SEVENTH CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS OF NATIONAL LIBRARIES IN ASIA AND OCEANIA (CDNLAO) - MALAYSIA: A COUNTRY REPORT*

By ZAWIYAH BABA **

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Report is to provide a general overview of the development in library and information services in Malaysia with particular reference to Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (PNM), the National Library of Malaysia from 1996 - 1998, the period following the 6th Conference of Directors of National Libraries in Asia and Oceania in Brisbane, Australia in 1995. Statistics for 1996 - 1998 are provided where available. The Report concludes with an outline of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia's future plans.

BACKGROUND

- MALAYSIA

Malaysia is a federation of 14 states, 12 of which are in Peninsular Malaysia and 2 in the Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak. The total area of Malaysia is 329,758 square kilometres, which is slightly larger than the United Kingdom but smaller than most countries in South East Asia. Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, is also the Federal Territory, the fourteenth State of Malaysia, with a population of about 1.9 million people. The total population of Malaysia is approaching 22 million people, comprising mainly of Malays, Chinese, Indians and others. The majority of the population are Muslims and Islam is the official religion. Other major faiths including Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism are also widely practised.

Malaya became an independent nation in 1957 and merged with Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore to form the Federation of Malaysia in 1963. Singapore subsequently left the federation in 1965. The national language in Malaysia is Malay, which is also the medium of instruction in primary, secondary and tertiary education. As a former British colony, English is widely spoken and remains an important second

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language taught in schools. Arabic, Chinese and Tamil are also taught alongside Malay and English in religious and vernacular schools. Malay is also established as the language of Parliament and increasingly in the courts of justice. The system of education in Malaysia was essentially developed on the British system but has undergone many changes since independence especially at the tertiary level. Education is free up to secondary school level but no legislation exists to make it compulsory. In 1997 Malaysia’s literacy rate is estimated at 93%.

Malaysia practises parliamentary democracy, and is ruled as a constitutional monarchy. Any citizen aged 21 years and above may vote in the general elections held every five years to elect representatives to Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies. The Head of Government in each state is the Ruler or Sultan, with the exception of the States of Melaka, Penang, Sabah and Sarawak which are headed by a Governor appointed by the King. The federal King of Malaysia, the Yang Dipertuan Agong is elected by the hereditary rulers of the nine states at the Conference of rulers every five years. While state governments may enact legislations or enactments on matters in the State List, for example on public library provision, the federal law takes precedence in the event of a conflict, except in matters concerning land and religion.

Malaysia has been described as one of the emerging tiger economies due to its high economic growth in the nineties until the currency crisis in mid 1997. This had a swift and severe impact on the nation’s economy necessitating immediate measures for public sector expenditure control including restrictions on overseas travel and acquisition of assets.

- **Libraries in Malaysia**

The establishment of the National Library as well as public libraries in Malaysia are provided for by federal laws as well as state library enactments. In addition to state public library enactments, the Local Government Act also provide for the setting up of public libraries by state local authorities. The National Library is represented by its Director General on State Public Library Corporation Boards. Although legally its role is advisory, federal government funding for State Libraries development and operating budget channeled through the National Library necessitates a monitoring and coordination role in the development of public libraries.

There is also provision for the establishment of University libraries under the University and University Colleges Act. The number of University libraries have increased significantly following the setting of a number of new universities in Malaysia over the last 3 years. From 9 Universities in 1993, the number has now increased to 14, including 3 private universities. More recent developments have been the establishment of 'off-shore' campuses of foreign Universities in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the first of which is the University of Monash in Australia. More recently Curtin University in Western Australia and the University of Nottingham in Britain has indicated interest to set up campuses in Malaysia. The National Library’s liaison with university libraries is through PERPUN, the Standing Conference of National and Academic Libraries in Malaysia.

There is no legislation for the establishment of special libraries in the public or private sector and these have been set up essentially on the basis of felt needs or part of organisational planning. Following the national annual reading campaigns and awareness of the importance of information in the IT era, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of libraries established, particularly in the private sector. This has led to the employment of library and information science graduates by non-library organisations.

School libraries or Resource Centres remain under the purview of the Ministry of Education and are staffed mainly by teacher librarians or teachers charged with the responsibility but who may not be trained in library work. Almost every school has a school library, although the standard of these libraries vary enormously.

In 1997, the number of libraries in Malaysia were estimated to exceed 10,000. The bulk of these are school Resource Centres which number more than 8,600. The
rest are distributed among public, special, academic and community centre libraries. The table in Appendix I shows the breakdown of libraries by type in Malaysia.

PERPUSTAKAAN NEGARA MALAYSIA

- **Establishment**

Since its inception 32 years ago as the national library division under the National Archives in 1966, the National Library of Malaysia has grown into a full-fledged federal government department, now under the Ministry of Education Malaysia. The National Library Act 1972 gave formal recognition of its status as a department in its own right, but it was only in 1977 that the National Library became a separate department from the National Archives with its own Director-General who is also the financial controller of the National Library’s budget.

- **Review of Legislation**

The objectives of the National Library as well as the functions of the Director-General underwent major revisions when the National Library (Amendment) Act was passed in 1987. While the purpose of the National Library was compressed from 5 to 3 main objectives, the functions of the Director General expanded from 11 to 17. With rapid developments in information technology over the last decade, the National Library is now in the process of reviewing its legislation to ensure that its role continues to be relevant in the changing environment, particularly in the public sector with its emphasis on the electronic government. There is also a necessity to ensure that the National Library be more focused on what it wants to achieve. A Committee chaired by the Deputy Director General is undertaking this review.

- **Strategic Plan**

Apart from its legislative purpose and functions, PNM has also formulated a corporate philosophy, vision and mission in support of and in line with national aspirations in Vision 2020 particularly in the development of a reading and an informed society. This remains an important national objective in successive national five year development plan as well as in the long-term national development plan and programme. PNM’s corporate mission has undergone several changes since it was first published in 1995 and is now compressed into a single statement as follows:

“To ensure that all Malaysians will have equal opportunities to benefit from library services and facilities as well as able to access and utilise Malaysian intellectual heritage and other knowledge resources through an integrated electronic library infrastructure throughout the country.”

Strategies to achieve the above mission include the following:

(i) To optimise the use of information technology in the effective management of information and library services;

(ii) To provide standards, guidelines and equipment to facilitate access and effective use of electronic information resources;

(iii) To establish strategic alliances with other institutions such as libraries, publishers, research institutes, telecommunications and other information providers in order to upgrade the quality of library and information services.

(iv) Develop the necessary human resources appropriate for the IT era.

- **Corporate Logo**

As part of its strategy to present a new face in keeping with modern developments, PNM has also changed its corporate logo to coincide with the 30th anniversary of its inception as a division under the National Archives of Malaysia in 1966. The new National Library logo with explanatory notes for its design appear in appendix II to this paper.

- **Organisational Structure**

The organisational structure of the National Library is based on programmes and activities under a planning and performance budgeting system. There are two Programmes and three Activities in the National Library structure. The two Programmes are Support Services, and Library Development and Information Services. The one Activity under the Support Ser-
services Programme is Administration and Human Resource, which comprises of 3 sub-activities. There are 6 sub-activities each under the two activities, Library Development and Information Services. The Library is headed by a Director-General and supported by a Deputy Director-General, Director of Support Services Programme, and Directors and Heads of sub-activities or Divisions. The 12 sub-activities as follows form the operational Divisions of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia:

**PROGRAMME I : SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Activity** : Administration and Human Resource

Sub-activities: Administration and Finance
Training
Corporate Affairs (changed from Public Relations in 1996)

**PROGRAMME II : LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT & INFORMATION SERVICES**

**Activity I** : Library Development

Sub-activities: Development
Library Research
Conservation and Reprography
Legal Deposit
Technical Services
Library and Information Technology (changed from Data Processing in 1996)

**Activity II** : Information Services

Sub-activities: Malaysiana Reference
General Reference
Serials
Centre for Malay Manuscripts
Media Resources
Reading Promotion

The organisation chart of the National Library of Malaysia is shown in Appendix I.

- **Staffing**

The number of personnel in PNM has increased from 283 in 1996 to 306 in 1998. There was no increase in 1997. The expansion in personnel followed a restructuring of the National Library’s organisation structure in 1966, for which new posts were approved in 1998. The filling of these posts however, is subject to restrictions imposed as a result of the economic crisis. The table below gives the breakdown of personnel by category of staff:

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top Management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management &amp; Professional</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>283</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Director General of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia is also the Head of the Library Commonuser Service Scheme, which is the scheme of service for librarians in the Government Service. Through this scheme, the National Library provides personnel for professional and clerical level library posts in federal Government Ministries and Departments. The number of such posts are as follows:

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management &amp; Professional</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>342</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Total**

625 641 664

The number of posts in the Library Commonuser Service Scheme saw an increase of 39 from 1996, bringing the total to 664.

- **Building**

The National Library moved into its new purpose built building in Jalan Tun Razak, Kuala Lumpur in 1992. This was the first time in its history that all divisions in the National Library of Malaysia came under one roof. Services were opened to the public in February 1993 following a month-long ‘Visit Your National Library Campaign’ in December 1992. This first phase of the building was officially opened in December 1994. The second phase, comprising of office space on the fifth and sixth floors, the auditorium and a sports complex on the 8th floor (which
was converted from the rooftop) was completed in 1996. With the completion of the second phase, the total floor space of the Library is 22,073 sq. metres to house a collection of 1 million volumes and seating capacity for 1000 readers at any one time.

The maintenance of the building is privatised as a total package comprising of the following services:

- Building Maintenance
- Landscaping and hydroculture
- Technical staff
- Mechanical and Electrical
- Security
- Cleaning
- Pest Control

The two-year contract is awarded to a single company as a turnkey contract. Now approaching its seventh year, the building is slowly but surely beginning to show signs of wear and tear and the need for repairs and refurbishment and the possibility of a long-term contract may be considered.

Constraints of space has also begun to show and from 1996, the National Library has had to resort to renting warehouse space to house newspapers received under the Deposit of Library Materials Act 1986. Funding for plans to build a newspaper library on a site owned by the Library in the outskirt of Kuala Lumpur was not approved under the 7th Malaysia Plan.

- **Budget**

The National Library receives all of its regular funding from the Federal Government. Federal funds are provided for its annual operating budget as well as development budget under the five year development plan for the period 1996 – 2000, referred to as the Seventh Malaysia Plan. In addition to its own budget, federal funds are also provided through the National Library’s budget for State Public Library Development Corporations and State Library Departments, both for annual operating as well as development budget.

The economic crisis in South-East Asia which begun in mid 1997 has had an impact on public sector funding in Malaysia, reminiscent of the recession in the early 1980s. The present crisis has resulted in a reduced budget for the National Library in 1998 and a standstill budget for 1999 as reflected in the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>27,640,000</td>
<td>25,185,070</td>
<td>24,601,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Off</td>
<td>327,500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>730,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Programmes</td>
<td>1,420,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>29,387,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>25,185,070</strong></td>
<td><strong>25,332,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under the Seventh Malaysia Plan (1996-2000), the National Library was allocated the following development budget:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Allocation</th>
<th>Expenditure (up to Sept. 1998)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Library Building</td>
<td>680,000</td>
<td>679,609.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Laboratory</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td>79,174.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Reading Promotion</td>
<td>1,995,000</td>
<td>300,125.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Collection</td>
<td>4,925,000</td>
<td>2,301,549.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Library projects</td>
<td>78,151,000</td>
<td>17,563,360.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>86,351,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>20,923,819.93</strong></td>
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</table>

- **Collection Development**

The National Library of Malaysia aims to be the centre of excellence for Malaysiana and its collection development policy is intended to support this objective. Materials are acquired through legal deposit, gifts and exchange and purchase. The Deposit of Library Materials Act 1986, which covers all forms of library materials, is the main vehicle for the acquisition of Malaysian publications, but the Library also purchase a considerable volume where materials are needed urgently or if there is a need for multiple copies, especially for its lending collection. The acquisition of Malaysiana materials is priority for both operating and development budget.

The National Library is also the depository for United...
Nations publications and is becoming a rapidly increasing collection. However, the use of the UN collection needs to be promoted and the National Library hopes to take the opportunity to publicise this collection when it receives a complete set of speeches and papers from a distinguished former Malaysian Chairman of the UN General Assembly early next year.

The Centre for Malay Manuscripts established at the National Library of Malaysia since 1985, has progressively been acquiring Malay Manuscripts in its original form as well as in microform. With the present total of 2442 original Malay Manuscripts in its collection, the National Library has the biggest single collection of Malay Manuscripts in the world. In addition the Centre examines and catalogues Malay Manuscripts kept in libraries and institutions overseas. Up to now, Malay Manuscript collections in Leiden, Netherlands, France, Germany, Sri Lanka, United States, Singapore and South Africa have been catalogued by officers of the National Library of Malaysia and published by the Centre.

The table below shows the National Library’s collection up to September 1998 :-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of material</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printed Material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monographs</td>
<td>1,303,503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serials (Titles)</td>
<td>24,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps/posters/other printed material</td>
<td>52,768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Printed Material</td>
<td>1,383,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Non-Printed/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AV Material</td>
<td>74,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,460,352</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACCESS

- On-Line Public Access Catalogue

The National Library’s collection is accessible through its On-line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) since it was first launched in 1990. Retrospective conversion of catalogue records have been completed and almost all of the National Library’s collection may be accessed on-line. The following databases are maintained for public access through the Virginia Technical Library System (VTLS):

- BINAR – The National Library Collection
- MENTARI – Index of Malaysian Periodicals
- PANCARAN – Index of Malaysian Conferences
- SURIA – Index of Malaysian Newspapers
- MATAHARI – Index of foreign journal articles about Malaysia

The indexing of newspapers was discontinued in 1997 in view of the fact that several major newspapers, including 2 English language national dailies *The New Straits Times*, and *The Star* as well as 2 Malay language national newspapers, *Utusan Malaysia* and *Berita Harian* are accessible on-line through the internet. More recently, the MENTARI and PANCARAN databases have been merged into a single database accessible to the public.

Five new application systems were developed by the Library and Information Technology Division in 1997 for the following projects:

- Malaysian Serials on-line
  - Warisan Budaya Malaysia

- CD-ROM


With financial support from ESSO Malaysia, the National Library initiated a project to publish local nursery rhymes on multimedia CD-ROM in cooperation with Mektoon Sdn. Bhd. and Puan Azah Aziz,
the compiler of the nursery rhymes in 1996. In an effort to revitalise local nursery rhymes into an exciting and interactive multimedia format, 500 copies of the CD-ROM were produced and distributed to public libraries, primary schools and kindergartens throughout the country.

- **Jaringan Ilmu**

JARINGAN ILMU or Knowledge Network, is a library and information network in Malaysia initiated in 1994 by the Malaysian Institute for Microelectronics Systems (MIMOS) with the cooperation of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia. It is one of the networks coordinated by MIMOS under the JARING network. As coordinator of JARING, MIMOS provides telecommunication backbone facilities for its subscribers to have access to Internet. In 1996, PNM, as the coordinator of JARINGAN ILMU, the National Library installed free of charge, computer systems with Internet network facilities in 45 libraries including 14 state public libraries and 35 special libraries in Federal Government Ministries and Departments. For the first year, the National Library also paid the JARINGAN subscription fees and in addition, a series of computer related courses were conducted for participants from these libraries. This first phase of the libraries network project enabled the selected libraries to communicate with each other via e-mail, share On-line Public Access globally, develop their homepages to promote their service as well as link to other international databases.

A further development of the JARINGAN ILMU Project is the JARINGAN MASYARAKAT BERILMU or Connected Learning Community (CLC) project jointly undertaken by The National Library of Malaysia and Microsoft Malaysia aimed at creating a stimulating, enriched educational environment in which :-

(i) all students have access to a PC and information online;
(ii) each student is empowered to pursue an individual path of learning best suited to his or her needs;
(iii) learning results not from access to information alone but from continuous, dynamic interaction between students, educators, parents and the extended community.

The CLC is the second phase of the JARINGAN ILMU project, in which the National Library of Malaysia and the 14 State Public Library Corporations will receive computer hardwares and softwares from Hewlett Packard Malaysia. A series of computer training courses jointly held by the National Library and Microsoft Malaysia will be provided for various categories of staff and the community for the project. It is expected that by February 1999, 500,000 users will be registered under the CLC Project.

**SERVICES**

**Reference Services**

Library services to the public are provided by the National Library’s service divisions under the Information Services Programme which include Malaysiana Reference, General Reference, Serials Division (Malaysiana and General), Media Resources, Centre for Malay Manuscripts and Reading Promotion Division. Photocopying services is wholly privatised. The table below shows a steady increase in the number of reference enquiries dealt with and the number of walk-in users of the Library’s reference services over the last five years:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials referred</td>
<td>421,051</td>
<td>609,993</td>
<td>606,617</td>
<td>545,416</td>
<td>379,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference enquiries</td>
<td>39,490</td>
<td>49,843</td>
<td>51,602</td>
<td>59,073</td>
<td>44,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk-in users</td>
<td>390,447</td>
<td>497,643</td>
<td>493,145</td>
<td>593,039</td>
<td>466,430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lending Services**

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia is the national centre for Document Delivery Services or SPP in Malaysia. Libraries participating in this scheme sign a memorandum of understanding with the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia undertaking to lend or borrow materials. In 1997, 25 new institutions registered with the service bringing the total number of members to 298 institutions.

Although public lending services are slowly being phased out to enable the National Library to focus on
its reference and referral role, the National Library still maintains a lending service for adults and children. The National Library’s three branch outlets as well as mobile library services have been handed over to the Kuala Lumpur City Hall, the local authority now taking over the provision of public library services in Kuala Lumpur. It is anticipated that when the metropolitan city library in Kuala Lumpur, now in advanced planning stages, is completed, the National Library will cease to provide a lending service, except for document delivery services through libraries registered with the service. At present, the popularity of the lending service is increasing as indicated by the statistics below:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book Loans</td>
<td>183,146</td>
<td>263,341</td>
<td>270,205</td>
<td>316,886</td>
<td>271,027</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figures include materials borrowed under the Document Delivery System, but exclude postal and bulk loan services.

**Media Resources**

The Media Resources division, established in 1993, has progressed rapidly in the provision of audio-visual services to readers. Its collection include audio-visual materials received through legal deposit, purchase and gifts and special emphasis is given to subjects such as management, science and technology, information technology, environment, education, library and information science, business and trade, health and country profiles. The 28 booths for video viewing, 3 audio-visual rooms for group viewing and a larger viewing room for 50 people as well as 38 listening facilities are provided by a RM 1 million grant from the Japanese Government. As a centre for edutainment and infotainment, the Media Resources Division also provide selected video programmes and satellite digital television programmes to library users. Services are provided free of charge to registered users.

Services for special groups such as the visually impaired are also provided by the Division. In 1996, the audio book project was launched by the National Library in cooperation with the Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka and MacDonald’s Malaysia. 10 titles of books published by Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka were reproduced into audio cassettes which were distributed to public libraries throughout Malaysia. In 1997, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia and the Malaysian Association for the Blind participated in the DAISY/ Plextalk World Field Testing project where audio books on cassettes were transferred onto compact discs and the results of the survey were sent to the International Expert Committee on DAISY/Plextalk World Field testing in Tokyo, Japan.

**Registration of Readers**

The compulsory registration of users of the National Library has largely been accepted by the public and fewer complaints are received regarding this requirement. The steady increase in the number of readers registering with the National Library shown in the table indicate the changing attitude of users compared to when the regulation was first introduced for all users in 1993:

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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered Readers</td>
<td>36,017</td>
<td>36,682</td>
<td>43,289</td>
<td>46,512</td>
<td>57,072</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Up to September 1998, the total number of readers registered with the Library is 274,732, which is about 15% the population of Kuala Lumpur.

The Library is open everyday except for Mondays and public holidays. On weekdays, opening hours are from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., on Saturdays from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., and Sundays from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. From 1st August 1998, the opening hours were extended to 8.00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays following a directive from the Government. The extended hours is intended to provide greater opportunity for those in full-time employment, particularly civil servants and professionals to use the library facilities. Introduced on a trial basis to coincide with the national reading month in August, it is hoped also that families would be encouraged to use the library as a family activity.

**Reading Promotion**

As the National Secretariat for the national reading
campaign, PNM also coordinates reading promotion activities at the national level throughout the year. Reading promotion programme is intensified in August, which is the National Reading Month. A national survey on the reading profile of Malaysian people was begun in 1996 and completed in 1997. The study was contracted to a private survey company and the main findings of the study were as follows:

- Malaysian literacy rate is 93% 
- 87% of Malaysians practice reading 
- On average, Malaysians read 2 books a year 
- Malaysian children start reading at the age of 2 years old 
- Only 29% of Malaysians have use of library facilities 
- 12% of Malaysians are able to use personal computers

Based on the results of the study, a plan of action to improve the literacy and reading rate of the Malaysian population is being prepared in consultation with government and non-government agencies involved with education and social development.

**Consultancy and Advisory Services**

Consultancy and advisory services are provided by the Development Division of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia to government and non-government institutions, in planning new libraries as well as in upgrading library and information services. In 1997, 28 institutions received advice services from PNM including 2 private sector libraries and 3 libraries belonging to voluntary organisations. This was an increase over the previous year when advice services were provided to a total of 20 institutions including 6 private sector libraries and one voluntary organisation library.

**Library Research**

The Library Research services coordinate research related to libraries, librarianship, information services and reading. The service include the preparation of standards and guidelines and compilation of statistics for library and information service throughout the country. The statistics of National Library and Public Library Services compiled are published in the Social Statistics Bulletin Malaysia, a Department of Statistics Malaysia publication. A comprehensive directory of libraries in Malaysia, Panduan Perpustakaan Di Malaysia was published following a survey conducted by the Library Research Division in 1996. Secretariat services was also provided by the Division for the national survey on the reading profile of the Malaysian people in 1996-97.

**CONSERVATION AND REPROGRAPHY**

Conservation and reprography services continue to provide an important support service for the preservation of the National Library’s collection. Its services include maintenance, repair and binding of materials conservation of manuscripts and rare materials and microfilming. In 1996, the Division introduced a technique using leaf-casting machines for the repair of manuscripts and rare books. The technique succeeded in improving the quality and quantity of repair of manuscripts and rare books. In the same year, a consultant provided under the US Fulbright Program conducted a study of preservation of library resources and submitted a proposal for a national preservation policy of library materials for Malaysia. The proposals submitted will provide the basis for the formulation of Malaysia’s national preservation policy.

**TRAINING SERVICES**

The National Library’s training programme caters for staff in the National Library as well as those in the Library Commonuser Service Scheme and to a lesser extent, library personnel in other library sectors. Following government restrictions on overseas travel due to the country’s adverse economic situation, training programmes in the National Library have been intensified to take advantage of the greater availability of officers, particularly senior management, on site. The series of talks and book reviews by professional officers was revived as a monthly event at the National Library and has been well received.

The two regular courses under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, the Basic Course For Library Assistants and Programme of Visits and Attachment for professional librarians were successfully conducted in 1996 and 1997. Due to budget con-
straints, only the course for library assistants was conducted in 1998. For this course, the Malaysian Government sponsored participants from Croatia, Myanmar, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Indonesia, Bhutan, and Ghana.

**LIBRARY PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY**

Promotion and publicity for the National Library’s services and happenings are actively carried out particularly with the mass media. Regular coverage of events taking place at the Library in the press, radio and television serves to maintain the National Library image as a dynamic and active institution and attract people to visit the Library and to use its services. In 1996, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia received 146 mass media coverage throughout the year, while coverage increased in 1997 with 165 mass media reportings.

A regular feature which helps attracts people to the Library are the exhibitions held at the National Library’s exhibition hall. Exhibitions are often held in cooperation with outside organisations mainly foreign embassies. A recent one that was successfully held at the Library was the exhibition on *Commonwealth: Surge To The Next Millennium* which attracted more than 17,000 people. The exhibition was held as part of the Commonwealth Cultural Festival Kuala Lumpur 98 in conjunction with the 16th Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur in September 1998.

A television commercial and two radio jingles were produced by Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia in 1997 and 1998 to boost the national reading campaign.

The number of people to the National Library is still increasing, despite the fact that building is now almost seven years old. Among the prominent visitors to the National Library are the President of the Republic of Uruguay Dr.Julio Marta Sanguinetti, and his wife Madame Marta Canessa De Sanguinetti who visited the Library on 4th July 1996. More recently, in early November 1998, His Excellency, the Yang Di Pertua Negeri Pulau Pinang, Tun Dato’ Seri Dr. Hj. Hamdan Bin Sheikh Tahir and his wife, Toh Puan Dato’ Seri Hajah Zainab Binti Hj. Baharuddin, visited the National Library.

**PUBLICATIONS**

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia has been fairly active in publishing over the last 3 year period. 30 titles were published in 1996, including 2 titles on CD-ROM and 10 titles in talking or audio books format and 25 titles, including 1 CD-ROM title were published in 1977. There were less titles published in 1998 due to the economic recession.

**QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

Public sector reforms in Malaysia are largely government driven. As a federal department under the Ministry of Education Malaysia, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia has been actively implementing programmes introduced to improve the quality of its public services. These include:-

- **(i) Clients Charter**
- **(ii) Quality Day**
- **(iii) Excellent Service Awards**
- **(iv) TQM Working Group**
- **(v) Implementation of ISO 9000**
- **(vi) Modified Budgeting System – programme review & evaluation**

Following the appointment of the Director, Support Services as Management Representative or quality manager in March 1988, the implementation of MS ISO 9002 is well underway for the National Library’s core process Development of the National Collection for which the Library hopes to receive certification by June 1999.

**REGIONAL COOPERATION**

- **CONSAL X**

Over the last three years from 1996-98, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia has been actively involved in the participation as well as organisation of regional cooperative activities. The highlight of these activities was the Tenth Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians held in Kuala Lumpur from 21-25 May 1996. The Congress was jointly organised by the Library Association of Malaysia (PPM) and Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia in conjunction with the Tenth
Consal Executive Board. 560 participants from Southeast Asia, the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and the United States participated in the Congress, which was officially opened by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia. As Chairman of the Organising Committee, The Director General of the National Library, Datin Mariam Abdul Kadir played a leading role in the Congress and in obtaining support from various sectors in Malaysia. The tremendous success of the Congress was achieved with the overwhelming support and unity of the library fraternity in Malaysia. Proceedings of the Congress were published in the same year.

- ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia was the secretariat for a national seminar on ‘Books For All: ASEAN Conference on Book Development’ held in Kuala Lumpur from 13-15 August 1996.

- National Libraries Group – South East Asia

Members of the group from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia, Laos, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam met in Kuala Lumpur on 20 May 1996. Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia coordinated the publication of the following two directories on behalf of the group:


- Regional Network for the Exchange of Information and Experience in Science and Technology in Asia and the Pacific Region (ASTINFO)

Through cooperation with ASTINFO Liaison officers for Iran and the Republic of China, a project to trace Malaysian materials in several institutions in these countries were successfully undertaken in 1966. A Librarian from the Institute of Science and Technology (ISTIC) in China also received practical training at Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia in November 1996. Ms. Zawiyah Baba Director Support Services was appointed the new ASTINFO Liaison Officer for Malaysia from September 1998. A programme of study visits to libraries in Malaysia was organised for a delegation from The National Centre for Science Technology Information and Documentation (NACESTID), in Hanoi, Vietnam in November 1998.

IFLA

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia continue to be represented by the Director General and Deputy Director General at IFLA General Conference in Beijing, 1996 and Copenhagen in 1997. Due to budget constraints, only the Deputy Director General represented PNM at the IFLA Conference in Amsterdam in August 1998. Cik Shahar Banun Jaafar, Deputy Director General, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia, a member of the Committee for Information Technology translated the committee’s brochure into Malay for distribution to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam.

The following were some of the papers presented by officers of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia at IFLA General Conference in 1996 and 1997:

(i) ‘A new vista on library services to the visually impaired in the developing countries of Asia: A Malaysian Paradigm’ by Shellatay Devadason, 1996.

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia organised the IFLA/UBCIM Regional Seminar on Bibliographic Control on 9-12 March 1998 in which all countries in Southeast Asia participated. Resource persons were from IFLA Section on Cataloguing and Division of Bibliographical Control, IFLA/UBCIM Programme Office, IFLA/ALP Programme Office and Mr. Alan Hopkinson from Hiddlesek University Britain. Proceedings of the Congress were published by Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia after the Seminar.
Malaysian Resource Centres Overseas

The Malaysian Resource Centre at the University of Ohio, United States, established in 1989, continue to develop with additional resources provided by Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia in 1966, 1997 and 1998, including microfilm of three major Malaysian national newspapers.

The new Malaysian Resource Centre was established in the Netherlands at the Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology (KLV) in Leiden, Netherlands in 1997. The Centre was officially opened by the Malaysian Ambassador to the Hague, Mr.S Ganapathy, in March 1998. Also present were the Director-General Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia, Datin Mariam Abdul Kadir and the Head of the Legal Depository Centre, Ms. Siti Zakiah Aman. The Centre received 903 titles of Malaysian publications as well as 2 national newspapers on microfilm. A third Malaysian Resource Centre is envisaged for New Zealand at the University of Victoria in Wellington.

ISBN / ISSN

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia continue to play its role as the national centre for ISBN and ISSN in Malaysia. The table below shows an increase in ISBN and ISSN issued for local publications as well as the number of new publishers registered with the national centre, indicative of increase in publishing activity in Malaysia:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10806</td>
<td>14,765</td>
<td>8,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSN</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Publishers</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FUTURE PLANS

Although there are positive signs of an economic recovery in the near future, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia as in the case of other public service organisations need to approach the future with the possibility of continued budgetary constraints. In these circumstances, the immediate challenges would be to maximise existing resources, while at the same time maintaining the quality of services.

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia will focus its efforts over the next two years on consolidating its resources to meet the challenges of the new millennium. Towards this end, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia hopes to accomplish the following plan of action which is now already underway:

(i) Review of the National Library legislation within regard to purpose, functions and role to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. It is hoped that the revised Act will be tabled in Parliament before the end of 1999;

(ii) Redefine its mission and strategies in line with its purpose, role and functions;

(iii) Initiate the review of the implementation of the National Policy for Library and Information Services over the last decade in order to plan and coordinate strategies for future development of library and information services in Malaysia. It is envisaged that a strategic plan for LIS development will be submitted for the 8th Malaysia five-year Plan (2001-2005);

(iv) Systematic integration of quality programmes and measures in the management of the libraries.

The certification on PNM’s core process, Development of the National Collection under MS ISO 9000 is envisaged before the end of 1999;

(v) Develop and upgrade the IT capability of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia and libraries in Malaysia to ensure its full participation in the multimedia supercorridor (MSC) project;

(vi) Encourage the development of local content by libraries in the development of databases;

(vii) Focus on two key target groups in the national reading promotion programmes school-going children and government officers; and

(viii) Training and retraining of library personnel in essential management, IT and self development skills so as to play a more effective role in the management of library and information services.
REFERENCES


## Appendix I

### TOTAL NUMBER OF LIBRARIES IN MALAYSIA, 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Libraries</th>
<th>Number of Libraries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Library</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Public Libraries</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Main State Public Library</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Territory Libraries</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Branch Libraries</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Town Libraries</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Village Libraries</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mobile Libraries</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural Community Centre Libraries</strong></td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- KEMAS, RISDA, FELDA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Libraries Under Local Government Authorities</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Others (mosque, etc)</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>University Libraries</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Government</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Private</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>University Branch Campus</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institute of Higher Learning Libraries</strong></td>
<td>(110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(College/Institute, Polytechnic, Teachers Training College, MARA Junior Science College)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Libraries</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ministry/Government Department</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Statutory Body/Private Agency</td>
<td>(207)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Resource Centres</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Secondary Schools</td>
<td>(1,538)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Primary Schools</td>
<td>(7,084)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,347</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: ( ) Estimated figure*
CONCEPT

Based on the Malay head dress (tengkolok) and book which symbolises knowledge which is the basis for the birth of a developed society and reading culture.

SYMBOL

Layer of Book symbolises a cooperative society to inspire and ensure Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia’s goal in reaching its success.

Pyramid Shape symbolises the peak of success, consistency and stability.

Compact Line symbolises information technology.

Layers of structured lines symbolises harmony and unity between the society and Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

CORPORATE COLOURS

Blue symbolises stability and harmony.

Red symbolises strength, aggressiveness and dynamism.