



IASLIC NEWSLETTER

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Libraries and Information Centres



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Quote of the Month

*“Civilized nations build
libraries; lands that have lost
their soul close them down”*

— Toby Forward,
English Writer

Appeal to Readers

News from different regions / states are solicited from IASLIC members for inclusion in the newsletter. Send such news to the Editor.

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An Appeal to Publishers of LIS Literature

Indian Library Science Abstracts (ILSA), being brought out by IASLIC since 1967, is the only national abstracting and indexing journal of India in the field of library and information Science. Due to the phenomenal growth of LIS literature in India in English as well as regional languages and the lack of volunteer professionals it has become a herculean task to collect, organize and compile data for the ILSA. The last cumulative volume (Vols. 40-44, 2006-2010) was published in 2018, the print copies as well as e-copies (in CD) of which are available for sale at IASLIC Office. The editorial team has now undertaken the task of compiling the next cumulative volume covering the period 2011-2015 and intends to publish the volume in early 2022. It will cover, besides periodical literature, papers published in conference/seminar volumes, festschrift volumes and other composite works. Due to pandemic situation the editorial team is facing problems in obtaining hard copies/soft copies of published materials in LIS. The team solicits cooperation from publishers, state library associations, organizers of the conferences/seminars/workshops, authors and individual library professionals and requests them to furnish hard copies/soft copies of LIS literature in English and regional languages published by them during the said period at the earliest, to enable it to complete the compilation work and publish the volume in time. The team hopes that with the effective support of the concerned people ILSA will become an authentic and comprehensive surrogate of Indian intellectual output in Library and Information Science.

IASLIC ACTIVITIES

Lecture on Journal Quality Assessment

The 337th IASLIC Study Circle meeting was held on November 26, 2021 on Google Meet virtual platform. A lecture on 'Assessment of Quality of a Journal' was delivered by Dr. Bapan Kumar Maity, Librarian, Sammilani Mahavidyalaya, Kolkata. In his welcome address, Dr. Sudip Ranjan Hatua, Convener, IASLIC Study Circle, explained why the credibility of research publications was extremely important and how in the last couple of years, the problem of predatory / dubious / sub-standard journals had become a cause of serious concern all over the world. In his introductory remarks, Prof. Amitabha Chatterjee, former Professor and Head, DLIS, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, and the Chairperson of the meeting, pointed out the problems created by mushrooming of low standard journals and emergence of journals that published papers against payment. He also highlighted the importance of quality of a journal. In his lecture, Dr. Maity explained how one could measure the quality of a journal through quantitative approach. He introduced a model and formula for this purpose. He explained the shortcoming of impact factor and raised various drawbacks of impact factor as a quality

indicator of a journal. He mentioned about fifteen parameters and explained how to quantify the values obtained by applying these parameters using three-point scale. He showed how he had applied his model in 15 reputed journals in Social Sciences and ranked them accordingly. He also elucidated how this model could be useful to a librarian for selecting the best quality journal among similar journals in a subject field in the face of budget constraint. At the same time it would help the authors to select quality journal for publishing their papers, he added.

In the lively interaction session several questions were asked by the participants. For example, Dr. M Tamizhchelvan asked whether impact factor was considered as quality measurement parameter? Dr. Abhijit Chakraborty asked on which theorem the formula arrived at by the speaker was based? Some other queries were: how an individual would assess the quality of a journal? Was the price of a journal considered as one parameter? The speaker answered and clarified all the queries. Prof. Chatterjee, in his concluding remarks, said that the formula proposed by the speaker would be helpful for the librarians but individual writer himself or herself will not be able to use it. He also emphasized on the need to stop publication of journals demanding money from the authors for publishing their papers. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Joydip Chandra, Librarian, Barrackpore Rastraguru Surendranath College, and Member, IASLIC Study Circle Division.

Altogether 90 people attended the programme, of which 3.4 per cent were LIS Faculty, 48.9 per cent were librarians/assistant librarians, 13.6 per cent were professionals of other ranks, 5.7 per cent were research scholars and 28.4 per cent were LIS students.

PC Shah Memorial Lecture

The 4th IASLIC-P C Shah Memorial Lecture will be held on December 6, 2021 at 5.30 pm through Google Meet. Shri S M Kulkarni, former Librarian, Anthropological Survey of India and former General Secretary, IASLIC, will deliver the lecture on topic: 'Random Thoughts in Librarianship.' For joining link email to iaslic.india@gmail.com

CONFERENCES / SEMINARS / WORKSHOPS

National

Webinar on Assistive Technology Devices

The Departments of Library, Social Work, Computer Science and HRD, of Malankara Catholic College, Kaliyakkavilai, Tamilnadu, are jointly organizing a National Webinar on 'Working Principles of Assistive Technology Devices in Library for People with Disabilities,' in collaboration with National Career Service Center for Differently Abled, Trivandrum, on December 3, 2021. The registration link is : <https://forms.gle/3cN6gc39HN9nx5gK9>

International

Webinar on Health Information Literacy

An International Webinar on 'Acceleration of Health Information Literacy: Preparing Multi-Lingual Covid-19 Contents for South Asia Region' is being jointly organized by the Association of Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) South Asia Chapter and Department of Information Science and Library Management, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh, on December 18, 2021 at 5:30 pm IST online via Zoom. The joining link is <https://bdren.zoom.us/j/66643317056?pwd=UXc3ZFUxNnZCUHFUMnRtUTBBSXUvQT09>

Conference on Information Policy

The International Conference of Asian Libraries (ICAL 2021), will take place online during December 18 - 19, 2021. The theme of conference is 'Developing Information Policies for the Knowledge Age.' For details visit: <http://www.asiala.co.in/>

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Books-in-a-box Drive

A unique roaming library, that carries books on cycles across some of south Kolkata slums, has allowed underprivileged children to read and stay in touch with studies. An initiative by NGO CRY, Kitabo ki Pitara - the roaming library run by local children aged 11-19 years - has been flagged off in ward number 80 in Taratala, as part of a project funded by Vesuvius India Limited, says a *The Times of India* report. A bunch of youngsters from the area, trained by CRY, have been criss-crossing five slums of the Kolkata Port Trust Colony since September 6, encouraging children to join. A particular day of the week is designated as 'library day' when the cycles do the rounds, handing over books to children. CRY field workers have trained 105 youngsters who are running the library with four trunks of books. Trina Chakrabarti, Regional Director, East, said, "Many underprivileged students suffered in the last one-and-a-half-years. Some were forced to drop out of school during lockdown. Kitabo ki Pitara has let them stay in touch with studies. We have story books in three languages donated by people. The initiative has helped many, like Madhu Kumari, who came to Kolkata three years ago and didn't know how to sign her name. After being roped in as a library coordinator, she can now read and write and goes around her area on a cycle distributing books to kids. Similarly, Mani Balmiki, a Class V student, dropped out during lockdown last year. Mani has now started reading again after almost a year. Asim Ghosh, Assistant General Manager, CRY, said, "The place where we have initiated the project is not ideal for books and studies. So, we are trying to create an area where children can feel safe." For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/books-in-a-box-drive-helps-slum-kids-keep-reading/articleshowprint/86180349.cms/2/2A>

New Shelf Life for Chennai Libraries

You know I'm thriving when I'm flipping through the musky fragrance of an old, dusty book, says Prabhu Viswanathan. Until the pandemic struck, the Chennai businessman would be found at the Madras Literary Society almost every week, or on a hunt for first editions, political biographies, and collectibles. For steadfast bibliophiles like Prabhu - who "wouldn't touch a Kindle at 90" - the pandemic has been a period of cruel withdrawal from the romance of that experience. With lockdown restrictions, many libraries have been forced to shut their doors forever. And those that have managed to stay afloat are struggling for subscriptions to survive. However, several initiatives have been launched in the city to take the reading experience to patrons and attract new bookworms, while also creating unique cultural experiences amid excessive digital consumption, says a story in *The Times of India*. "During the first wave, we associated with a lot of libraries, ensuring that memberships were renewed. We showed our support to the local lending libraries," says Thirupurasundari Sevel, founder of Nam Veedu, Nam Oor, Nam Kadhai, a social history group, which has also been creating various maps of Chennai from tea kadais to old lanes. "We had taken children on a tour of all the libraries in 2015. Since we had all that data, last August we checked they are still functional and created an e-map," says Thirupurasundari, adding that there are around 300 libraries which they have mapped, both established and free smaller ones. "We sent the map to schools and urged them to support these establishments." But then the second wave of the pandemic broke out and libraries had to close. "So recently we printed out the map and have been distributing it. We want people to continue patronising these places," she says. Libraries have also come up with creative ways to stay relevant during the pandemic. "Though I have temporarily suspended operations at my #Stories Library Café in KK Nagar during the pandemic, my mobile library has been very much in demand," says Gopi Sampath, who started the library on wheels around eight years ago. "I have a few hundred members. Many people have turned to reading during the pandemic and though some read e-books, there are those who still prefer physical books, especially people aged 40 and above. Also within families that love reading, the one Kindle in the house may be used by youngsters, but the others still need reading material." Companies and new housing complexes are also requesting his services, says Gopi. "In March, a housing complex in Medavakkam asked me to set up a library. Companies also want my mobile library to come to their campuses so that their staff can borrow books," says Gopi, adding that they sanitize their books and van regularly. But perhaps the most isolated from any tactile learning during the pandemic are the children, who have been spending more screen time than they ever had the luxury to do, before 2020. And that's why Thirupurasundari, who is also the general secretary of Madras Literary Society (MLS), along with artist-architects Srishti Prabhakar and Muhilan Murugan decided to take

storybooks and puzzles to children across the city in autorickshaws completing close to 72 such trips over the past year. "The intention was also to offer a livelihood to our autorickshaw annas as well as local chai and snack sellers in the neighbourhoods we went to," says Thirupurasundari. "We sanitized our books and games and picked street corners to do impromptu readings. We always had a set of books that kids could borrow," she says. Another concept that has been filling the gap is the pop-up library curated as part of social or cultural initiatives at a few public spaces. For full story visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/libraries-get-new-shelf-life/articleshowprint/85934445.cms>

Library to preserve Sports History

In a major development towards preserving the rich history of sports activities of Barak Valley and for the whole of the state of Assam and even North East at large, a state of the art sports library-cum-archive was inaugurated at the District Sports Association premises at Silchar recently, says an *Assam Tribune* report. Built in the memory of Sudhangshu Mohan Dutta, the sports library was inaugurated by Alo Dutta, the former's wife and his son and eminent sports enthusiast Sibabrata Dutta in the presence of Subodh Malla Barua, president of Sports Journalists Federation of India (SJFI) and also the president of Assam Sports Journalists Association (ASJA), who was the keynote speaker on the occasion. In his address on Sports in Assam, Barak Valley, in particular, Barua hailed the efforts of the DSA Silchar and said "I am elated to be a part of such an occasion at the DSA Silchar which is growing with great enthusiasm. A place that has a rich and glorious history that goes back to 1909 when Captain Nalini Mohan Gupta had been to Kolkata Football League. India Club here has a history of over 100 years. For all these glorious facets of history, I feel Silchar should be well and truly termed as the sports town of Assam." He handed over a book authored by him to the DSA authorities which would be kept at the sports library. For original report visit: <https://assamtribune.com/assam/sports-library-cum-archive-of-silchar-dsa-inaugurated-1239973>

Actress sets up School Library

A lot of folks have been stepping up in the pandemic to do their best to help others - some via monetary means, others by providing food and shelter and some, by their own efforts. Rishina Kandhari has also done her bit. The actress recently inaugurated a well-equipped library in a zila parishad school at Gorhe village, Maharashtra, says a report by Ismat Tahseen in *The Times of India*. Along with her husband Vishal Kandhari and the Punyakarma foundation, which works for the underprivileged in all sectors, they worked towards making the library come about. It is the result of the efforts of hard work where she spent hours to literally create the space with her own hands. Talking about it, the Bollywood actress says, "Most schools in the city have libraries for the convenience of teachers

and children, but it is rare to have such facilities in the rural areas. School students in rural areas should enjoy reading too, and with that motto, we decided to create a beautiful, well-stocked library so that they could get good reading material in their village.” The project, which was raised from zero, took six months to complete. She adds, “The teachers of Gorhe school helped and cooperated a lot, right from giving a place in the school for the library to selecting the right books. The kids are thrilled with it and they have already started reading the books.” For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/events/mumbai/rishina-kandhari-inaugurates-a-library-at-a-village-school-in-maharashtra/articleshow/87040810.cms>

Library for Children on Tempo Van

Books, in all sizes, shapes and eye-catching colours, are now on wheels to wow toddlers in suburban Mumbai, says a story by Ambarish Mishra in *The Times of India*. A smart tempo traveller, loaded with nearly 1,500 tomes, gently threads its way through the criss-cross lanes of Dahisar, Borivli and Kandivli in north Mumbai every evening to spread the magic of the printed word. Knee-high toddlers, with anxious parents in tow, make a beeline to the all-white vehicle to lay their hands on the treasure trove: fairy tales and fables, poems and proverbs, endearing stories of adventure and animals all free of cost. “The concept is to help the young ones discover the pleasure of reading,” said Chintan Dagli, a 30-something electronic engineer recently. Having worked for nearly 16 years in a US corporate giant, Dagli, on returning to Mumbai in December last year realized, to his dismay, that children were fiddling with mobiles and laptops for too long the screen time lasting several hours at a stretch chiefly because of online classes and urge for quick entertainment. Dagli and his wife Nidhi thought of a mobile library which would reach out to children. “There is no profit motive,” he added. Not only did his two kids wholeheartedly back Papa's 'Gyan Library' project, they got down to help him shortlist books. There is a steady trickle of young readers besieging the van as the evening wears on. Many parents have donated books. Meanwhile, Dagli roped in school mates Tejas Patil and Siddhesh Patange as he put final touches to the plan. A Kandivli dealer helped them with the bulk purchase of books at a reasonable rate. Next, Dagli bought a tempo traveller and fitted it with wooden racks to stockpile the booty. Sudha Murty sat serenely between Geronimo Stilton and Cupcake Diaries. “Much time went into working out the details,” said Patil, a tax consultant. “We colour-coded for varying age-groups. Also, the entire distribution process is digitized,” added Patange, a banking professional. A weekly itinerary has been drawn up to cater to various enclaves in the three populous suburbs. For instance, a reader from Mahavir Nagar, in Kandivli, will get his share of books once a week. The van boasts a formidable collection of English books; but Dagli is eager to acquire Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati titles following growing demand. The tempo begins to zoom and vroom after the three friends are

done with their daily work-from-home grind. “Evenings are set aside for the 'baba log' brigade,” laughed Patil. Paucity of funds has compelled the troika to put on hold its expansion plan. Some have suggested crowdfunding as a viable option, though. “Children scramble onto the tempo and want to rummage the entire collection. The atmosphere reeks of raw energy,” said Dagli. “I am an Iron Man,” screamed Krishna Harite, all of four, straining his vocal chords as if to buttress Dagli's claim, and gladly flaunting a copy of his favourite Marvel comic book. “I quit my job to spend quality time with my son. We all are passing through troubled times. It's time we went back to books to heal ourselves and Mother Earth,” said Gayatri, Krishna's mother. For original story visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/mumbai-library-on-wheels-to-woo-screen-tired-kids/articleshow/87245522.cms>

Books against Trash

A librarian in Indonesia's Java island is lending books to children in exchange for trash they collect in a novel way to clean up the environment and get the kids to read more, says a Reuters story in *The Indian Express*. Each weekday Raden Roro Hendarti rides her three wheeler with books stacked up at the back for children in Muntang village in Indonesia to exchange for plastic cups, bags and other waste that she carries back. She told Reuters that she was helping inculcate reading in the kids as well make them aware of the environment. As soon as she shows up, little children, many accompanied by their mothers, surround her “Trash Library” and clamour for the books. They are all carrying trash bags and Raden's three-wheeler quickly fills up with them as the books fly out. She's happy the kids are going to spend less time on online games as a result. “Let us build a culture of literacy from young age to mitigate the harm of the online world,” Raden said. “We should also take care of our waste in order to fight climate change and to save the earth from trash,” Raden said. She collects about 100 kg (220 lbs) of waste each week, which is then sorted out by her colleagues and sent for recycling or sold. She has a stock of 6,000 books to lend and wants to take the mobile service to neighbouring areas as well. Kevin Alamsyah, an avid 11-year-old reader, scours for waste lying in the village. When there is too much trash, our environment will become dirty and it's not healthy. That's why I look for trash to borrow a book,” he says. Jiah Palupi, the head of the main public library in the area, said that Raden's work complemented their efforts to combat online gaming addiction among the youth and promote reading. The literacy rate for above-15-year-olds in Indonesia is around 96 percent, but a September report by the World Bank warned that the pandemic would leave more than 80% of 15-year-olds below the minimum reading proficiency level identified by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. For original story visit: <https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/life-style/your-trash-for-our-books-indonesian-library-creates-literacy-from-litter-7614471/>

First Women's Library in Delhi Village

In the heart of Northwest Delhi's Karala village is an airy room where young women have been spending their days studying in a space of their own in the first women's only library in the district, says a story by Sukrita Baruah in *The Indian Express*. Swati Mathur (20), preparing for SSC exams, said that she found studying at home full of distractions and frustrations. "I share a room with three of my siblings, so I do not get my own space. There are people who keep coming and going throughout the day. In the village, if someone is idle, they just go and visit someone's home. Whenever they come, my sister and I need to make tea. I think girls get more troubled while trying to study at home. When my neighbours come, I have to deal with questions about when I will get married," she said, adding, "My father works in DTC; he is very supportive. He found out about this library and told me to come here and study peacefully." Mathur has been coming here every day for the last week, arriving at noon and staying till it closes at 5 or 5.30 pm. The library has been set up on the first floor of the village's community centre through a collaborative effort between the village community and district administration. The administration used Beti Padhao Beti Bachao funds to set it up, and has partnered with Vision IAS, which provided books and workstations that can accommodate up to 35 women. Two book racks house NCERT books and history, geography, mathematics, and analytical reasoning books as well as books for competitive exams such as, UPSC exams, NEET and JEE. "This is a community driven project. They have given us the space and pledged to maintain and look after it. It is mainly targeted at young women, aged between 21 and 28, who are done with schooling and college and are now preparing for what's ahead. This part is so far from the hubs of such activity like Rajender Nagar and Mukherjee Nagar. The library is free, so there should be nothing holding women or their families back," said Northwest Delhi District Magistrate Cheshta Yadav. This last point has been important to 20-year-old Vanshika Mathur, for whom financial constraints meant she could not afford a place to study. "There are actually quite a few 'private libraries' nearby but these are really expensive, around Rs 800 per month. I could never have afforded those and there is no study environment at home, so I had been having a tough time. But here it's peaceful. I bring my lunch and stay from 10 am to 5 pm," she said. For full story visit: <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/northwest-delhi-in-urban-village-first-womens-library-gives-many-a-room-of-their-own7501772/>

Library Book returned after 63 Years

A library book has finally been returned to Newcastle library, roughly 63 years late, says a *The Times of India* report. The book which should have been returned at Fenham Library way back on November 25, 1958 was sent to Newcastle's central library in UK this year, reports BBC. The book returned was the first edition copy of 'How to Lie with Statistics' by Darrell Huff. While it isn't known who returned the book, it was sent

along with a note that read "Better late than never!". This was returned in the post recently. It's only taken 63 years but like they say better late than never! David Hepworth, library manager, said, according to BBC, that the returnee "may have been worried about us sending them a bill as a fine for late returns and may be that's why the person didn't reveal his or her identity. However, fines have been suspended due to the pandemic so that people can avoid unnecessary trips to the libraries. As much as we're pleased to have this book back, we're also pleased that it's sparked a bit of interest and people are talking about libraries and reading," Hepworth said, reports BBC. He further said that they would like to hear from the person who returned the book so that their in-house publishing company called Tyne Bridge could offer them some books for appreciating their thoughtful work. Isn't that a wonderful gesture? For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/books/features/book-returned-after-63-years-to-newcastle-library/articleshow/84755381.cms>

Library Book returned after 73 Years

A book that was issued from the Dunfermline's Central Library in Fife, Scotland, has been returned to it more than 73 years late says a *timesofindia.com* report. 'Stately Timber' by Rupert Hughes, which is an adventure story set in Boston, should have been returned to what is now Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Galleries on November 6, 1948. However, the staff at the library were dazed to receive a parcel containing the book recently! It had been found by the borrower's daughter and posted back. I burst out laughing when I opened the parcel, I couldn't believe it," told Donna Dewar, of Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Galleries, to a UK news broadcaster. "We had a book returned to our Rosyth branch after 14 years recently, which we thought was amazing enough, but this was way beyond anything we've heard of," she added. Donna also mentioned that for a bit of fun, the staff at the library calculated the late fees and it came down to 2847 Pounds. Furthermore, the book came along with a letter from the borrower's daughter who gave some details. She explained that her late father had lived in Thornton in Fife in 1948. Also, she said she would never know whether he simply forgot to return the book or had chosen to keep it. "I find it fascinating to see the dates of when this book was taken out, during the latter years of WW2, and that the war ended between stamps marked by librarians. Life goes on around momentous historical events," she wrote. For full report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/books/features/book-issued-in-1948-returned-to-scotland-library-73-years-late/articleshow/87779012.cms>

Library Books to reach Doorsteps

Residents of Kerala's Alappuzha Municipality no longer have to go to a library to borrow their favourite books. The books would soon reach them at the click of a button, says a story by Sam Paul P in *The Hindu*. The municipality will soon begin delivering books at the doorstep. As part of the project titled 'Vignjana Nagaram-Vayanasala Vadhilpadiyil', the civic body will soon launch a mobile application for people to order books

online from the Alappuzha Municipal library and 17 other libraries within its limits. The libraries have a combined stock of 2.07 lakh books. "The project is to encourage people to read books. Like online food delivery, we will deliver books of readers' choice at their homes. We hope the initiative will also help create a bunch of new readers," says Soumya Raj, Chairperson, Alappuzha Municipality, adding that the technological framework to implement the project would be provided free of cost by Techgensia Software Technologies Private Limited, an IT company based at Infopark, Cherthala. Touted as the first-of-its-kind initiative among local bodies in Kerala, the project will be materialized with the help of Kudumbashree units, whose members will act as delivery girls. The municipality will charge a nominal fee for book delivery and return. "Libraries in the municipal area have over two lakh books. At present, less than 5% of the registered members are visiting the libraries. Our aim is to make these libraries more accessible to the readers, especially to the younger generation by making the most of modern technology. We hope the initiative will reinvigorate the habit of reading," says an Alappuzha municipal official. In the initial phase, 39,161 books at the Municipal Library will be made available for home delivery. As part of the project, the entire 2.07 lakh book stock in 18 libraries will be brought under a common database. "The technological framework consists of a web application for libraries and two apps - one for delivery girls and another for the public. We are developing the model aimed at delivering books within 24 hours of placing orders," says Joy Sebastian, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Techgensia. For original story visit: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/books-from-library-at-the-doorsteps/article36310569.ece>

Immunity-boosting Library

An "immunity-boosting library" which has been developed at Poothkalan in northwest Delhi has been opened for Delhiites to educate them on the usage of medicinal plants and the process of growing them at home, says a *The Times of India* story. People will be allowed to take the medicinal plants for free from the nurseries of the forest department. This is a creative and inventive way to make common people aware of the medicinal benefits of herbs and plants. However, the forest department should also inform visitors that these immunity-boosting plants offer no specific protection from the virus; only Covid-appropriate behaviour and vaccination can do that. Forest department officials said that the place was named "immunity-boosting library" to help visitors closely watch and learn about the health benefits of medicinal plants. If any person has health issues, he or she can know what herbs should be added to their diet for improvement. Visitors can enjoy a walk in the library and know the process of growing the plants at home. For instance, for growing giloy in a pot, it should be soaked in water for 24 hours and later cut into five-inch-long pieces. These sticks should be covered in soil in a pot, whose height should be 6 to 12

inches. Deputy Conservator of Forests (North) Vipul Pandey said, "The purpose is to let people take a walk in the library. They can observe the qualities of medicinal plants and learn how to grow them. They can then go to the nearby nursery and pick up the plants of their choice." He added that entry was free for visitors. "We beautified a vacant plot which was lying unused for a long time. The walls have been painted with pictures and information about medicinal plants, which have been planted there. The idea behind developing this library is to create awareness among people about the importance of medicinal plants," said an official, adding that a forest department employee would be present to guide the visitors. For original story visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/immunity-boosting-library-to-showcase-medicinal-plants/articleshowprint/85544411.cms>

A School's Train Library

With a view to break down barriers, a school in Nashik in Maharashtra is holding classes under the tree. There is also no strict rule to wear a uniform. Besides, they are running a library in a train to induce special learning in children during their formative years says an ANI story available on [edexlive.com](https://www.edexlive.com) website. Love the imagery? Well, so do we. Sachin Joshi, Principal of Espalier Heritage School in Nashik, told ANI that the vision behind the school was to break the stereotype. "This school is constructed in such a way that children will themselves want to come to school. The unique train library was inspired by Tetsuko Kuroyanagi's memoir *Totto-Chan, the Little Girl at the Window*," explained the Principal. He added, "Totto-Chan is a very beautifully written book, where the schools were on the train in Japan. We obviously could not execute the idea but based on that we have made a very unique train library." Highlighting the versatility and why they don't restrict children, Joshi elaborated on the rules and types of learning modes the school offered. Joshi said, "Our curriculum includes outdoor classrooms beneath the trees, no uniform for students among other things. We have farms where children indulge in farming. We also have a science park which is constructed in a way to induce practical learning. Moreover, we put special emphasis on drama and education. We have amphitheatres, in-house record studio and have converted over 70 per cent of the syllabus to music." Besides this, children sit on the floor instead of desks and benches. "We believe uniforms, in a way, restrict and limits children's abilities, therefore there are no uniforms in the school. We also don't believe in punishing children, instead, we tell them to cycle for 30 minutes, which in turn generates electricity," he said. Joshi further said that the curriculum was constructed in such a way that after almost every fifteen minutes children could have entertainment breaks and enjoy extracurricular activities. For original story visit: <https://www.edexlive.com/news/2021/nov/10/this-school-in-nashik-has-constructed-a-unique-library-inspired-by-kuroyanagis-totto-chan-25468.html>

TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Change in WhatsApp Delete Feature

It was reported a long time ago that WhatsApp was planning to extend the time limit of the 'Delete Message for Everyone' feature. Now, the messaging app has been spotted testing different time limits for the feature, says a story by Ankita Chakravarti available on www.indiatoday.in website. Currently, users only have the option of deleting the message once sent after one hour, eight minutes and sixteen seconds. However, things will soon take a different turn as WhatsApp users may get to delete their messages for everyone, seven days after sending them. Delete for Everyone feature is a useful tool, which helps you in deleting a message you have wrongly sent to a person. However, there are limitations as you can only delete the message upto one hour of sending it. If you miss the deadline, you cannot delete the message for everyone. To make things easier for users, WhatsApp is now working on extending the time limit. The messaging app was spotted testing two different times for Delete For Everyone feature. WhatsApp features tracker Wabetainfo has confirmed that WhatsApp was now planning to change the time limit to 7 days and 8 minutes in a future update. Previously, it was also being speculated that WhatsApp will do away with the time limit bit and keep the option open for users to delete messages for everyone even after hours, days, years of sending them. But now WhatsApp is planning to modify the current time limit at a later date. The WhatsApp tipster reports that the feature is still under development, so WhatsApp might change its plan again or introduce a new time limit. Only a final rollout can confirm whether WhatsApp will completely remove restrictions to delete a message or modify the time limit at a later date. This could be upto 7 days or more. On a related note, WhatsApp was also spotted testing new playback options for audio messages. WhatsApp was found testing the possibility to rush through the forwarded voice messages. For full story visit: <https://www.indiatoday.in/technology/news/story/whatsapp-may-now-allow-users-to-delete-messages-for-everyone-7-days-after-sending-them-1880133-2021-11-24>

SPECIAL FEATURE

An Emulative Story!

Kerala is known for its library movement. Similarly, libraries, arts and sports clubs have historically been public spaces that have amply contributed towards the progressive spirit of the state. Though there are aberrations, still there are corners in Kerala where these libraries, arts and sports clubs are vibrant and active. Innuneeli Memorial Library, Arts & Sports Club located in the outskirts of Chalakudy in Thrissur district is one such, according to a feature story by Anand

Prince in *English Mathrubhumi*. From taking the name of an illiterate woman headload worker to its ambitious plan to launch a women's football academy, this local library-cum-social club which completes 30 years leads by example.

There are many libraries and arts and sports clubs in Kerala that have taken the name of political figures, places, prominent persons and well known individuals in their social circles. But it's very rare to name them in memory of ordinary people. That's where Innuneeli Memorial Library, Arts & Sports Club becomes unique. It has been named after Kannaempamban Innuneeli, an illiterate woman who worked as a headload worker in Chalakudy market. She was so healthy that even during her early 90's she was able to find livelihood herself by involving in loading and unloading activities, mainly banana bunches.

Innuneeli till her last days led her life without any support from others as her family members including her husband and daughter passed away too early. She only had distant relatives and even they were not in a position to give care for her. It was the people around the locality who attended to her ailments. Among the locals, a PWD daily wage worker Edarathu Velayudhan and his family members even took her to their home nearby and gave her proper care. She passed away in 1990 and her home was unoccupied. The distant relatives of Innuneeli granted the property to Edarathu Velayudhan and he donated the property for an idea proposed by a youth at that time - a library. That's how Innuneeli's house became a library-cum-social club in 1991 and took her name. Interestingly, the house was renovated to a club-like building in 2017 only when the number of members increased. Until then, it was maintained as Innuneeli's house itself. Meanwhile, members are now planning to get a sketch of Innuneeli done and wish to place that portrait in the library. As her photograph is not available, her sketch will be made by taking personal accounts of senior citizens in the region.

Innuneeli Memorial Library, Arts & Sports Club had gone through various crests and troughs in its pursuit. The vibrant library which was running in an informal setup gained a formal stature by registering under Kerala State Library Council in 2008. There was a crisis period in the library when the generation shift happened as people who initiated this venture were occupied by their occupational and personal obligations. At that time a new generation of youngsters emerged and the spirit of the library was retained. The library which was in the E-grade category gradually evolved into an A-grade library in a span of three years.

Presently, the library has more than 960 members and 7900 books, and is inching towards the ambitious A+ grade of the council. It is interesting to note that despite the limited financial support in the form of government grants, the library has been fostered by the active involvement of the core members. Even from distant places, people used to take

membership in the library due to the cordial and vibrant environment offered by the library and the immediate crowd with it. More than a library and a club, it has evolved into a community. The library has been involved in organizing various programmes catering to kids, youth, senior citizens and women. Among them, some are novel initiatives. Free PSC-UPSC coaching along with group study is one such and it has even attracted many from distant panchayats. As per the latest count, more than 75 people have got government jobs through this initiative.

For the last two years the club members have been involved in paddy cultivation and organic farming of vegetables. They have been cultivating crops on land taken for lease. During these two years, they have cultivated paddy on 8 acres without the help of machines or external help. During the same period, they cultivated vegetables on one-acre land through organic method. The yield was sold and in case of surplus, it was shared among the members and locals. Similarly, the club has groomed a women's football team that is very active in local and district level matches. The team is provided with regular training and coaching, and have won several matches. Apart from that, cultural activities, self-help groups focused on food making and hand-made products, sessions for school students, medical checkup for senior citizens and digital sessions on various topics have been actualized by Innuneeli Memorial Library, Arts & Sports Club. It has social media handles, mainly Facebook and Instagram to update about various activities it is involved in.

As part of its 25th anniversary in 2016, 25 programmes were

organized involving various stakeholders and well-wishers. During the 2018 world cup, the club organized mixed team football to uphold the message of gender equality. In the years 2018 and 2019, Innuneeli Memorial Library, Arts & Sports Club also hosted state and district level summer vacation camps for students. The library-cum-social club has received many district and taluk level accolades. Among them, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan's award for best club and Sarojini Damodaran Foundation's award for organic farming initiative stand out.

Innuneeli Memorial Library, Arts & Sports Club is in pursuit to become centre of excellence. According to the library secretary Arjun Palladan, the first priority is to get A+ grade from Kerala State Library Council. They also have a plan to start a football academy for women. However, lack of public ground is a roadblock. Presently, they depend on the grounds in nearby schools and panchayats. Meanwhile, an idea to shift the library-cum-club to a new building is in discussion so that more people can be accommodated at a time and space constraints can be avoided. But the affection of people with the place and cost constraints pose a challenge.

[Note: As this emulative story of a library-cum-social organization may be liked by the readers of this newsletter, it is being reproduced here with due acknowledgment to the writer and the news organization concerned. The original story may be found at: <https://english.mathrubhumi.com/features/web-exclusive/named-after-an-illiterate-woman-headload-worker-this-library-in-kerala-leads-by-example-kerala-news-1.5971887>]

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