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ULA President's Message

Forward Collectively to Fruitful Years



"Simple can be harder than complex: You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it's worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains."

- Steve Jobs

Welcome to the new issue of the ULA Newsletter.

The leadership of ULA has always been depended on membership engagements and their participation. The longer you serve for ULA; the more you realize how much dependent you are.

I am thankful for the support you are offering and also for your interest in supporting, though you have not been able to contribute as much as you were willing; indeed, I encourage them to continue their support for ULA, as ULA belongs to them too.

On that note, I would like to make a personal plea: try to *"make the pie bigger for everyone"* instead of trying to get a *"bigger piece of the pie"*.

Let us all work together towards the promotion of the profession and show other communities what Librarians could do to help develop our motherland.

So, looking forward collectively for fruitful years, the Executive Committee has openly agreed to implement the Strategic Plan with Seven Goals for the development and benefit of ULA and its members.

Further, we need to find ways to ensure that our communications reach diverse groups, the young librarians know much better than I.

I do not believe in borders, so I am confident that, with your help it will strengthen, ULA to go beyond borders...Thank You...!

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Feature Article

Accepting Challenges: Continuing Library Services During Covid-19 Pandemic



Shirani Ranasinghe

Deputy Librarian

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

At the moment, the whole world is in the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic situation. Coronavirus has posed a threat to the world and affected almost every aspect of our lives and livelihood. It has caused disruption in every academic institution, including libraries and information centers.

Though the crisis and effect are huge, we cannot cease our library services. Librarians have to work hard to deal with the crisis. These days society needs up-to-date and current information more than ever. Readers are not able to visit libraries or information centers physically, therefore information providers need to understand the situation and face this challenge successfully. It is attempted in this article, to discuss some measures or strategies that could be adopted in providing library services during this challenging situation.

There are two phases

1. Operation of library services during the lock down period
2. Reopening and resumption of services when the country is restoring into normalcy.

Operation of library services during the lock down period

During the Covid-19 pandemic, all institutions and libraries were kept closed. Users were not able to access the collections of libraries and librarians were not in a position to provide usual services as practiced before. During lock down, “work from home” concept came into scenario in almost all the institutions (both private and government) and there was no exception for libraries. Libraries face difficulties and had to impose limitations in providing the services they offer, as physical connections with users are not possible. Therefore, librarians too had to move into online environment with the use of electronic resources and the Internet. Users, especially students,

researchers and scholars required information to continue their studies, and for their research needs.

To fulfill this requirement, Librarians need to serve the users through electronic Document Delivery Services using a variety of open access resources and materials obtained through Inter Library Loan requests from other libraries where there are electronic resources. Librarians should be able to provide the users with links to open access resources such as e-books, e-journals etc. and the users should be well informed about these resources. Relevant reading materials and details of other information resources with links to its websites should be uploaded to Learning Management Systems (LMS) of students.

Publishers' cooperation has been tremendous in providing access to online resources. Most of the publishers provided remote access facility for their information products and users could get access to information resources off site.

User education is another service that could be offered using online environment. Many new technologies such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Teams etc. have appeared facilitating the online environment. User awareness workshops, Information Literacy programs, lecture sessions, orientation programs could be conducted using these technologies and other mobile learning facilities. Librarians and staff should get adapted to such technological changes and they should be trained in such applications in order to provide a successful service.

All the students, faculty and library staff should be informed of these facilities via e-mail and SMS and users should be encouraged to check on the library website which should be updated frequently.

Reopening and resumption of library services

Reopening and resumption of services is a challenge that has to be faced by the librarians. Their aim should be to provide a pleasant learning environment to its users, while following all the Covid-19 preventive guidelines, new norms and standards. They need to take precautionary measures in order to protect the users as well as the library staff. First and foremost, thing is following Covid-19 exit strategies strictly.

All the staff members should be aware of and follow the guidelines prepared by Covid-19 Prevention Committees of the universities and Ministry of Health. The new standards and norms, which includes social distancing, wearing masks, using gloves, and hand washing should be practiced by the staff.

It would be necessary to adjust library policies, rules and regulations in order to ensure the safety of library staff and users. With regard to users, following guidelines could be implemented during reopening.

- Since libraries are closed environments, only a limited number of users should be allowed to sit together at one time keeping the social distance.
- All the users should be advised to wear face masks continuously within the library and adhere to hand washing with soap or sanitizing before entering to the library.
- Users should not be allowed to use some areas such as Discussion rooms etc.

Books and other materials received in the library should be quarantined at least for 03 days before shelving and a separate table has to be allocated for this purpose. Also, regular cleaning of the library with disinfectants must be in operation.



(With the courtesy of the Librarian, University of Sri Jayewardenepura)

"Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything"

- George Bernard Shaw

Special Events

38th ULA Annual General Meeting - 2021

The 38th Annual General Meeting of the University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka was held on 19th of February 2021 at the Taj Samudra Hotel, Colombo. No any guests were invited to the inaugural session of the AGM due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation in the country. The Interim President, Dr. (Mrs.) Nayana Wijayasundara, Librarian of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura welcomed the ULA members to the AGM, and addressed the gathering screening strength of the librarians to improve the profession of librarianship in the country.

Issues pertaining to the journal published in 2020 of the University Librarians Association were presented to the members of the head table by the Interim Editor of JULA, Dr. Mrs. Pradeepa Wijetunge, Librarian of the University of Colombo. Further, she shared her experiences in order to upgrade the quality of research conducted by the membership.

Vote of thanks at the AGM was delivered by the ULA Interim General Secretary, Dr. Chaminda Jayasundara, Librarian of the University of Kelaniya.



Achievements and Awards

Dr. Chaminda Jayasundara Wins Vice-Chancellor's Award 2020

Dr. Chaminda Jayasundara, Librarian of the University of Kelaniya won the "Outstanding Senior Researcher in the Library" award at the Long Service Awards and Vice-Chancellor's Awards Ceremony of the University of Kelaniya.

Long Service Awards and Vice-Chancellor's Awards Ceremony of the University of Kelaniya was held on the 01st of January 2021 at the Dharmaloka Hall of the University as a virtual ceremony. The prime objective of this awards ceremony which is being held annually since 2007, was to appreciate the

service of the academic and non-academic staff members during the last year and further to motivate them.



Librarians of Rajarata University Wins Best Paper Award at the SEUIARS



The paper presented by Mrs. W.P.T. Dilrukshi and contributed by Dr. S.K. Illangarathne & Mrs. W.M.P.G.K.T. Wanasinghe who are the Senior Assistant Librarians of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka was selected as one of

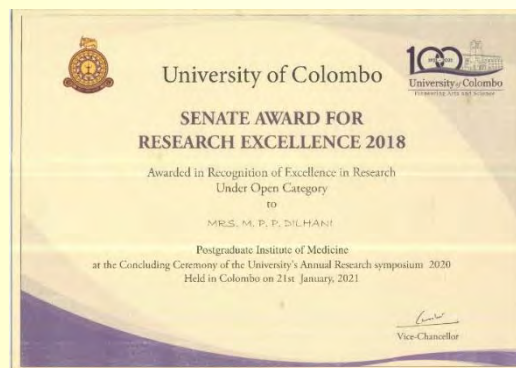
the best papers of the technical sessions at the 9th International Symposium of South Eastern University International Arts Research Session - 2020 [SEUIARS 2020] which was held online on 19th of January 2021. The paper was focused on a timely subject which was titled, "New online user service initiatives of public libraries during the long-term shutdown periods due to the unexpected circumstances: a case study in Sri Lanka during the Covid-19 pandemic".

"To succeed in life, you need two things: ignorance and confidence"

- Mark Twain

Priyanka Dilhani Wins Senate Award for Research Excellence

Mrs. Priyanka Dilhani, Senior Assistant Librarian, Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo received the Senate Award for the Research Excellence in 2018 and 2019 at the Annual Research Award Ceremony held on 21st of January 2021 at the University of Colombo.



Academic Contribution

Workshop on Search Literature in Electronic Environment

Ms. Hiruni Kanchana, Senior Assistant Librarian of the Allied Health Sciences Library of the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University provided her service as a resource person to a workshop organized by the Section D of the Sri Lanka Association of the Advancement of Science (SLAAS) in collaboration with the Faculty of Research and

Development, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University on 18th of March 2021. She shared her knowledge and experiences as a library academic under the topic "Search Literature in Electronic Environment". Undergraduate and postgraduate students in Biological Science participated in this workshop.

Webinar Series Offered by the KDU Library Network

In a bid to raise awareness of usage of subscribed information resources of databases and subscribed services of software, the library network of the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) successfully organized a user-awareness webinar series on 25th of February, 24th and 26th of March 2021 in collaboration with Taylor & Francis Publishers, Turnitin, South

Asia, and EBSCO Information Service. Students and academic staff of KDU actively joined the webinar series. Mr. Pankaj Wadhwa, National Sales Manager of Taylor & Francis Group, Mr. Akshay Prasanna, Senior Consultant, Turnitin, PES, South Asia, and Mr. GK Upadhyaya, Senior Training Manager, EBSCO Information Service served as resource persons in this webinar series.

Webinar Series at Library of the University of Kelaniya

The Library, University of Kelaniya has organized a series of webinars on various topics related to academic and research domains with the view of improving the academic community of the University in terms of their academic and research outputs. These webinars have been conducted from September, 2020, and are planned to be continued up to the end of the year 2021. Academic staff members of the library serve as resource persons of this webinar series.

During the period, January to March, 2021, five webinars have been covered via ZOOM. First webinar was conducted by Librarian, Dr. Chaminda Jayasundara on 26th of January 2021 on the topic “Publication process”. Senior Assistant Librarian, Dr. Tharanga Ranasinghe delivered the second webinar on “Predatory publishing practices” on 02nd of February 2021. Third webinar was carried out by Senior Assistant Librarian, Dr. Suranga Sampath on the topic “Compilation of scientific documents using LaTeX software” on 23rd of February 2021. Senior Assistant Librarian, Dr. Achala Ranaweera addressed the fourth webinar on the theme “Use of Mendeley Reference Management Software” on 09th of March 2021. Final webinar was conducted by Assistant Librarian, Ven. Deiyandara Pannananda on 28th of March 2021 on the topic “Research data organization with WebHarvy software”.

These webinars have been greatly appreciated and valued by the academics of the University which could enlighten them on validity of information to incorporate in teaching-learning process and research accomplishments.



Community Outreach

Mini Library Project of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

Commemorating the “Technology Library Day 2021” of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, another Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project of donating a mini library to “Pilika Sarana” Cancer Patients’ Relief Center-Kurundankulama, Anuradhapura was successfully completed on 11th January, 2021. The Technology Library & Technology Faculty staff collaboratively launched this project where 285 books were donated.



Book Donation by the Library of the University of Kelaniya

The Library of the University of Kelaniya organized a book donation programme at the library premises on 18th of February, 2021. Books were donated to St. Mary’s College, Elpitiya with the noble intention of developing knowledge and skills of school children. Dr. C.



C. Jayasundara, Librarian, University of Kelaniya graced the event as the Chief Guest while, Mr. B. H. A. Anura, Principal, St. Mary’s College accompanied with teachers participated as guests. Furthermore, library staff members were present at the occasion.



“Research is to see what everybody else has seen, and to think what nobody else has thought”

- Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

Research Contribution

Workshop on Systematic Reviews in Health Care

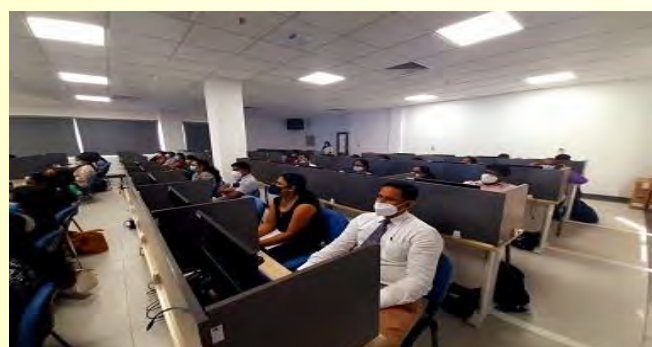
The Library of the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine of the University of Colombo organized a workshop on “Conducting Systematic Reviews in Health Care: Methodology, Guidelines, Standards” for the PGIM trainers and trainees. The workshop was held on 30th of March 2021 at the PGIM Academic Centre of Postgraduate Institute of Medicine. Mrs. Sriyani Perera, former Faculty Librarian of Medicine, University of Peradeniya and Mrs. Dilhani Munasinghe, Senior Assistant Librarian, PGIM served as

resource persons. Mrs. Chandima Wadasinghe, Senior Assistant Librarians of the PGIM coordinated the event.



Session on Reference Management Tools

Mrs. Priyanka Dilhani, Senior Assistant Librarian, Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo conducted a program on “How to use PGIM Library Resources and Managing References using Mendeley Reference Management Software” on 16th February 2021 at the Computer Lab in PGIM Academic Center. This session targeted MSc Medical Administration Training students. Mendeley is a free program for managing bibliography and sharing research. With Mendeley, one can create a personal library, organize and manage PDF files and automatically retrieve metadata from articles and enter bibliographical references.



Publications by KDU librarians at NILIS Research Symposium

Ms. Hiruni Kanchana and Mr. V.Alagaratnam, Senior Assistant Librarians of the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University published their research papers at the “NILIS Research Symposium 2020” which took place at the University of Colombo on 23rd of January 2021 under the theme “Challenges and Opportunities for Libraries in the New Normal”.

Ms. Hiruni Kanchana, Senior Assistant Librarian of the Allied Health Sciences Library of the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University published her research paper under the title, “Extending library services to the community by library outreach services:

An institutional experience of Kotelawala Defence University”. Mr. V.Alagaratnam, Senior Assistant Librarian of the Main Library of the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University and Dr. V Inpamohan of the Library of the Eastern University of Sri Lanka together published a research paper titled “Impact of ZOOM in information sharing during Covid-19 pandemic - A case study”.

Further, Mr. V.Alagaratnam together with Dr. S.Santhirasegaram of the Eastern University of Sri Lanka published a research paper titled “Impacts of literacy level in information sharing: A qualitative study on folk literary tradition”.

Presentation at the GARI Winter Multidisciplinary Symposium

Ms. Pearl Wijesekara, Assistant Librarian of the Southern Campus of the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University presented a research paper titled “Access subscribed databases behind the library wall during the Covid 19: a case study of university library” at the GARI Winter Multidisciplinary Symposium – 2020 held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 29th January 2021.



Training Session on Similarity Check

Library, University of Sri Jayewardenepura conducted a training session on similarity check through the Turnitin package on 10th of March 2021 via Zoom. The resource person for this training session was Mr. Varun Piplani

from Turnitin, India. Academics including library professionals participated in this session which could educate them on different features of Turnitin to detect plagiarism.

Quality Assurance

Seminar on Role of the Library in Quality Assurance Cell

The Quality Assurance Cell of the Library (QAC-Lib), University of Peradeniya organized an awareness seminar for the preparation of the Institutional Review (IR) writing report. The program was held on 11th of February 2021 at the Seminar Room, Faculty of Arts.



The target audience was the committee members (QAC-LIB), academic staff of the library, academic supportive staff and assistant registrars of the library services. Prof. R. W. Pallegma, Director, Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) of the University of Peradeniya was the resource person. The main theme of this seminar was “Role of the Library in Quality Assurance Cell (QAC-Lib)”, and the contribution and support of the library in the IR writing process was discussed. The Librarian, Mr. R. Maheshwaran welcomed the audience, and Mr. Sunil Premarathne,

coordinator, QAC-Lib delivered the vote of thanks.

The Quality Assurance Cell in the Library (QAC-Lib) is a Vice-Chancellor approved cell, and this is the first time a quality cell was established for the library in order to accomplish quality assurance tasks successfully.



Student Support Services

Establishment of Digital Wall, University of Kelaniya

The digital wall board of the library, University of Kelaniya was established on 23rd March with the cooperation of British Council Sri Lanka. This feature will enable readers to access the digital collections of the British Council through QR codes. Ms. Maarya Rehman, Country Director- British Council attended the event to officially hand over the wall to the library.

Cadre Chair & Senior Prof. Nilanthi de Silva, Vice Chancellor of the University of Kelaniya addressing the gathering, pointed out the need for a library in university education, and its functions. She further stated that the need for digital books has become more acute than ever, given the current pandemic situation in the country.



Dr C.C. Jayasundara, Librarian of the University of Kelaniya declared in his welcome address that the digital wall board will enable students, teachers and researchers to access a vast array of information available at the British Council. He stated that he found many essential resources, not only for education but also for recreational purposes and preparing undergraduates and junior staff for IELTS offered through the digital wall.



Other News

Centennial Celebrations of the University of Peradeniya

Centenary Celebrations of the Library of the University of Peradeniya was inaugurated at a ceremony held on 23rd of February 2021 at the auditorium of the new library building under the aegis of Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Upul B. Dissanayake, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Parakrama Karunaratna, and Acting Registrar, Ms. Jayantha Dharmasiri. The event was organized by the Librarian, Mr. R. Maheswaran and the library staff.

The highlight of the event was the unveiling of the “centenary logo” and the launching of the centenary logo in the digital format. Subsequently, a press briefing was held, and the Vice-Chancellor briefed about history, value and services rendered by the University of Peradeniya Library. Exhibiting of few items of historical value was another important feature of this inaugural ceremony. The four monumental articles which were displayed for the guests were, the very first accession register which was started on 08th April 1921, the first ten books in the accession register which belonged to the Arunachalam Padmanabha collection, the “Mahavamsa” palm-leaf manuscript which is to be declared shortly as a world heritage by the UNESCO,

and finally, the oldest palm-leaf manuscript housed in the library, namely, “Visuddhi Magga Teeka” which was known to be written in 1302 C. E. during the Dambadeniya period.



“Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think”

- Albert Einstein

Centenary Celebrations, Library of the University of Colombo

The Library of the University of Colombo celebrates its 100 years of excellence in the year 2021 under the theme “*Providing information for excellence - a century and beyond*”. To mark this milestone, the library has organized a series of events throughout the year as follows;

Research Commons at the Main Library

The opening ceremony of the Research Commons at the Main Library, University of Colombo was held on 21st of January 2021, with the participation of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Colombo, Senior Prof. Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne as the Chief Guest, who also launched the centenary website that includes centenary logo, history of the library, memories provided by several dignitaries, photo gallery, and introduction to the research commons.



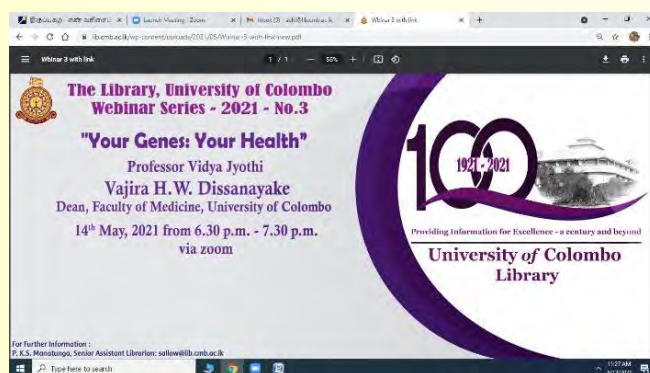
The main library always keeps up to the best practices and cutting-edge technologies in the field of library and information sciences and services. In this line, the renowned leadership and creative talents of the library have planned and set up research commons in the

main library, where research scholars/ academics would work in peace.



This special space provides the academics with necessary equipment and resources to work incessantly. The impetus has indeed emanated from the insisting requests from many lecturers and professors of the University. The library looks forward to expanding the resources, and enhancing the atmosphere with its demand and growth.

Webinar Series from the Library



As part of the centenary celebrations, the Main Library of the University of Colombo has planned to conduct a webinar series every month, and has conducted the first three webinars so far. The first webinar was held on 15th of March 2021 via Zoom, where Senior Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne, Vice-

Chancellor, University of Colombo, delivered a very informative speech on the theme "Living and Working with Covid-19". This can be viewed at; <https://lib.cmb.ac.lk/living-and-working-with-covid-19/>

Opening of the New Science Library Building at the Faculty of Science

The doors were open to a new era of learning experience with the new library of the Faculty of Science, University of Colombo. The "Information and Learning Centre" of the Faculty of Science was opened for the community of scholars on 21st of January 2021, the day that the Faculty of Science, University of Colombo celebrated 100 years of excellence in science education.



Senior Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Colombo was the Chief Guest of the ceremony, and the Guest of Honour was Professor Emeritus Lakshman Dissanayake, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Colombo.

This is a seven-story modern learning centre with different study zones, such as reference zone, quiet study zone, collaborative study zone, interactive study zone and open study zone. In addition to that, fully equipped

library skill lab, studio, e-resource centre and the auditorium are value added spaces.



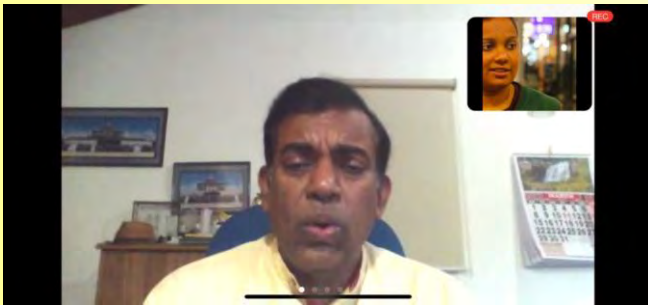
2021 Virtual Human Library Program, Sri Palee Campus Library

Sri Palee Campus Library, University of Colombo conducted the "2021 virtual Human Library" Program, where readers could borrow human beings to serve as open books and participate in conversations that they would not otherwise be able to encounter.



Six sessions of the human library program were conducted on various topics, which greatly benefitted the university students and

the academics in gaining knowledge from experts. Dr. Prathibha Mahanamahewa, Rector, Sri Palee Campus, Rev. Prof. (Dr.) W. Wimalaratana, Prof. Dharmakeerthi Sri Ranjan, Dr. Tudor Weerasinghe, Dr. Mahesh Rajasuriya, Dr. Kumudini Maddumage, and Dr. Jayantha Wannisinghe participated as human books at the 2021 Virtual Human Library Program.



Among the topics discussed at the human library were; role of the university students, sustainable university education, exploiting the students' capacity as a highly rewarding investment, research culture of the university students, application of theory into practice, importance of counseling for the university students, media and the multinationals and is there a thing called free will etc.



Visit of the Assistant High Commissioner of India

The Assistant High Commissioner of India, His Excellency Raakesh Natraj paid a visit to the Main Library of the University of Peradeniya on 12th March 2021. The Librarian of the University of Peradeniya, R. Maheswaran warmly welcomed him and took him on a guided tour of the library.

The Assistant High commissioner made a valuable donation of Sanskrit books to be added to the library collection for the benefit of students and academic staff members who are interested in Sanskrit language and literature. The Librarian presented the Assistant High Commissioner with a Jade plant as a souvenir to signify the Centennial Celebrations of the Library of the University of Peradeniya. Future support for the library

and collaborations were also discussed during this meeting.



Opening of the Librarian's New Office of the University of Kelaniya

A Pirith chanting was organised on 1st of January 2021 to celebrate the opening of the Librarian's new office, and to bless the library staff, the university community, and all the others in this pandemic situation. The Librarian, academic and non-academic staff of the library contributed and participated in this event.



Visit of Conservationist of the National Archives

Library of the University of Peradeniya was visited by a Conservationist attached to the Department of National Archives as per the request made by the Librarian of the University of Peradeniya.

The main purpose of this visit was to examine the physical condition of the palm-leaf manuscript collection available in the library, and to inspect the ongoing palm-leaf manuscript preservation process. The officer was highly satisfied with the prevailing physical condition of the materials, and the preservation and conservation measures that

had been taken by the library of the University of Peradeniya.





University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka

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