

2.52 A New Proposals for Restructure of the National Library and Documentation Centre of Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

The national library is a depository of human thoughts and culture of the nation and it represents the heartbeat of the society. The national libraries of the world also differ from society to society as well as from country to country. As such there is no universally accepted definition for the national library.

The idea of a national library for Sri Lanka emerged in the 1950s. A number of prominent scholars and a number of Commission reports urged the contemporary governments to consider the establishment of a national library and from 1950-1970 very important dialogues took place in this regard. Among these, the Choksy Commission report on government services in 1955, the Kandaiah Commission reports in 1958, the Brohier report in 1959 are very important.

In the same year another UNESCO expert, Mrs. Evelin G Evens visited to country and in her report she also emphasized the establishment of a national library.

As a result of recommendations of these reports and conferences the National Library Services Board was setup in 1970 by the parliamentary act on "Ceylon National Library Services Board Act No.17 of 1970".

One of the main responsibilities of this board as motioned above was establishment of a national library for Sri Lanka. 22 years after the establishment of the National Library Service Board in Sri Lanka ,the national library was inaugurated in 1990 April 27.

Although the National Library and Documentation Centre was established in 1990, present organizational structure is based on outdated organizational structure which was copied from organizational structure from a state cooperation in 1970 s. So it was not suitable for national library context and now time has arrived to introduce a new organizational structure for the NLDC.