

37 Conclusion

NASSDOC has given impetus to documentation activities in India. But it has not succeeded in establishing National Information System for Social Sciences (NISS). It is only such a system, which could lead to national information grid. A national information grid, hopefully would provide information to a social scientist expeditiously and exhaustively irrespective of his location.

4 RAJA RAMMOHAN ROY LIBRARY FOUNDATION

The year 1972 was the year of celebration of the bicentenary of Raja Rammohan Roy. The Government of India decided that a Library Foundation would be the best tribute to the memory of Raja Rammohan Roy, who spent his life in fighting against forces that shackle and retard the progress of a society. Thus Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation was set up by Government in India in 1972, as an autonomous body under the then Department of Culture, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, with its headquarters in Calcutta. Its major aim being to promote and support public library movement in the country through provision of adequate library services and popularisation of reading habits amongst neo-literates and rural population.

The major objectives of the Foundation are given below⁴:

- (i) to promote library movement in the country;
- (ii) to enunciate a national library policy and work towards its adoption by the Central and State Governments;
- (iii) to help build up a national library system by integrating the services of National Libraries, State Central Libraries, District Libraries, and other types of libraries (children's, academic and special) through inter library lending system;
- (iv) to propagate the adoption of library legislation in the country;
- (v) to provide financial and technical assistance to libraries;
- (vi) to establish in the country Regional Library Service Centres which will offer reprographic and book preservation services to assist in the reproduction and proper preservation of reading material, whether printed or in manuscript form;
- (vii) to act as a clearing house of ideas and information on library

⁴Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation: memorandum of association and rules, New Delhi, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Government of India, 1972, pp. 5-7.

development in India and abroad;

(viii) to advise the Government of India on all matters pertaining to the library development in the country;

(ix) to promote research in problems of library development.

The Foundation consists of 22 member, Minister of Education, Government of India or his nominee is the Chairman. Indian Library Association is represented on the Foundation. In addition four eminent librarians are also its members.

The Foundation works in collaboration with State Library Planning Committees, established in each state for the development of public libraries and promotion of library movement. It provides assistance to state governments on matching basis for purchase of books, organization of seminars and conferences; running of mobile library service; purchase of furniture, etc. Up to now Foundation has given assistance to over 18 thousand public libraries all over the country. It has assisted library associations for organization of seminars, conferences etc. It brings out Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation Newsletter (quarterly) to disseminate information about its activities.

One of the principle objective of the Foundation as given in its Memorandum of Association is "to enunciate a national library policy and to work towards its adoption by the Central and State Government." Accordingly, "National Policy on Library and Information System: A draft policy statement" was prepared on behalf of Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation.

The Foundation provides assistance to state government on matching basis but some of the states are reluctant to take full advantage of the scheme. State authorities need to be educated towards value of libraries.

According to one of the objectives of the Foundation, it is "to propagate the adoption of library legislation in the country". The Foundation should give first priority to this. At present funds are being given to a large number of libraries, rather thinly spread over. It would be a useful idea, if enough funds are made available to certain libraries at different levels to serve as model libraries. It is essential that studies should be carried out from time to time to study the situation in public libraries. Such studies should form the basis of policy of the Foundation. It is further suggested that it is high time that a senior librarian/teacher of library science be requested to carry put a study to determine the impact of financial support provided by the Foundation. This will enable Foundation to formulate its policy accordingly.

5 UNESCO

Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) has done a great deal for library development in many countries of the world especially in field of public libraries. In recent years Unesco has been paying special attention to libraries in developing countries.

Unesco has been concerned with all kinds of libraries but it has given special consideration to the development of public libraries in developing countries. Unesco public library manifesto (1972) "proclaims Unesco's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and understanding between people and between nations"⁵ This indicates Unesco's abiding faith in public libraries.

Through its Public Libraries Division at Paris, Unesco initiated a pilot public library project at Delhi in 1951. This later on developed into Delhi Public Library. Unesco also did pilot projects in other countries such as Columbia and Sudan. Department of Library Science, University of Delhi was an associated project of Unesco.

The General Information Programme (PGI) was established in 1976. The aim was to provide a focus for activities of Unesco in specialized information, documentation and archives. These activities include internationally developed methods, norms, standards, principles, and techniques governing the processing and transfer of information, particularly through the use of computer and telecommunication technologies and their application to the development of compatible information systems.

PGI is responsible for the following programmes under Medium Term Plan 1984-1989:

- (i) Improvement of access to information: Modern technologies, standardization and interconnection of information systems.
- (ii) Development of infrastructure, policies and training required for the processing and dissemination of specialized information.
- (iii) Development of information and documentation systems and services.

Primary role of PGI is to provide consultation and collaboration with different organizations to improve the provision and use of

⁵Unesco public library manifesto", *Unesco Journal of Information Science, Librarianship and Archives Administration*, 1 (no 4), October-December 1979. p. 230.

information throught the world.

Unesco has also sponsored the NATIS programme for the development of national information systems. NATIS (National Information System) is a brainchild of Unesco. It implies that governments at different levels (national, state and local) should maximize the availability of all relevant information.

Unesco has sponsored study visits by librarians from developing countries. Librarians have benefited a great deal from such visits.

Unesco has been responsible for sending a large number of experts as consultants and advisors to developing countries, for the purpose of initiating and expanding library services.

In 1955, Unesco Seminar on the Development of Public Libraries was held in Delhi. Unesco Vienna Symposium was held on national libraries in 1958. Unesco has supported library conferences, seminars and meetings. For instance, the 1971 IFLA Seminar for Developing Countries was sponsored by it and supported by FID, and a number of other organizations. Unesco has sponsored research on librarianship especially for developing countries. Literature contains many such reports.

Unesco published *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries* for many years, as well as *Bibliography, documentation and terminology*. It has also published number of useful publications, namely, *Public libraries and their mission* (1961), by Andre Maurios, *Unesco Public Library manifesto* (1949; 1972). Unesco brings out *PGI-UNISIST Newsletter* (quarterly). Unesco has brought out a large number of reports on different aspects of library and information science.

Basic operational grants given by Unesco to IFLA and FID are meagre. Grants needs to be increased, keeping in view the importance of meeting the increasing information needs worldwide. These best perform functions committed by Unesco in its charter.

FURTHER READING

- ANNUAL REPORT, 1932, New Delhi, INSDOC.
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- K.C. HARRISON. "Professional associations and other interested bodies" in *Manual of library economy*, edited by R. Northwood Lock, London, Clive Bingley, 1977, chapter 19.
- IASLIC CONFERENCE (14: 1983: *New Delhi*), *Souvenir*, New Delhi, INSDOC, 1983, pp. 26-33, 50-54.