



# NATIONAL LIBRARY

(Republic of Mauritius)

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## Annual Report to CDNL 2013-14

### Name of Country: Mauritius

- Name of Library or equivalent national-level organisation: National Library
- Name of Chief Executive: Mrs Toolsee Kreetee RAMNAUTH (Director)
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- Web address of the library: <http://national-library.gov.mu>
- Email address for contacting the library: [natlib@intnet.mu](mailto:natlib@intnet.mu)

### General overview of recent major developments

Despite the very limited budget, the National Library has organised several activities which have been a tremendous success such as World Book Day in Mauritius and in Rodrigues.

The number of users visiting the library last year has increased by some 15%. A new Reading Corner has been introduced in the Search Room. The number of documents acquired and processed has increased by 10% last year, from 21,000 in 2012 to 23,900 in 2013. Similarly, the number of documents microfilmed in 2013 experienced an increase by 75% as compared to the previous years.

In order to avoid any risk of data loss, the National Library has, in 2013, opted to store all its data in a firm at Rose-Hill, another town far from Port Louis.

The Finance Section, which was located in the corridor, has been integrated within the Administration Department.

### Library's relationship to government

The National Library of the Republic of Mauritius is a corporate body operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Culture. It is funded by means of a block grant received from the central government. The National Library maintains a very good relationship with all the other ministries, including the Prime Minister's Office. Since two years, the Office of the "*Culture et Avenir*" of the Prime Minister's Office, invites the National Library to participate, free of cost, in the

International Book Fair, whereby many foreign authors and publishers meet. Similarly, the National Library is often invited in various activities organised by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands, Ministry of Information and Technology, etc. The services of the National Library are highly sought by the Supreme Court, Police Force, Politicians and the Press. The Website has been re-vamped to be in line with all other government websites.

### **Key facts and figures**

The library collection which comprises of materials such as books, newspapers, periodicals, annual reports, government gazettes, audio-visual materials, photographs, manuscripts, maps, theses, dissertations, pamphlets and stamps has reached over 490, 000 items. The Collection annually increases by 5% through legal deposits and purchases.

**The number of staff is:** 27 (as in April 2014, three employees have just resigned / retired)

**Total operating budget:** Rs 16,8 million (Mauritian Rupees)

### **New developments in creating and building collections**

Apart from collections regularly received by the United Nations (UN), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), European Union (EU), Window of Shanghai (Shanghai Public Library), Nippon Foundation, the National Library aims to enrich further its Mauritian Collection. Books published elsewhere or documents by local authors are constantly being purchased. The number of requests by overseas users is on the high rise.

### **New developments in managing collections**

The digitisation process is still in the pipeline but due to unavailability of fund, the project has not fully started. The preservation and conservation processes of old newspapers and documents are still carried out methodically, since older documents are given priority. This is a long and slow process. Newspapers are microfilmed and recently few documents are being scanned.

### **New developments in providing access to collections**

All the collection of the National Library are online and users can easily read all the titles and do their request accordingly. The National Library is also contemplating to open till late in order to allow more people to visit the Reference Section. Requests are accepted by all types of communication – fax, mail, phone and letter.

### **Collaboration between the reporting library and other national collecting institutions**

The National Library participated in several activities organised by the Ministry of Arts and Culture, such as National Day Celebration, Mother Tongue's Day, compilation of a booklet for the Aapravasi Ghat, setting-up of a Documentation Centre at the Mauritius Tamil Centre.

The National Library also hosted few exhibitions in its Search Room such as Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam's 113<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary and 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the African Union and the year of Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance.

The National Library maintains a close and regular contact with the National Archives. Very often, the National Library directs its users to the National Archives for further search.