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Federación Internacional de Asociaciones de Bibliotecarios y Bibliotecas

The Status, Reputation and Image of the library and information profession

Proceedings of the IFLA Pre-Session Seminar
Delhi, 24-28 August 1992

Under the Auspices of the IFLA Round Table
for the Management of Library
Associations

**Edited by Russell Bowden
and
Donald Wijasuriya**

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INTRODUCTION

These Proceedings are the record of the official Pre-Session Seminar held in Delhi from 23 to 28 August 1992 that preceded the IFLA Conference 31 August to 4 September 1992.

The subject 'Image, Status and Reputation of the Library and Information Services Profession' was approved by IFLA's Professional Board as the result of work previously undertaken by the Round Table for the Management of Library Associations, which in turn had been inspired by a Pre-Session Seminar held in Japan in 1986.

To organise and plan the seminar, a Pre-Session Seminar Sub-Committee was established in August 1990. Ably chaired by Donald Wijasuriya and including A Anand (RSC A/O), M Ragavan (representative the Local Organising Committee), L Hütteman (DSE), W Roberts (Professional Co-ordinator, IFLA), and R Bowden (RTMLA).

It reported to and obtained views and responses from not only the Round Table for the Management of Library Associations which provided advice on the professional content of the seminar but also the Section for Regional Activities: Asia and Oceania in IFLA's Division XIII for Regional Activities.

The Sub-Committee's aims were clearly defined at the first meeting. 'Recent surveys and research have re-emphasised the problems relating to status, reputation and image of the library, information science and documentation profession and their associations. These problems inhibit the ability of association members to function effectively.

'The objectives of the seminar are, among others, to consider these findings and make recommendations:

- (a) to IFLA and other relevant organisations for the development of their policies;
- (b) for programmes and activities to improve the status, reputation and image of the profession;
- (c) for the efficient management and organisation of professional associations.'

It was also the Sub-Committee's intention to spread the division of the preparation of papers as widely as possible and it was agreed, therefore that the selection of participants would be based on the following considerations:

1. They should primarily be professionals serving in the library, information and documentation sectors in the developing countries.
2. They should currently hold or expect to hold important office in the relevant national association.
3. They should be able to initiate or influence the further development of the association or the profession in their own countries.

4. They should be able to communicate and contribute to the deliberations of the seminar on the basis of their experience or expertise.

As a result, papers were obtained from India, Fiji, Ghana, Netherlands, Nigeria, UK, US and Venezuela.

Similarly, the Sub-Committee wanted participants from as wide a field of experience as possible. The problem was the further from India a potential participant came, the higher the costs of travel to get them to the seminar. Sponsorship and support from, amongst others, DSE, the Government of India, BIEF, Air India and the Asia Foundation, (a full list of acknowledgements appears later), enabled 23 participants from countries as far apart as Angola and Venezuela to Fiji and Cuba and included countries either fairly new to IFLA or participating for the first time in a Pre-Session Seminar, for instance St Martin, Nicaragua, Mozambique and Vietnam. They were particularly welcomed. A full list of participants appears at the end of this volume.

A unique feature of this book are the Country Reports edited by Donald Wijasuriya. Of course, they will quickly date but they represent the state-of-the-art at a given moment in time, namely early to mid-1992, describing the status, image and reputation of the library and information services profession in 23 countries. Never before has such a comprehensive picture been obtained of these situations. Each is compiled on common lines which included considering the issues, or hypotheses, that research investigations had addressed and seeking views on their relevance and aptness nationally. The contain views on the priority for the profession in that country, and therefore for the library associations, to address the problems of image, status and reputation and they also provide some idea of activities that the association had undertaken to improve the situation or of plans to do so in the future.

In order to assist in providing a full and as exact a record as possible of the proceedings of the seminar, each paper is followed by a report of the discussions that ensued. This was made possible by the Sub-Committee appointing to each session a discussion leader and a rapporteur and a co-ordinator for this work. They produced full reports of the discussions. They have been résuméd to produce a distillation of issues raised and views expressed and particularly, where this was possible, an indication of agreements, perhaps not reached unanimously, as votes were not taken, but where there appeared to be support by a majority.

These discussions, with the papers, form the basis for the eleven resolutions that are included towards the end of this volume. They were arrived at through a process of discussion in groups. These were established on the basis partly of common language, for obvious reasons, but also to enable issues to be addressed regionally on the presumption that there might be problems common to specific regions of the world.

The results of the research¹, completed in 1991, provided firm evidence on a factual basis collected by means of questionnaires and interviews in various parts of Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, to establish a main plank in the platform of issues for the seminar to address. A preview of the results had been made available at the 1991 IFLA Moscow Conference in a paper later published in the *IFLA Journal*². However, additional specific issues were identified by the Organising Sub-Committee and speakers were selected

not only on the basis of their authority and their knowledge and expertise in the subject allotted to them but also to be able to obtain views that might be representative of the problems being addressed in a particular region of the world.

The RTMLA came into existence between 1980 and 1982. In its 10-year history it has been active in trying to improve the organisation and management and efficiency of professional library, information science and documentation associations, believing that these bodies are one of the keys to improvements in the provision and operation of national library and information services which, as a result and as this seminar endorsed, ought to assist in improvements in status, image and reputation. It produced for IFLA under contract to Unesco the *Guidelines for the management of library, information science and archive professional associations* in 1989³ and these formed the basis not only for the last session paper but also a Workshop during the main Conference which was conceived as an integral part of the seminar but for which time could not be made available. The majority of the participants attended the Workshop.

The seminar started with a series of hypotheses, identified in the Foreword to this volume and which had already been tested in the research project. These also helped to provide a basis for each of the papers. The Resolutions from the discussions after each paper, published at the end of this volume, indicate whether the hypotheses were found to be acceptable or not.

It is perhaps worth making the point that the seminar, because it concentrated on problems of image, seemed very negative and did not stress the many achievements of library and information services and particularly some library associations, for instance that of the Philippines (see the Country Report) which has succeeded in pressing its government for recognition of a code of conduct and qualifications and to have the term Librarian recognised by statute. Other successes of course also were noted.

This volume therefore contains each of the papers followed immediately by a résumé of the discussions. The resolutions emanating from group discussions follow and after this there is a summary, in the form of an essay, to indicate some of the lessons that can be drawn from the seminar and its resolutions, with an indication of work going on, or planned for the future, to ensure that the resolutions are not lost and that from them something of use will emerge. A list of participants and the programme is also included, as are the opening addresses by Girja Kumar, Chairman of the Indian Organising Committee for the IFLA 1992 Conference, C Niemoeller, Cultural Counsellor in the German Embassy in India and the address by Donald E K Wijasuriya, Chairman of the Seminar and of the Organising Committee and the opening address by S K Mahapatra, Special Secretary to the Planning Commission of India. A valedictory by C P Vashishth, President of the Indian Library Association, closed the Seminar.

The Seminar would not have been possible without very generous financial support from the Government of India (through the Indian Organising Committee for IFLA 1992) and the German Foundation for International Development (DSE). IFLA is grateful also for the financial support received from the Banque d'Information des Etats Francophones (BIEF), Air India, the Asia Foundation, the IFLA ALP programme and the Association des

Bibliothécaires Français (ABF). It was held on the edge of the beautiful Lodi Gardens in New Delhi, with their ancient tombs of the Lodi dynasty, in the Indian International Centre. The interpreters helped excellently well to facilitate communication in not only English and French but also Spanish. The team of Marvin Holdt, Jesus Lau and Michael Perdreau participated fully in the Seminar and its deliberations.

Much of the Seminar's success was due in no small measure to the dedicated work of Mr S Majumdar, who took over responsibility late in the planning processes and at short notice. IFLA's Professional Co-ordinator, Winston Roberts with Mr Majumdar ensured the Seminar's success. A vote of thanks to both of them and the interpreting team for their support should be recorded.

¹ The report of the research it is hoped to publish as a companion volume to these Proceedings by K G Saur in the IFLA Publications Series.

² IFLA Journal, 18 (1992), 108-118.

³ Unesco, 'Guidelines for the management of professional associations in the fields of archives, library and information work', (PGI-89/WS/11), (Paris, Unesco, 1989).

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

The problems of image, reputation and status have been of concern to the library and information services profession for years, if not decades. The literature contains many references to these concerns and they have at various times surfaced with enough strength of feeling for something occasionally to be done about them. For instance, the Special Libraries Association in the United States from 1988-90¹ undertook a study which identified interesting factors such as:

the way in which librarians perceived themselves and the contrasts with the way in which they were viewed by not only the public but their managers, that the stereotype image is often reflected in status and compensation to librarians etc. Above all it discovered that: 'Most of the respondents were found to be happy in their self-esteem and that their work is valued by society. They were about evenly divided on the issues of whether their salaries are appropriate in terms of value to their employers. Neither is there agreement on the image question; none feel strongly about the matter whilst others think there is no problem at all'².

This study was presented to the IFLA Conference in Paris in 1988 and was reported in the *IFLA Journal*³.

More recently FID (International Federation for Information and Documentation) launched a similar investigation which is undertaking work within the Special Interest Group on Roles, Careers and Development of the modern Information Professional (FID/MIP).⁴

Within IFLA the issue of status and its associated problems was formally raised at the Kanazawa Pre-Session Seminar that preceded the 1986 Tokyo Conference.

It formulated a resolution that read: 'Recognising the crying problem of low status of librarians, documentalists and information specialists in some of the Third World countries, this Seminar strongly recommends that the following steps are taken by IFLA as an attempt to redress the situation:

- (a) That a pre-Session Seminar on the "Status of librarians, documentalists and information specialists" be organised by IFLA preferably in a Third World country.
- (b) IFLA should take effective steps to formulate standards relating to the status issue and circulate these standards globally.'

The Round Table for the Management of Library Associations agreed with IFLA's Professional Board that it would take responsibility for taking up work resulting from that resolution. So it was that in 1987 the RTMLA formally agreed to a programme of work. The first activity was to commission research, not by librarians but by sociologists supported materially and financially not only by IFLA's Professional Board but also by the Nederlands Bibliotheek & Lector Centrum (NBLC). Hans Prins and Wilco de Gier were commissioned to undertake research via a questionnaire and interviews. The results of these investigations formed a main plank in the platform of issues that were before the participants in this Delhi Pre-Session Seminar.

The Delhi IFLA Pre-Session Seminar was seen by the IFLA Round Table for the Management of Library Associations (RTMLA) as the culmination of one of the stages of its work on the image, status and reputation of librarianship and information work.

The project, first considered in August 1987, aimed to identify reasons for the current poor image and identify tasks to be performed by national bodies to remedy that situation.

Background

The general image by the public of the profession and the practice of librarianship is poor. The reputation of the profession is low and as a consequence the status of workers in it is also low, made manifest by poor salaries and inadequate conditions of service. The picture is not standard worldwide but it is to varying degrees and it is fairly accurate for most countries.

Reasons

The reasons for this situation are many and varied and differ from country to country depending on the political, cultural, developmental and social situations. The RTMLA's research project was concerned to discover more precisely the reasons - many of which relate to all, or some, of the following:

- * little understanding amongst the general public of what library and information (LIS) workers do and what responsibilities they undertake;
- * poor perceptions by LIS workers of their responsibilities which can be viewed in terms of social responsibilities such as access to information and the protection of the free-flow of information as well as their managerial responsibilities in terms of staffs, buildings, stocks and finances;
- * the concept of the librarian as a profession is not clearly understood; some in the profession regard themselves only as skilled workers, some as professionals but even then there is a difference in understanding between a 'hard' and a 'soft' profession, eg medicine for the former and management for the latter;
- * expectations of the quality of the services provided by librarians to their user-communities are not always clearly understood and sometimes, when they are, they are of a poor standard;
- * the profession in many countries is dominated by women and in many countries, unfortunately, women's status itself is low;
- * over-production from departments of library and information studies (DLIS) onto the markets where job opportunities are limited;
- * poor quality of the education and training of entrants onto the markets from the DLIS;

- * the actual work and responsibilities of many professional librarians are at low levels, such as paraprofessional/technical levels, and compare unfavourably to other professionals, ie in local government, in commercial and business firms or in academic institutions;
- * lack of legal status or statutorily recognised qualifications, ie no register of qualified practitioners as have engineers or architects, for instance.

These were only some of the reasons that were relatively easily identified. Others were far more complex and it was the task of the Dutch NBLC-led and financed research project to identify them.

The Seminar participants had before them the results of the NBLC-led research that addressed the problems already identified and which served as hypotheses to be proved or dis-proved. As a result further objectives of the Seminar were to consider these results and make recommendations:

- (a) to IFLA and other relevant organisations for the development of its policies and Medium Term Programmes;
- (b) for a concerted programme of activities to improve the status, reputation and image of the profession;
- (c) concerned to bring about improvements in the efficient management and organisation of professional associations.

The Recommendations of the Seminar concluded the deliberations. However, a summary based not only on the papers and the discussions that followed each but also on the Recommendations and the subsequent deliberations of the RTMLA with regard to picking up action on them, written by the Editor, completes this publication.

Russell Bowden

- ¹ Special Libraries Association, 'Inter-association task force report on image', (Washington, SLA, 1990) (mimeographed).
- ² *Op. cit.* Darrell Orwig. Executive Summary, p.11.
- ³ Spalding, Frank, 'Image of the librarian/information profession: a Special Libraries Association Presidential Task Force', *IFLA Journal*, 15 (4) 1989.
- ⁴ International Federation for Information and Documentation, 'State of the modern information professional 1992-1993'. FID Occasional Paper 4, FID, The Hague, 1992.

Work was undertaken through a series of papers delivered in plenary sessions and followed by discussions and then in individual discussion groups.

The programme was as follows:

PROGRAMME

Sunday 23 August:

15.00-18.00 Registration at the India International Centre

Monday 24 August:

08.30-09.30 Registration continues

10.00-12.00 *Official Opening*

- address by the representative of the Indian Organising Committee of IFLA '92.
- address by the representative of IFLA
- address by the representative of the German Government.
- address by the seminar chairman, Dr Wijasuriya.
- official opening address by the representative of the Indian Government.

12.15-13.30 Lunch

Afternoon: *Plenary Session I* - Chairman: Dr D Wijasuriya

14.00-14.30 Lead paper: 'Image, status and reputation: some observations'.
- Mr Russell Bowden (London, UK)

14.30-15.15 Tea

15.45-16.15 Research report: 'The status, image and reputation of librarianship', (Report on the research project of the IFLA Round Table on the Management of Library Associations).
- Mr Hans Prins and Mr W de Gier (The Hague, Netherlands)

16.15-17.15 Discussion

17.30- Reception

Tuesday 25 August:

Morning: *Plenary Session II* - Chairman: Ms A Anand

09.00-09.30 Theme 1

Paper: 'Perceptions of the status of the profession'.

- Ms Maria Elena Zapata (Caracas, Venezuela)

09.30-10.15 Discussion

10.15-10.45 Coffee

10.45-11.15 Theme 2

Paper: 'The social and professional responsibilities of the profession'.

- Mr Pawan K Gupta (Jaipur, India)

11.15-12.00 Discussion

12.15-13.30 Lunch

Afternoon: *Plenary Session III* - Chairman: Ms S Arlante (Philippines)

14.00-14.30 Theme 3

Paper: 'Improving the market value of the profession: educational requirements'.

- Ms Christine O Kisiedu (Legon, Ghana)

14.30-15.15 Discussion

15.15-15.45 Tea

15.45-16.15 Theme 4

Paper: 'Improving the market value of the profession: increasing recognition'.

- Ms Elizabeth Fong (Suva, Fiji)

16.15-17.00 Discussion

Wednesday 26 August:

Morning: *Plenary Session IV* - Chairman: Mrs Amenu-Kpodo (Jamaica)

09.00-09.30 Theme 5

Paper: 'Statutory recognition of the library and information profession'.

- Mr A O Banjo (Lagos, Nigeria)

09.30-10.15	Discussion
10.15-10.45	Coffee
10.45-11.15	Theme 6 Paper: 'Management of professional associations: guidelines'. - Dr David Bender (Washington DC, USA)
11.15-12.00	Discussion
12.15-13.30	Lunch

(Afternoon free)

19.00- Cultural evening: Oddissi dance, by Ms Rekha Tandon

Thursday 27 August:

09.00-10.30	<i>Discussion groups</i>
10.30-10.45	Coffee
10.45-12.15	Discussion groups (continued)
12.15-13.30	Lunch
14.00-15.15	Discussion groups (continued)
15.15-15.30	Tea
15.30-17.00	<i>Plenary Session V</i> - Chairman: Dr D Wijasuriya - reports from discussion groups - summing up by the chairman
17.00-18.00	Meeting of the resolutions committee
18.00-19.00	Dinner

Friday 28 August:

09.00-11.00	<i>Plenary Session VI</i> - Chairman: Dr D Wijasuriya Discussion and adoption of draft resolutions
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11.00-11.30 Coffee

11.30-13.00 *Closing Session*

- remarks by the Chairman of the IFLA RTMLA
- remarks by the Chairman of the IFLA Division of Regional Activities
- official closing by the President of the Indian Library Association

13.00- Lunch

Notes on key participants

- Donald **Wijasuriya** is Managing Director of Library and Information Development Consultants, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; former Director General of the National Library of Malaysia; and a former member of the Professional Board of IFLA.
- Russell **Bowden** is Deputy Chief Executive of the Library Association, London, UK; Chairman of the IFLA Round Table for the Management of Library Associations (RTMLA); and First Vice-president of IFLA.
- Hans **Prins** is a researcher at the NBLC (Netherlands Public Library Centre), The Hague, and jointly responsible (with Wilco de Gier of NBLC) for the IFLA RTMLA research project.
- Maria Elena **Zapata** is Director of State Public Library Network at the Biblioteca Nacional de Venezuela, Caracas; and Secretary of the IFLA Section on Regional Activities for Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Pawan K **Gupta** is Director of the Library, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India.
- Christine **Kisiedu** is Head of the Department of Library and Archival Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.
- Elizabeth **Fong** is Senior Assistant Librarian, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji.
- Gboyega **Banjo** is Head of the Library, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; Chairman of the IFLA Division of Regional Activities; and a member of the Professional Board of IFLA.
- David **Bender** is Executive Director of the Special Libraries Association (SLA), Washington DC, USA; and a member of the Executive of the IFLA RTMLA.

IFLA wishes to acknowledge the very generous financial support made available by the Government of India (through the Indian Organising Committee for IFLA '92) and the German Foundation for International Development (DSE).

IFLA is grateful also for the financial support received from the Banque d'Information des Etats Francophones (BIEF), Air India, the Asia Foundation, the IFLA ALP Programme and the Association des Bibliothécaires Français (ABF).

ADDRESSES OF WELCOME - OPENING CEREMONY

Welcome address by Mr Girja Kumar, Indian Organising Committee for IFLA 1992

Mr S K Mahapatra, Mr Winston D Roberts, Mr C Niemoeller, Mr Donald E K Wijasuriya, delegates to IFLA Pre-Conference Seminar, ladies and gentlemen, I have great pleasure in welcoming you to the opening session of the 'Seminar on the Status, Reputation and Image of the Library and Information Profession' on behalf of the Indian Organising Committee for IFLA 1992 and myself personally. Indeed, the present seminar shall be considered a historic moment in the annals of Indian librarianship, for it is the precursor (and sounding bell) heralding the start of the 58th General Conference of IFLA.

I would like to extend a special welcome to the chief guest, Shri Sitakanta Mahapatra, a distinguished poet in Orissa fallen among bureaucrats. I also welcome all of you on behalf of the Indian community of librarians as sample representatives of the international community of librarians. I hope your stay in this metropolitan city where past and present are tearing to interact with the future is extremely comfortable.

You may have felt discomfited by the present Delhi weather. In the Indian tradition, the monsoon season is considered the most auspicious of all seasons. It is during the rainy season, when the man and nature find themselves in unison. The poets have sung in praise of *virchow rithu* (rainy season) with abandoned joy. The great Kalidasa has penned a poetic drama *Meghaduta* (cloud messenger), again in praise of the rainy season. The Rajput and Mughal miniature paintings have the monsoon as the recurring theme. The great music composers including Tansen have sung in praise of *virchow rithu*. The current season thus reminds us of the song, drama and dance. The thoughts naturally turn to nature and romance.

But since we are concerned with the prosaic topic of 'image, status and reputation' in this seminar, romance should take a back seat. It shall however not be far from our thoughts. The lovely Lodi Gardens and its monuments which constitute the backdrop to the Indian International Centre Building shall continue to remind us of the *rithu virchow* season. The present seminar is thus assured of an auspicious start.

It is not customary to speak at length on the theme of the seminar in the welcome address, but having been in this business for nearly 45 years, the age gives me the liberty, if not wisdom, of saying a few words of caution and advice on the main theme. Appropriateness of the theme is no doubt, especially in the Indian context. Indeed we have not kept the promises that we made to ourselves nearly two decades ago. In the communication (20 July 1974) sent to the Minister of Education and Social Welfare, Government of India on behalf of the Community, the report of the Library Committee of the University Grants Commission headed by Mr S R Ranganathan (whose centenary we are celebrating this year) was referred to extensively:

'The high academic and professional qualifications, the combination of academic and administrative responsibilities indicate that the status and the salary scale of library staff should be the same as that of the teaching and research staff'.

As one looks back at the communication, circa 1974, there was a commitment and indeed a solemn assurance on our part: 'The librarians are fully conscious of the lacuna in their running of the university library. We can, however, assure you that with the influx of highly qualified young men and women into the profession, things are changing for the better.' Sad to say, the profession has not kept the promise it had made to itself and the community in general. We were perforce made to eat grow, and, in 1992, as if in part expiation. One had to write a piece, entitled 'Decline and fall of the academic library' (it shall be available in print next week). There is thus need for introspection by the profession. The intellectual inputs by the seminar shall provide the Indian community of librarians a golden opportunity to review the entire situation.

It gave me somewhat vicarious pleasure to realize that the predicament in this connection was a worldwide phenomenon. In the words of the Round Table for the Management of Library Associations (RTMLA), circa 1989: 'The general image by the public of the profession and the practice of librarianship was poor'. The working group appointed by RTMLA confirmed the impression through data obtained from 150 national (library) associations in 90 countries. Eighty-two percent librarians themselves stated that their status was low. Why? One of the reasons stated for the low status of the profession was due to 'the female image of the profession'. It may perhaps give the librarians some satisfaction to be rated above air stewardesses, travelling salesmen and insurance agents.

One may call it a coincidence, but a similar image of the profession emerged, when the present author had the opportunity to read once again Umberto Eco's novel *The Name of the Rose* (1983), along with the excellent commentary on it by Jeffrey Garrett ('Missing Eco: On reading the Name of the Rose as Library'), published in *Library Quarterly*, October 1991. I would recommend everyone of you present here to read it. The novel reinforces the findings of the working group of RTMLA. As Jeffrey Garrett of Purdue University puts it so well, Eco's *The Name of the Rose* is not only a 'tale of books, but also of libraries, librarians and library users'.

The exasperated hero in search of Aristotle's long-lost manuscript on humour finally concludes, after failing to crack the perplexing code of 'classification and shelving scheme', that 'the fault is not his own, that instead the knowledge of the all powerful librarian has been used "to conceal" rather than to enlighten'. The cruellest cut is made when Eco triumphantly concludes that the librarians lack the ability to laugh at themselves. To quote from the exact words of Jeffrey Garrett: 'Eco seems to doubt the ability of librarians to laugh at themselves, not to mention their (in)ability to tolerate the laughter of others'. I have taken the liberty of quoting extensively from Eco for his meaningful remarks. Those are indeed most relevant to the topic under discussion.

In this centenary year of S R Ranganathan, our thoughts should turn to him for inspiration. The working group of RTMLA in its report has laid its fingers on three causes responsible for the compromised image, status and reputation of librarians. Those are: i) invisibility,

ii) education and iii) professional culture. Maximum stress was laid on professional culture or ethics, which Ranganathan translated as his *dharma*, variously interpreted as duty, obligation and law. The term is hard to translate, but there is contained the essence of librarianship and Indian tradition through historic times. Ranganathan viewed library service as a service to the humanity, and hence his *dharma*, which he was obligated to perform through sheer compulsion.

As regards the other condition of 'invisibility', S R Ranganathan was the most visible librarian to be seen. He spent half the time of 13 hours per day and seven of the week by sitting at the reference desk. His visibility was the strongest point of his long tenure at Madras University Library. Regarding the third condition, 'education', Ranganathan raised the level of library education. The present generation is however engaged in dismantling the innovative structure designed by him by freezing it permanently. At this rate, Ranganathan shall become an unperson.

When one looks back at the long tenure as a professional librarian, one feels extremely sad for the things happening. The library community seems to have lost its *élan*. Its humanistic ethos had distinguished it from other professions. The heritage of humanism seems to have been forsaken. It is now lost in the jungle of information technology, a mere technique and a subsidiary handmaiden. There is no fun to mortgage the soul for a mash of pottage, and for an imaginary pie in the sky.

It shall be far from correct to assume that one is bent upon presenting the dark image of the profession. Diagnosis is any day better than cosmetic surgery to plaster the ugly spots. I am optimistic by nature. I see a great future for librarianship in years to come. The librarians are unleashing to go, but...

Mr Girja Kumar is a former librarian of Jawaharlal Nehru University and ex-President, Indian Library Association. He has recently published a biography of Ranganathan, entitled *S R Ranganathan, an intellectual biography*.

Address by Mr C Niemoeller, Cultural Counsellor, German Embassy, Delhi, India

On behalf of the German Foundation for International Development (DSE), I should like to wish you every success for the IFLA General Conference and this particular Pre-Session for participants from developing countries.

It's a great pleasure for me to welcome eight librarians and documentalists from eight African countries whose participation in this session and the General Conference was sponsored by DSE.

The German Foundation for International Development (DSE) was created by the Federal and Land governments in 1959 on the initiative of all the political parties represented in the Federal Parliament. It was assigned the task of fostering the relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and developing countries on the basis of a mutual exchange of experience. The DSE fulfils this mandate by organising training programmes, seminars and conferences to support projects in countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America which serve economic and social development.

Since its creation, the DSE, in co-operation with national and international partner organisations, has provided more than 92,000 specialists and executives from more than 140 countries with an opportunity to discuss issues of international development or undergo professional training.

In its work, the DSE attaches priority to rural development, food security and the promotion of industrial vocational training. It also supports efforts to improve organisation and planning in developing countries in the fields of public administration, health, education, development planning, documentation and information. Furthermore, the DSE prepares German experts for their assignments in developing countries, and provides a comprehensive information and documentation service.

The DSE is based in Berlin, but it also has specialised centres at various locations in the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Information and Documentation Training programme of DSE is carried out by the Information and Training Section of the Education, Science and Documentation Centre in Bonn.

On an average six to seven short-term training programmes ranging from three days to six weeks are organised for some 120 participants each year and about 45 scholarships for long-term training measures ranging from three months to two years are administered annually.

Because information services in Asia and Latin America are relatively highly developed, the I & D Training Programme focuses its work on Africa.

In view of substantial French involvement in West and Central Africa, it co-operates mainly with Eastern and Southern African countries.

DSE concentrates on five programme areas:

1. *Seminars for the Establishment of National I & D Services.*

Target groups of these seminars are professional and senior personnel from I & D centres and libraries, planners, decision-makers from governmental or parastatal bodies of the host country.

2. *Training Courses for Personnel from I & D Services.*

This series of training courses ranges from nationally organised programmes for basic training of school librarians to programmes on a regional level for professionals in specialised fields, ie information for industry, agriculture, trade, health, appropriate technology and management of information services.

Since 1988 four training courses on 'Use of Micro-CDS/ISIS' were organised in co-operation with Unesco.

3. *Continuing Education and Ad-hoc Courses.*

Continuing education courses are either for untrained library personnel or for holders of library diplomas working in small libraries, who need refresher training, are held at the University of Botswana, Department of Library Studies, in Gaborone during this long vacation period.

Ad-hoc courses - these are programmes which require immediate action due to pressing professional problems or gaps in training - are organised or co-sponsored occasionally by DSE on request of partner institutions.

4. *Scholarship Programmes.*

With regard to long-term training that lasts up to two years, DSE provides scholarships for library, archival and I & D studies. These scholarships are awarded to pursue certificates or diplomas in library studies at the University of Botswana in Gaborone for applicants from countries without their own training facilities in these subject fields. Diplomas in archival studies can be obtained at the School of Archival Studies of the National Archives of India in New Delhi.

An Advanced Training Course leading to an Associateship in Information Science is offered at the Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre in New Delhi.

For participants of francophone African countries Diploma Courses in Library, Archival and Information studies are offered at the Ecole de Bibliothécaire, Archivistes et Documentalistes at the Université de Dakar, Senegal.

Scholarships for information training in industrial countries are not provided. University training leading to advanced degrees, ie MA or PhD, are not within DSE's competence, they are handled by the German Academic Exchange Service.

5. Publications Programmes

As a general rule, the papers presented in a particular programme will be published after the event, and distributed as a report document to some 100 corresponding partner institutions in the Eastern and Southern African region, and to the participants of the programme. This procedure ensures that a maximum number of professionals in the countries of the region is able to benefit from the contents of each programme in which DSE was involved. Apart from reports, I & D teaching and learning materials are published, most notably the modules of the Botswana vacation courses.

Expert Missions are financed when the organiser of a national training course needs external expertise to cover a specific subject of the course for which local experts are not available.

Congress Travel Grants are provided when the organisers of an international seminar, workshop or conference on information-related subjects require direct personal input from professionals from Third World countries.

DSE started its training activities in 1974. From the very beginning all activities were carried out in close co-operation with national, regional and international partners, ie amongst others: national library associations like the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute, Unesco and other UN organisations, IFLA, FID (International Federation of Information and Documentation) and the International Council of Archives. Co-operation is also sought with agencies from industrial countries, ie The British Council, the International Development Research Centre, Canada, to mention only a few.