democracies, as such an important area that needs to be developed further.

The shortage of qualified people in this profession means that even to teach the advanced certificate program, the University has had to employ lecturers from overseas.

The 2011 course was taught on full time basis during the first term by Mr. Amman Adam (a Canadian national), and in the second term by Ms. Dilara Begum (a Bangladeshi national).

The teaching load was shared by the professional librarian team of the MNU Library on part-time basis. Some of the units were taught by Ms. Aminath Shiuna, Ms. Athiyya Shakeel, and Ms. Aishath Shabana.

Maldives experience: voice of expatriate lecturer from the ACLIS course 2011

I had an opportunity to join as a faculty member at the Maldives National University in Malé, in the Faculty of Arts from August to November, 2011.

I think I was fortunate enough to work with other teachers and students and completely immerse myself in a new culture. This journey inspired me on different levels. It has shaped my outlook on life and has given me an opportunity to explore and to discover the unknown. **My growth in Malé has helped me flourish as a teacher and has taught me more than any educational institution could in such a short span of time.**

I had always wondered about a future career in teaching, so teaching overseas seemed a natural fit. I applied for the position from Bangladesh, completed a successful telephone interview, signed a 3-month contract and set off! Well, the first day itself went good - my students participated well and I really enjoyed it.

I taught Information Literacy, Library Resources and overlooked the Services and Industry Placement (3 subjects) and worked as a course coordinator, for the Advanced Certificate in Library and Information Services course (ACLIS). The University has an excellent resource library and while subject descriptions often came with a recommended book, teachers were given a fair amount of flexibility in terms of tailoring the subjects to student needs and making adjustments and additions to the curriculum as necessary. I found my students are eager to learn, and generous and open in sharing their impressions and experiences as well. Maldivians are peaceful people.

In a country that is 90% water, their lives are inextricably tied to the sea. I watch in amazement as my co-workers happily eat tuna fish curry three times a day. Maldivians prefer tuna over the abundant reef fish. The traditional fishing boat, the Dhoni is both an income and a home to many fishermen. **Living here has been a very special experience. It is a different kind of life.**

Working as a teacher, in a foreign country, was definitely nerve wrecking at first. Once I built up a positive reputation with the University and students I worked with, I learned to value and make use of the wonderful flexibility and control such a situation gives you. My experience teaching overseas has been really interesting. I met people and had experience I will always remember, and made friendships which will last a lifetime.

My love of travel and my interest in and curiosity about other cultures, places and ways of life, my teaching abilities, communication skills, confidence, resilience, independence and knowledge of the world all expanded exponentially. Working with friendly teachers and students, hearing about their lives and how they got to be where they are today.

While everyone's experience will be different, I would certainly recommend teaching and living abroad wholeheartedly.

I think I'm not mistaken with my percept of being a teacher - it was really a hard task, but what's good about this is it is a rewarding experience specially when your students shows gratitude of how thankful they are that they have you to educate them. I can say that this profession is something you could love and hate at the same time but after the hard work and pain you can look back to something you can be proud of and when you see the results, the lack of compensation will after all be rewarded by thank you and hugs coming from students, then **suddenly realize that everything is worthwhile after all.**

I have found the curriculum developed by the Maldives National University is really up to the mark. I think if students go through this curriculum, they will get the latest information which will help them to explore them in this field easily. My recommendation is to start bachelor and post graduate degree in this discipline because it will help them to learn about the depth of knowledge in this field.

Lastly I want to say that it was really a great experience for me to teach in Maldives as faculty member of the one and only University in the country. I have enjoyed a lot. The students and the people of Maldives were very friendly, cooperative and supportive. ∎

~ Dilara Begum ~

Ms. Dilara Begum with ACLIS 2011 students

Note from the Editor:

Ms. Dilara Begum is a Bangladeshi national and a very active member of the Library and Information Services (LIS) community in her country. She holds a Masters degree in Information Science and Library Management (with honours) from Dhaka University. She came to the Maldives on a sabbatical from her employer, the East West University of Bangladesh. According to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, her students, her colleagues, and also the members of LIS community of the Maldives, Dilara showed exemplary performance during the short period here. Dilara will be remembered fondly by everyone. Good Luck!

ދިވެހިބަހާއި ތާރީޚް ދިރާސާކުރާ
ޤައުމީ މަރުކަޒުގެ ފަރާތުން
2011 ވަނަ
ކިޔެވޭނެ ޤައުމީ ފެންވަރުގެ
މަސައްކަތްތަކުގެ ތެރޭގައި

1. ޑިސެންބަރު 2011 ވަނަ އަހަރުގެ ތެރޭގައި ބޭއްވުނު ދިވެހި 2011 ވަނަ އަހަރުގެ ޤައުމީ ފެންވަރުގެ 4 ފޮތެއްގެ ހިތާބުކުރެވުނު ކަމާއި، މިމަސައްކަތް ކުރިއަށްދާ ގޮތުގެ އެންމެފަހުގެ ރިޕޯޓް...

2. ފެބުރުއަރީ 2011 ގެ ނިޔަލަށް 9 ފޮތެއްގެ ހިތާބުކުރެވިފައިވާ ކަމާއި...

3. އެންމެފަހުން ކޮންސެޕްޓެއްގައި...4 ފޮތެއްގެ...

4. ފޮތެއްގެ މަސައްކަތް މިހާރުވެސް ކުރިއަށް ގެންދެވެނީ...

5. މި ބޭއްވުނު ތާރީޚު...8 ސަފްހާ...2011 ވަނަ...

6. ފެންވަރެއްގެ ޑީ.ޓީ.ޕީ ބޭއްވުނު...

ދިވެހި ޤައުމީ ފޮތެއްގެ ފެންވަރު އުފެއްދުމުގައި އިސްކަމެއް ކުރުން

(ތާނައިން ލިޔެވިފައިވާ ދިގު މައުޟޫއީ ލިޔުން)

މި ފަރާތުން ފޮތެއް ތައްޔާރުކުރުމުގައި ތިރީގައި އެވާ ފޮތެއް ފާހަގަކުރެވޭ:

- ޒަވާޒަތުގެ ސާދާ (ރ. ކަނޑޮޅުދޫ)
- ވ. އަތޮޅު ތަރިކަ މަޢުލޫމާތު (ވ. ފެލިދޫ)
- އަޑިނަގާ ސާދާ (ބ. ދޮންފަން)
- ރ. އަތޮޅު ތަރިކަ މަޢުލޫމާތު (ރ. ކަނޑޮޅުދޫ)
- ހޮވާ ބިން ހުޅުމާ އަޅުގަނޑު (ވ. ފެން)
- ދ. އަތޮޅު ތަރިކަ މަޢުލޫމާތު (ދ. މީދޫ)
- ތ. އަތޮޅު ތަރިކަ މަޢުލޫމާތު (ތ. ވަންދޫފަން)
- މިހާރުގެ ސާދާ (ސ. ހިތަދޫ)

ނޯޓް: ޤައުމީ ނެޝަނަލް ލައިބްރަރީ ގޮތުން ކުރެވިފައިވާ ވެބްސައިޓް http://www.nationallibraryofmaldives.com އިންނެވެ.

މަސައްކަތް ނިމުނު އެންމެފަހުގެ ސާޑާރިވޫސް 22 އޮގަސްޓް 2011 ވަނަ.

7. ޑިސެންބަރު އޭ.ޕީ.ސީ.ގެ ފަހުން 8 ފޮތެއްގެ ބައިވެރިކުރަން ނިންމުނެވެ.

8. އެންމެފަހުންވެސް އެއާއެކުއެކުވެ 4 ފޮތެއްގެ ތެރެއިން 1 ފޮތެއްގެ ބޭނުންވާ ޤައުމީ ފެންވަރެއް ... 11 ފޮތެއް...

9. ފޮތެއްގެ ތެރޭ މަޢުލޫމާތު ... ކާމިޔާބު ... ރިޕޯޓެއް.

10. އޭ.ޕީ.ސީ.ގެ ޤައުމީ ... 2 ... މި އޭ.ޑީ.އޭ.ގެ ... (ކާމޫ) ... 1 ... ޤައުމީ ...

11. ... 2011 ގައި ...

12. ޑިސެންބަރު 2011ގެ ނިޔަލަށް ... ޤައުމީ ...

MLA Members 2011

Ahmed Niyaz
Aishath Afra Waheed
Aishath Aliya Ibrahim
Aishath Hussain Manik
Aishath Shabana
Aminath Ahmed
Aminath Riyaz
Aminath Shazina
Aminath Shiuna
Amman Adam
Athiyya Shakeel
Fathimath Nashfa
Fathimath Shiham
Fathmath Nashath
Habeeba Hussain Habeeb
Hawwa Shiuna
Ibrahim Shiyam
Khadeeja Mohamed
Mahasin Ahmed Didi
Rugiyya Sajidha

MLA Member Institutions 2011

Aminiya School
Baa Atoll Madharusaa
Dhaalu Atoll Education Centre
Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll Education Centre
Gnaviyani Atoll Education Centre
Hamadh bin Khalifa Al Thaani School
Islamic Library
Jalaaludheen School
Lhaviyani Atoll Education Centre
Maafushi School
Maldives Politecnic
Muhibudheen School

Thoughts on Stephen Abram's article "20 Things Info Professionals Need to Keep Their Eyes On": *article review*

By the very nature of the title given to this writing, it suggests to us that we live in a world that is constantly changing where we no longer can afford to be just aware of new technologies and information resources, but be familiar and comfortable using them on a daily basis. We have witnessed rapid transformation in the area of information management and dispersal in the last decade.

The introduction of Web 2.0, internet search engines and more recently social networking and blogging are all part of this important transformation. This creates both challenges and opportunities for us as information professionals, which we need to deal with on a daily basis. This writing by Abram Stephen (Abram, 2008) looks at some of these information resources that we need to be immersed into, in order for us to function effectively as information managers of today. Therefore, an in-depth look at the information in Abram's writing is necessary at this point.

After looking carefully at the different things that Abram's wanted us to be aware of as information professionals, I was able to divide them into three broad categories. The categories are **Social Networking** related items, **New Technology and Software** items, and lastly **Convenience with Security** items.

He defines **social networking** items as those that either enables human to human interactions or computer to human interactions or interactions between technology and humans. In this category I include Tagging, Microblogging, Social content, Social networking, Social networking integration, RSS groups and readers, Podcasts and music, Custom search and micro-federation, and E-learning (Abram, 2008, p. 39).

He defines **new technology** as being the new hardware created to run the new platforms "software" on them. In other words gadgets and their function, where the gadget being the technology and the function being the work of the software. In this category I include Mobile, GPS/GIS, Open Handset Alliance, SaaS (software as a service), E-books, E-Book devices and Streaming media (Abram, 2008, p. 39).

Last category "**Convenience with Security**" includes Scrapbooking, Personal homepages and Open ID (Abram, 2008, p. 39), and I define them as being convenient services where security of the service is important. So how important is it for us to be aware of these new sources of information?

In the current information age, I believe that we absolutely do need to be aware of these types of new information resources and need to keep an open eye for new development and an open mind about utilizing them as well. We as information managers need to be aware of what it is that we need to be aware of in the first place.

Now this sounds rather cyclical, but it is not the case. We need to know what it is that we are looking for in order for us to look in the right place for us to find what we are trying to find. For example, looking for E-Books in a database for new software will most likely result in failure. So in general I agree that we need to make a sincere effort at the least to be aware of and at the best to be totally familiar with some of these new information resources. But this does not mean that I am giving a blanket endorsement of all the twenty or so odd items Abram listed as being things we need to keep an eye on.

First of all there is a lot of overlap between some of these resources, which begs the question: is it really necessary for some of these to be stand alone items or should they be combined? For example, E-books and E-book devices which could be listed as one item as they are different sides of the same coin so as to speak (i.e. one needs the E-book device to read E-books). Another issue that arises with embracing new technology is the issue of time; we already have a lot on our plates as it is in terms of technology. Most of us on a daily basis already utilize items such as computers, telephones, cell phones to name a few, so I don't understand why we need to burden ourselves by being active participants in a newer technology such as a blog or a social network. Other concerns that also arise from new technology includes the relative lack of privacy that comes with many of these new resources and mediums and also the compromise in security that comes with some things such as Open ID (Abram, 2008, p. 39). So, is using new technology worth the risk of losing one's privacy and compromising security.

In my opinion it is the right balance that we are looking for, we need to be able to know what new technologies we want to embrace and which ones we want to stay away from. We need to be informed of the new things and technologies that are affecting our field. But we should not be pressured into utilizing the new technologies or informational sources unless it is going to make a meaningful difference in our personal or profession lives. So who is the best judge of what is best for us? And since we all know the answer to that, I suggest we leave it to us to decide when and how we would like to embrace these new developments be it technological, networking or convenience oriented when it comes to technology. ∎

~ Amman Adam ~

Reference

Abram, S. (2008). 20 things Info professionals Need to Keep Their Eyes On. *Information Outlook.* 12(3), 39-41.

ޔުނިވަރސަލް ޑެސިމަލް ކްލެސިފިކޭޝަން (ޔޫޑީސީ)

ތާވަލު 1:

ތަރަޖަމާ ޢަދަދު	ފުރަތަމަ ބައި ނަންބަރު
ޢާއްމު މަޢުލޫމާތު	0
ފިލޯސަފީ (ފަލްސަފާ)، ނަފްސާނީ އިލްމު	1
ދީން	2
އިޖްތިމާޢީ ހަރަކާތްތައް އިލްމު (ސޯޝަލް ސައިންސް)	3
ހުސަންތަން	4
އައްޑަކުރާހާ ކައުނަކުގެ ހިއްސާތައް ޤުދުރަތީ އިލްމު (ސައިންސް)	5
ބައިލޮޖީކަލް ފަންނުތައް ބޭސް އިލްމު (ޓެކްނޮލޮޖީ)	6
ފަންނުވެރިކަން (އާރޓްސް)	7
ބަސް ނުވަތަ ބަހުގެ އަދި އަދަބިއްޔާތު	8
ޖޯގްރަފީ ބަޔޮގްރަފީ އަދި ތާރީޚު	9

ތާވަލު 2:

ނިޝާން	ނިޝާނުގެ ފުރިހަމަ ނަން	ބަސް	މިސާލު
+	އައްޑަކުރާ	އައްޑާކުރުން	636+59 ޕޮޓް (ޖަނަވާރުގެ ބަގީޗާ) އަދި ބަކަރި ހަދާއިގެ
/	ޖަހާ ފާރަ	ދަންވަރު	599/592 ސިންގަލްފިޝް ޕޮޓް (592 އިން 599 އާއިދެކޭ ހުރިހާ އަދަދެއް ގުޅާ ދޭން)
:	ދަމަން	ބަކަރި/ދަޅަން	7:17 ފަންނުވެރިކަމާ އައްޑުގެ ގުޅުން
[]	ހަސަރުސްކޮޅު ބަރެކެޓް	އަންނަރު ދައްމާކުރުން	311: (485) [622+669] ސްވީޑަން ފަރ މައިނިން އަދި މަޢުދަނުގެ އިލްމު ދައްމާ ފަރޫސާރިސާ
=	އައްވަރު ބަރަބަރު	ބަރާބަރު	111 އިގުޅޭ ބަރަބަރުން؛ 59=111 ޕޮޓް، އިގުޅޭ ބަރަބަރު

1992

1993 %40

220000

60000

1995

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_Decimal_Classification

http://www.udcc.org/about.htm

Professional Development

The Faculty of Arts of the Maldives National University is commencing the first Diploma level program in January 2012.

Students with the necessary Higher-secondary school qualifications can complete the program in one year while those with Secondary qualifications can join the Diploma year after completing the Advanced Certificate in Library and Information services course offered from the Faculty of Arts or any other equivalent qualification.

Application is open until mid January 2011.

Update on MLA activities 2011

- **Memorandum of Understanding with the National Library of Maldives**
  The MLA signed a MoU with the National Library to provide technical assistance to its efforts in introducing library automation to the libraries of the Maldives, as well as in the creation of digital libraries.

- **MLA workshop series – Workshop on Koha ILS**
  The workshop on Koha Integrated Library System organized by the MLA was held on September 11 to 13, 2011, at the National Centre for Information Technology.

- **MLA workshop series – Workshop on GSDL**
  The workshop on Greenstone Digital Library Software organized by the MLA was held on September 14 to 15, 2011, at the National Centre for Information Technology.

- **Consultancy to the Islamic Library**
  Consultancy to the Islamic Library of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs was provided at their request, from September 18 to October 6, 2011.

Upcoming Events

- **Selection of additional libraries to MLA Koha Project**
  With the experience from 2011 Koha Pilot project, MLA has plans to select additional libraries for the MLA Koha Project in 2012.

- **MLA General meeting**
  The next general meeting is scheduled to be held early 2012. New MLA Council for the Jan 2012-Dec 2013 term will be elected at this meeting.

- **MLA Newsletter**
  The next issue of this newsletter will be coming out in April 2012. 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.

meet.learn.acquire   Volume 8   Issue 03   December 2011

Maldives Library Association
meet.learn.acquire

Maldives Library Association
National Library
Malé, Maldives
Blog: http://infomalias.wordpress.com
E-mail: info.malias@gmail.com
Phone: 7765181 (Editor)