Content

01. The Information and Public Relations Committee

Sankathana Lecturer Series 33:
Reading for a Cultural Life

The "Sankathana 33" program, organized by the Information and Public Relations Committee of the Sri Lanka Library Association, was successfully conducted on 29th October 2025, via the Zoom platform.

Held under the theme "Reading for a Cultural Life," the program was organized in commemoration of Literary Month and aimed at promoting reading habits and cultural appreciation among reading enthusiasts. Mr. Uditha Alahakoon, Senior Assistant Librarian at the University of Colombo, served as the resource person for the session.

During the program, Mr. Alahakoon highlighted the role of reading in enriching cultural understanding, personal growth, and lifelong learning. His presentation emphasized how reading contributes to intellectual development and the preservation of cultural values in contemporary society.

The online program attracted a wide audience of readers, library professionals, and individuals interested in literature and cultural studies. Participants appreciated the insightful discussion and the opportunity to reflect on the importance of reading in fostering a meaningful cultural life.

The successful completion of "Sankathana 33" reaffirmed the Sri Lanka Library Association's commitment to promoting reading, culture, and intellectual engagement within the wider community.

SLLA Launches Flood Relief Initiative to Support Affected Libraries

The Sri Lanka Library Association launched a relief initiative in November 2025 to support libraries nationwide that had been affected by recent floods. The initiative aims to mobilize donations and other forms of assistance to help damaged libraries restore services and continue meeting the information needs of their communities.

The program is led by the Information and Public Relations Committee convened by Ms. Buddika Liyanaarachchi and her team, under the guidance of the SLLA Council. The initiative reflects SLLA's commitment to safeguarding library services during times of crisis and supporting institutional recovery.

Libraries or individuals seeking assistance, as well as those wishing to contribute to the relief effort, are invited to contact the Association via the following email addresses: president@slla.lk and gs@slla.lk

The Sri Lanka Library Association encourages members of the library community and the general public to support this important initiative, which plays a vital role in restoring and sustaining library services in flood-affected areas.

02   **Libraries, Departments, Institutions: Workshops, Training programmes, and Outreach activities**

2.1. Academic Library Group

Webinar on Accessing Secondary Sources

The Academic Library Group of the Sri Lanka Library Association successfully conducted the first session of its Webinar Series on 28th October 2025, via Zoom.

The webinar, titled "Strategies and Tools for Finding Secondary Sources via Online Platforms," was delivered by Dr. Neluka Karannagoda, Senior Assistant Librarian at the University of Colombo.

The session focused on enhancing participants' ability to locate high-quality secondary sources through various online platforms, an essential skill for academics, librarians, and students engaged in research and scholarly writing. Dr. Karannagoda introduced key concepts related to secondary sources, demonstrated free online academic resources, and highlighted essential tools that support effective information searching and research writing.

The event attracted a diverse audience including library professionals, university lecturers, researchers, undergraduates, and other interested participants. Organized as a free webinar, the session encouraged wide participation from the academic community.

Participants appreciated the practical nature of the session, noting its value in improving their research skills and awareness of reliable digital tools. .

2.2. Special Library Group

"Power of a Page" Workshop on Career Development Skills

The Special Library Group of the Sri Lanka Library Association successfully conducted a workshop titled "Power of a Page" on 10th October 2025 at the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS).

The session was facilitated by Mr. D. M. T. Madushanka, Lecturer in the Department of Business Management, Faculty of Management and Finance, University of Ruhuna. The workshop aimed to strengthen participants' career development competencies and professional communication skills.

During the session, participants were guided on designing professional curricula vitae (CVs), drafting effective cover letters, and managing digital files using zipping techniques. Additionally, the workshop focused on building professional networks through LinkedIn and developing interview skills for both in-person and online recruitment contexts.

The interactive and practical nature of the workshop provided participants with a valuable learning experience, enhancing their career readiness and confidence in professional presentation. The successful conduct of the program reflected the Special Library Group's continued efforts to support professional development and employability skills within the library and information sector.

Radio Program to Promote Reading and Inquiry-Based Learning

The Special Library Group of the Sri Lanka Library Association successfully organized a radio program titled "Sarasavi Raswalalala," which was broadcast on 8th November 2025 at 6.30 p.m. on Swadeshiya Sewaya.

Presented under the theme "Kiyawana Vimasana Heta Dawasak," the program featured Mr. Uditha Alahakoon, Senior Assistant Librarian at the University of Colombo, as the main resource person. The discussion focused on the promotion of reading culture and the significance of inquiry-based learning in nurturing intellectually engaged future generations.

The program was presented by Ms. Kaveesha Hansi and Mr. Vihan Kaveesha, students of the Institute of Library and Information Science, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo. Ms. Kaveesha Hansi also contributed as the script editor, while Ms. Priyanthani Gamage Yahampatha was responsible for the production of the program.

Through insightful dialogue and expert commentary, the program effectively engaged listeners and highlighted the crucial role of reading and critical thinking in shaping a better tomorrow. The successful broadcast reflected the Special Library Group's commitment to extending library advocacy and literacy promotion through mass media.

Workshop on Book Writing in Bandarawela

The Special Library Group of the Sri Lanka Library Association, in collaboration with the Bandarawela Municipal Council, successfully conducted a free workshop titled "How to Write a Book" on 15th November 2025 at the Bandarawela Municipal Council Auditorium.

This workshop, conducted in the Tamil language for the first time in the region, targeted Tamil authors and aspiring writers from across the Uva Province. Mr. M. S. M. Shiham, Records Management Officer at the Sri Lanka National Library and Documentation Services Board, served as the resource person for the program.

The session focused on developing essential writing competencies, including writing according to recognized standards, understanding authorship ethics, and procedures for obtaining ISBNs. The workshop also addressed the limited availability of locally authored Tamil publications in Sri Lankan libraries, where a significant proportion of Tamil literature is currently imported from India.

The organizers expressed confidence that the initiative would stimulate the growth of Tamil novels, short stories, poetry, and magazines produced within Sri Lanka, thereby strengthening the national literary landscape. The program received strong support from Mr. Gajendra Kumar, Municipal Commissioner of Bandarawela, along with the municipal library staff led by Ms. Inoka Polgampala, media representatives, and members of the Municipal Council.

2.3. Public Library Group

Workshop on Integrating SDGs into Library Services

The Public Library Group of the Sri Lanka Library Association successfully conducted a workshop on 30th December 2025 at the Bope Poddala Divisional Secretariat Auditorium, Galle, focusing on "Integrating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into Library Services and Measuring Their Impact."

The session was led by Mr. Uditha Gunasekara of the National Library and Documentation Board, who served as the resource person. The workshop aimed to enhance participants' understanding of how library services can be aligned with national and global sustainability agendas, while also emphasizing methods for assessing the impact of such initiatives. Mr. Sugath Gunathilaka, President of the Sri Lanka Library Association, and the Chief Secretary of the Bope Poddala Divisional Secretariat graced the event as chief guests, underscoring the importance of libraries in advancing sustainable development at the community level.

Participants gained valuable insights into strategic approaches for integrating SDGs into public library services, as well as practical tools for monitoring and evaluating their outcomes. The workshop was highly appreciated for its relevance and contribution to strengthening the role of public libraries in supporting sustainable development initiatives.

2.4. School Library Group

Program on Library Planning for 2026

A productive program titled "Library Planning for the Year 2026," organized by the School Library Group of the Sri Lanka Library Association, was successfully conducted on 20th December 2025 via the Zoom platform.

The session featured Ms. Nadeeka Ratnabahu, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Kelaniya, as the resource person. The program was designed to provide participants with comprehensive knowledge and practical guidance on the strategic aspects of library planning for the year 2026.

During the session, Ms. Ratnabahu discussed key components of effective library planning, including goal setting, resource management, service development, and implementation methodologies. Emphasis was placed on aligning library plans with institutional objectives and emerging trends in education and information services.

The program attracted the participation of school librarians and other library professionals, who found the session highly informative and relevant to their professional practice. The successful completion of the program reflected the School Libraries Committee's continued commitment to strengthening planning and management capacities within the library sector.

2.5. Sri Lanka Library Association

Workshop on Preventive Conservation and the 10 Agents of Deterioration

TheA workshop focusing on "The 10 Agents of Deterioration – Understanding the Preventive Conservation Framework" was successfully conducted on 13th November 2025 at the SLLA Auditorium.

The program was designed for library professionals, museum personnel, and individuals interested in preservation and conservation practices. The workshop aimed to enhance participants' understanding of the key factors that contribute to the deterioration of library and museum collections.
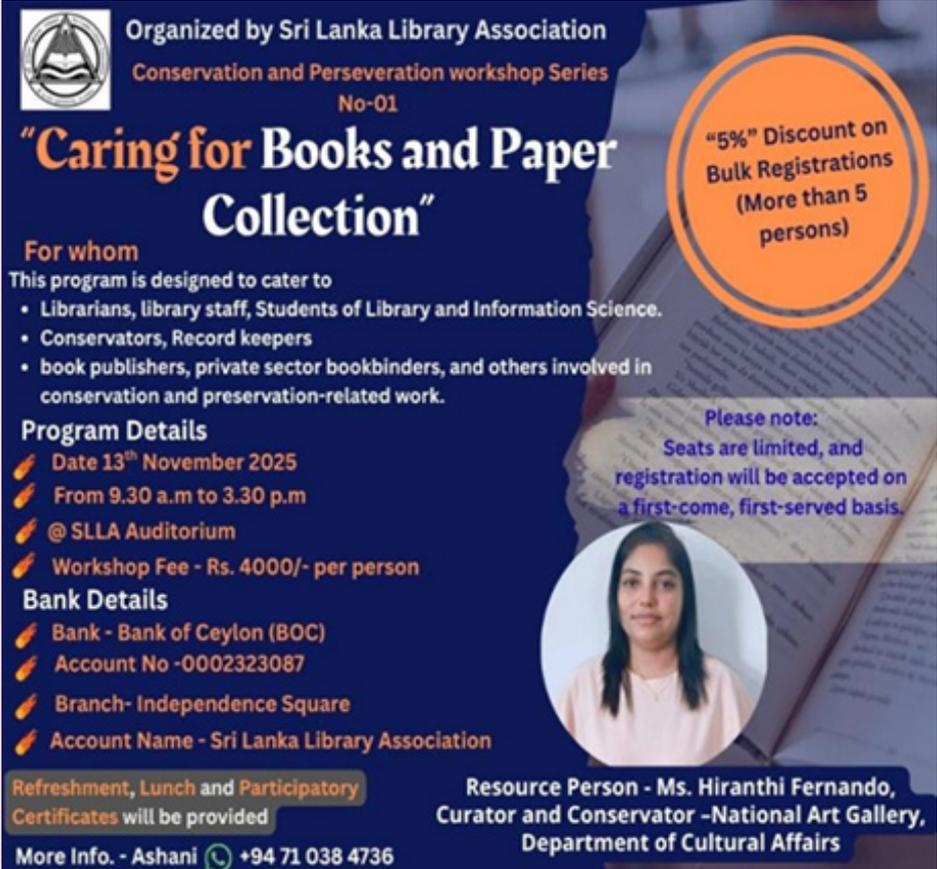
Organized by Sri Lanka Library Association
Conservation and Perseveration workshop Series
No-01

"Caring for **Books and Paper Collection**"

"5%" Discount on Bulk Registrations (More than 5 persons)

For whom
This program is designed to cater to
- Librarians, library staff, Students of Library and Information Science.
- Conservators, Record keepers
- book publishers, private sector bookbinders, and others involved in conservation and preservation-related work.

Program Details
- Date 13th November 2025
- From 9.30 a.m to 3.30 p.m
- @ SLLA Auditorium
- Workshop Fee - Rs. 4000/- per person

Bank Details
- Bank - Bank of Ceylon (BOC)
- Account No -0002323087
- Branch- Independence Square
- Account Name - Sri Lanka Library Association

Refreshment, Lunch and Participatory Certificates will be provided

More Info. - Ashani +94 71 038 4736

Please note:
Seats are limited, and registration will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Resource Person - Ms. Hiranthi Fernando, Curator and Conservator –National Art Gallery, Department of Cultural Affairs

During the session, participants were introduced to the ten agents of deterioration, including environmental, biological, and human-related factors, and were guided on

practical preventive conservation strategies to minimize damage and extend the lifespan of collections. Emphasis was placed on adopting proactive and sustainable preservation approaches within libraries and museums.

The workshop provided valuable professional insight and practical knowledge, supporting the development of effective preservation practices and reinforcing the importance of preventive conservation in safeguarding cultural and documentary heritage.

03 Feature Articles

1. Strategic Directions for Public Libraries Towards Cultural Sustainability

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Introduction

Cultural sustainability is maintaining and transmitting cultural knowledge, values and heritage while practicing them as well as allowing them to spread and grow in a useful way over time. Currently, cultural sustainability is recognized as an important criterion of sustainable development. Traditionally, the sustainable development dialogue has often focused on economic growth, social equity, environmental protection, good health and safety etc. However, over the past decades, culture has emerged as a critical factor of sustainability, often recognized as the "fourth pillar" of sustainable development. Cultural sustainability is defined as the processes through which cultural values, practices, knowledge systems, and heritage are preserved, transmitted, and revitalized for present and future generations (Soini & Birkeland, 2014).

Public libraries play a significant role within this context. As public organization funded by the government and embedded with community, public libraries should provide open access to cultural knowledge and resources while playing a role as curators of culture, heritage and memory of the community. Stepping over the role of archives and museums, public libraries should be committed to integrate cultural safeguarding practices with their traditional information services, literacy development initiatives, and community engagement.

With the adaptation of international instruments such as the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, public libraries in many countries around the world have redefined their roles and responsibilities as dynamic agents in sustaining cultural continuity, diversity, and vitality. This article discusses the need to incorporate cultural sustainability into the strategic direction, policy planning, and research agendas of libraries.

Conceptual Framework of Cultural Sustainability

Cultural sustainability is generally identified as the capacity of communities to continue, maintain and develop their cultural values, expressions, and heritage while adapting to social change (Throsby, 2011). UNESCO (2013) highlights that as well as tangible heritage, the intangible cultural heritage including languages, oral traditions, rituals, and traditional knowledge also crucial in sustainable development.

Dessein et al. (2015) explained cultural sustainability in three interrelated domains as follows.

I.   Culture in sustainable development (as a sector),
II.   Culture for sustainable development (as a mediator), and
III.   Culture as sustainable development (as a foundational dimension).

Public libraries maintain through all these three aspects by operating as cultural institutions, allowing cultural participation, and fostering cultural values into community life.

Public Libraries as Custodians of Cultural Heritage

Preservation of cultural heritage through various forms can be identified as most common initiative practiced by the public libraries towards cultural sustainability of the country. Public libraries maintain local history collections, rare books, manuscripts, newspapers, photographs, and digital archives that document the social and cultural evolution of communities (IFLA, 2018).

Moreover, public libraries often engage in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) through documentation projects of oral history, collection of folklore, initiatives for recording and preserving community memory, collecting and preserving endangered languages and their forms etc. Most of such efforts are aligned with UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which emphasizes the significance of intergenerational knowledge transmission and community engagement in cultural preservation initiatives towards sustainable development. By preserving both recorded and unrecorded cultural expressions, public libraries support making cultural heritage accessible.

Community Participation and Co-creation of Culture

Active participation of the communities or ICH bearers in its safeguarding is very important for Cultural sustainability. Public libraries act as an inclusive civil organization and cultural space where communities engage in cultural practices, creation, dialogue, and exchange. Revitalization folk games and rituals, practice storytelling sessions, establish reading circles, organize cultural exhibitions, workshops, and festivals are most popular initiative that public libraries can implement to make communities to participate actively to shape their cultural narratives (Aabø & Audunson, 2012).

Libraries can implement participatory models such as community archiving and crowd-sourced documentation for ICH safeguarding. In this aspect the community or people will consider as creators, bearers and owners of culture not users anymore. These approaches are highly appropriate when dealing with marginalized or Indigenous communities who belongs comparatively rich cultural heritage which directly contribute for sustainable culture.

Cultural Identity and Diversity

Enhancing cultural identity of specific groups of people or communities while maintaining cultural diversity and giving mutual respect is very important for sustainability. Public libraries play a vital role in this process being connect different communities in the event of cultural sharing. Maintaining multilingual and multicultural collections, organizing culturally responsive library programs and implementing inclusive cataloguing and knowledge organizing practices enable libraries to reflect the multicultural nature of contemporary societies while enhancing respect for cultural identity.

Providing access to culturally relevant information and sources always supports the formation of culture particularly among migrant communities, youth, and minority groups. This initiative will help to promote social cohesion by fostering intercultural understanding and mutual dialogue among different social and cultural groups while respecting cultural diversity which remain as significant component at cultural resilience and continuity.

Access to Cultural Knowledge and Cultural Rights

Equal access to cultural knowledge and information is an underpinning aspect of ensuring cultural sustainability. Public libraries operate cultural rights by providing free access to books, digital resources, artistic works, and heritage materials regardless of socio-economic status (IFLA, 2019).

Digital libraries and open access initiatives which can be introduced by the public libraries further enhance this role by enabling wider exposure for cultural related information and dissemination of cultural content for wider community regardless of geographical or linguistic limitation. But this initiative should address issues of digital exclusion particularly to ensure intellectual property and human rights. However, for maintaining sustainable access for a collection requires balanced openness with ethical considerations, including cultural sensitivity, intellectual property, and informed consent from bearers and community—particularly in relation to Indigenous knowledge.

Public library strategies toward Sustainable Development Agendas

Libraries always greatly contribute to achieving sustainable development goals at their strategic directions and activities. However, their representation in country's development plans and sustainability policies appears very low. Sustainability frameworks and plans worldwide frequently assess library's role in terms of their social impact, economic return, or environmental performance. But inherent cultural value of libraries as a cultural institution and community hub for promoting, disseminating and transmission of culture always remain overlooking.

However, integration of cultural sustainability into library policy, would be more holistic approach to achieve valid outcomes such as identifying heritage preservation, cultural participation, and ensuring identity, diversity and intellectual rights. Strengthening the library's role as advocacy for long-term institutional support for implementation of national cultural policies and achieving global agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals is highly required to align public library strategies with national development mechanism.

Issues and challenges for Public Libraries towards cultural Sustainability

Public libraries face substantial issues and challenges in sustaining their cultural role and responsibility including administrative barriers, funding constraints, digital transformation and shifting policy priorities. The emphasis on measurable economic or social outcomes can marginalize cultural functions that are harder to quantify (Holden, 2004). Moreover, lack of training in professional role on cultural intervention in such as cultural safeguarding, cultural documentation and ethical consideration of heritage management may constrain the capacity of libraries to engage greatly with cultural sustainability. Skills development of librarians, interdisciplinary collaboration with communities and other cultural institutions, and enhance research practice are essentials to overcome these challenges.

The way forward: Cultural sustainability through libraries

Public libraries play a vital but still underprioritized role in cultural sustainability. Apart from the development of cultural related collection, heritage preservation through community participation, cultural inclusion, providing equitable access to cultural knowledge and resources for sustaining cultural continuity are crucial strategies for public libraries. However, this role is still lacking in recognition within sustainability discourse and policy frameworks in administrative directions of many countries. Therefore, the role of public libraries must be redefined as key stakeholders for ensuring cultural sustainability rather than their traditional role of social services. Proper integration of cultural sustainability into library strategic directions such as research, policy, and practice are essential to ensure that public libraries are vital to sustaining culture for present and future generations.

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2. Predatory Publishing in the Scholarly Context

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Introduction

The trend of publishing is both emerging and concerning among scholars and researchers. Over the years, there has been an increase in the number of academic publishers. This growth has also given rise to what are known as predatory journals, which are considered dishonest. A predatory journal is an exploitative or inferior academic publication that requests publication fees while failing to provide sufficient editorial and publishing services (Elmore & Weston, 2020). Hence, these journals can be defined as those involve an illegitimate publication process and lack the basic standards and publication ethics. Most of the journals publish the work soon after receiving the publication fee without any peer review process. In contrast, high-quality academic journals take their time reviewing and publishing articles because manuscripts are rigorously reviewed and edited in preparation for publication.

Predatory journals exploit the open-access publishing framework by imposing publication fees without delivering standard peer-review or editing services. This type of publishing typically follows an author-pays model, where the author pays a fee to publish their research online. However, predatory publishers frequently misuse the author-pays model for their own gain. It is important to note that not all open-access journals are predatory. There are many reputable open-access journals across various fields. These journals charge publication fees, referred to as article processing charges, but uphold high standards for peer-review and editing services. Additionally, open-access journals eliminate paywalls for readers, allowing their articles to reach a broader audience and providing a citation advantage for authors.

Predatory publishing was first highlighted by Jeffrey Beall, a librarian, in 2008. (Beall's List – of Potential Predatory Journals and Publishers, n.d.). He also put forward a tentative definition for this new concept in 2010. These publishers are predatory because their mission is not to promote, preserve, and make available scholarship; instead, their mission is to exploit the author-pays, open-access model for their own profit. They work by spamming scholarly e-mail lists, with calls for papers and invitations to serve on nominal editorial boards. Also, these publishers typically provide little or no peer-review. In fact, in most cases, their peer review process is a facade. None of these publishers mentions digital pres-

ervation. Indeed, any of these publishers could disappear at a moment's notice, resulting in the loss of its content (Moher et al., 2017).

Besides predatory publishing, there are also predatory conferences. The most recent definition of predatory journals and publishers was published in Nature. This definition was agreed upon at the Predatory Summit in Ottawa, Canada, in April 2019.

"Predatory journals and publishers are entities that prioritize self-interest at the expense of scholarship and are characterized by false or misleading information, deviation from best editorial and publication practices, a lack of transparency, and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices." (Cukier et al., 2020; Grudniewicz et al., 2019)

Features of Predatory Journals

Title of the journal and impact factors

- Predatory journals are disguised with the title Global, International, World, American, European, Advanced Journal of…, etc
- Having the same name as that of some established journals causing confusion for authors
- Grand words or claims are used on the journal's website instead of verifiable facts
- Market their impact factor
- Display of unofficial impact factors
- False claims of being indexed in major indexing services like Web of Science, PubMed or DOAJ
- The Index Copernicus value is promoted on the home page of the journal.

Editor and editorial board members

- Appointing fake editorial board
- Details regarding editorial board members are not available if searched online, based on the affiliation provided
- Origin of editor and editorial board members. Editors and members of the editorial board frequently come from a variety of countries, often unrelated to each other, and lack a direct connection to the journal's declared focus or geographical area.
- The journal editor or staff send unsolicited emails to people and invite them to submit papers
- Manuscripts are requested to be submitted via email.

Scope of journal

- Predatory journals solicit submissions from a range of fields such as medicine, engineering, technology, humanities, and business management to gather a wide array of manuscripts and generate profit.

Publication turnaround time

- Numerous journals advertise a 'quick turnaround time' from submission to publication. The so-called 'fake' online journals rapidly publish articles, which attract young researchers who are keen to get published at any expense.
- A credible journal usually takes between six months and a year to process an article until it is published, although some may offer a mechanism for earlier online publication.
- There is an absence of a retraction policy.

Guidelines/instructions to authors

- Numerous predatory journals and publishers often replicate author guidelines from reputable publishers.
- Several articles published in these journals disregard the requirements outlined in the instructions for authors.
- The goal is not to disseminate scientific knowledge but to generate revenue from submitted works.

Structure and language of the articles

- Upon examining the articles released in these predatory journals, it is evident that they are inadequately composed.
- The submissions that are accepted for publication often contain numerous typographical and grammatical mistakes.
- Many of the published papers display clear errors in their content, language, or formatting.

Why do authors publish in predatory journals?

Early career researchers might become victims of predatory journals for a number of reasons:
- Expectations to publish: Numerous institutions demand regular publications for career progression.
- Insufficient knowledge: Predatory journals take advantage of researchers who are unaware of genuine publishing standards.
- Misleading practices: Deceptive emails, fack impact factors, and fabricated editorial boards foster an illusion of credibility.
- Time pressures: Predatory journals offer quick publication, which is attractive to those under tight deadlines.

Risk of publishing in Predatory journals

- Your research might undergo minimal or no peer review: The absence of established academic publishing standards could endanger the quality of your findings.
- Your research might remain unpublished: You might lose the option to submit your work to other publishers if you have waived your copyright

- Your research could be hard to locate: Works published by predatory publishers are rarely included in academic databases, leading to diminished readership and citation rates.
- Your research might be lost over time: If predatory publishers cease operations, their websites may disappear, making the works unrecoverable.
- Damage to reputation: Publishing in predatory journals or conferences can negatively impact both your institution and you

How to identify high-quality journals

The genuine journal has undergone a review process and meets specific criteria set by journal indexers such as Web of Science, DOAJ, PubMed, Scopus, EBSCO, etc. To minimize the risk of submitting to a predatory journal, consider the following key indicators. If most of these criteria are satisfied, the journal is likely to be legitimate. In contrast, if numerous warning signs emerge, it is advisable to avoid the journal.

- Being listed in certain resources can suggest that a journal is reputable. Check the Directory of Open-Access Journals (DOAJ) to see if the journal is included. The DOAJ thoroughly assesses open-access journals for eligibility. If the journal in question is not found in the directory, it may raise concerns.
- Look up the NLM Catalog to find out if the journal is included in MEDLINE, the most extensive subset of PubMed. If the journal is not currently listed in MEDLINE, its credibility could be in doubt.
- Search Cabell's Predatory Reports to determine if the journal has been identified for engaging in predatory publishing practices. Cabell's International is a profit-making organization that offers two subscription-based journal directories: Cabell's Whitelist, which includes journals confirmed to deliver high-quality peer review and clear business operations, and Cabell's Blacklist, which features journals with questionable business behaviors.
- Check the Journal Citation Reports (JCR) database to verify whether the journal has an impact factor. The JCR impact factor is granted only to journals that have been approved by the database. If a journal states it has a JCR impact factor but is not listed in the database, it may not be credible. Keep in mind that not all journals are monitored in the JCR database. Newly established journals need to accumulate citation records before they can be considered for inclusion in the database.
- A recommended resource for identifying predatory publishers is "Beall's List," a frequently updated report developed by Jeffrey Beall that helps verify whether a journal is reputable (https://beallslist.net/).
- ThinkCheckSubmit.org is a non-profit platform that offers a guide with steps for assessing the quality of journals (https://thinkchecksubmit.org/).
- The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) is an association of publishing organizations committed to maintaining specific standards for ethical publishing. The COPE website features a searchable directory of credible publishers and journals.
- The SCImago Journal Rank is a complimentary online resource that offers metrics on journal citation frequencies derived from data in the Scopus database. Utilizing SCImago can assist you in determining whether a journal is included in a primary citation database and in recognizing other reputable journals within your field of study.
- Ulrich's Periodicals Directory is a credible resource that contains detailed information

on more than 300,000 serial publications of all kinds globally, including academic and scholarly journals, peer-reviewed titles, open access journals, digital publications, newspapers, and more.

Conclusions

Recent findings indicate that predatory journals and publishers are becoming popular and will likely continue to create significant challenges for the genuine scientific community unless measures are implemented to combat them. It is vital to educate researchers on how to recognize credible journals. Higher education institutions and the University Grants Commission (UGC) should raise awareness about predatory journals and establish clear guidelines to help distinguish legitimate journals from fraudulent ones. While restricting academic freedom can be difficult, it is imperative to guarantee quality assurance in professional advancement. It is important to acknowledge that Beall's List provides valuable information but is also contentious, and it should not serve as the exclusive basis for decision-making. Moreover, it is recommended to assess any journal thoughtfully before submitting your work rather than relying solely on lists of predatory or reputable journals. Keeping these lists unbiased and consistently updated can be quite challenging.

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Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Library

The Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS) is the country's leading autonomous policy research institute, established by the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka Act, No. 53 of 1988. IPS was created to support national development by providing independent, high-quality research and policy analysis to inform evidence-based decision-making. The Institute's vision is to contribute to a prosperous and inclusive Sri Lanka through sound economic and social policy, while its mission emphasizes rigorous research, informed policy advice, public dialogue, and capacity building.

Ms. K.A. Vishaka Narmada
Assistant Librarian

Ms. G.H. Thilanka Prasadi
Library Assistant

Aligned with this mandate, the IPS Library, also known as the Information Resource Centre (IRC), functions as a specialized research library supporting students, researchers, policymakers, and development professionals.

IPS Staff Using the Library

Role and Scope of the IPS Library

The IPS Library is recognized as an excellent national resource for economic policy and development literature, covering both Sri Lankan and international perspectives. Importantly, it serves as the national repository for grey literature related to economic policy in Sri Lanka, preserving and providing access to valuable research outputs that are often unavailable through commercial publishing channels.

Subject Coverage and Collections

The Library's collections are carefully developed to support IPS's research agenda. Major subject streams include:

- Macroeconomic Policy
- Trade and Competitiveness
- Migration and Urbanization
- Health, Education, and Labour
- Agriculture and Agribusiness Development
- Poverty and Social Welfare
- Environment, Natural Resources, and Climate Change
- Induction Training
-

The IPS Library maintains diverse information formats, including:Monographs

- Research reports and annual reports
- Journals
- Newspaper articles
- Audio-visual materials

Library Services

The IPS Library provides a comprehensive range of user-focused services designed to support policy research and analysis.

- **Borrowing Services**

Borrowing facilities are provided to internal IPS staff in accordance with the Library Circulation Policy. Materials may be borrowed for 14 days, with the option to renew for an additional 14 days if required

- **Current Awareness Services (CAS)**

Current Awareness Services are a key feature of the IPS Library. These include:

- Top Stories compiled from daily newspapers
- Sunday Top Stories based on Sunday newspapers
- Circulation of New Arrivals
- New Funding Alerts relevant to research activities

These services ensure that researchers remain informed about current economic, social, and policy developments.

Electronic Reference Services

The Library provides an e-reference service, assisting users by locating and sending journal articles, books, and book chapters upon request, thereby saving researchers valuable time.

- **Intra-Library and Online Access Services**

The IPS Library offers several digital access points to facilitate efficient information retrieval:

- Intra Library Service via the internal network
- Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) for searching the Library's holdings
- EconSpace Digital Library, which functions as the IPS digital repository for institutional knowledge resources

Online Public Access Catalogue

Econspace Digital Library

- **Electronic Resources and Databases**

To enhance access to current and authoritative information, the IPS Library provides:

- E-paper access to leading local newspapers, including Daily FT, Daily Mirror, Sunday Times, Daily News, Sunday Observer, The Morning, and Sunday Morning
- Online magazine access to The Economist
- Access to online databases supporting academic and policy research

In addition, the Library subscribes to international and local journals and provides access to major scholarly databases such as JSTOR, supporting high-quality research and analysis.

- ## Library Automation and Digital Infrastructure

The IPS Library is fully automated using the KOHA Integrated Library Management System, enabling efficient cataloguing, circulation, and resource management. Digital library services are provided through DSpace (EconSpace), ensuring long-term preservation and access to IPS publications and institutional outputs. An IPS Intranet further supports internal archiving and seamless access for staff.

Conclusion

The IPS Library (Information Resource Centre) plays a critical role in advancing the mission and vision of the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka. As a national repository for policy-related grey literature and a provider of specialized services such as Current Awareness Services, e-reference support, digital library access, and newspaper and database services, the Library exemplifies the evolving role of special libraries in the digital age. Its integrated use of KOHA, DSpace (EconSpace), and intranet-based services demonstrates a strong commitment to innovation, accessibility, and excellence in library and information services in Sri Lanka.

05   Publications, Awards and Achievements

5.1. Vice Chancellor's Award for Research Excellence

Mr. M. N. Ravikumar, Senior Assistant Librarian, was awarded the Vice Chancellor's Award on Output-Based Research – 2024 in recognition of his research publication in a Scopus-indexed journal. The award was conferred at the Meritorious Service Awards and Felicitation Ceremony held on 29th October 2025 at the Eastern University, Sri Lanka. This prestigious award recognizes outstanding research contributions that demonstrate academic excellence and measurable research output. Mr. Ravikumar's achievement highlights the growing research engagement and scholarly contributions of library professionals within the higher education sector. His accomplishment also reflects the important role of librarians in advancing knowledge creation and research dissemination at the institutional and national levels.

5.2. Outstanding Presenter Award at ICULA 2025

R. M. Nadeeka Rathnabahu, Senior Lecturer, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Kelaniya, was awarded Outstanding Presenter at the International Conference of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka (ICULA 2025), held on 2nd October 2025 at the Galle Face Hotel, Colombo.

5.3. *Professional Development Achievement in Sustainable Education*

R. M. Nadeeka Rathnabahu, Senior Lecturer, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Kelaniya, completed the INCLIDES: Inclusive Commonwealth Learning for Interdisciplinary Development and Education for Sustainability short course offered by University College London, United Kingdom, on 30th November 2025. The program focuses on integrating sustainability into interdisciplinary curricula through innovative pedagogical approaches and aligns closely with her academic work in Library and Information Science education. Under the guidance of Prof. Anne Preston and her team at University College London, Ms. Rathnabahu enhanced her curriculum development skills and applied an Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) lens to develop a comprehensive Library and Information Science curriculum aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 16, and 17.

Outreach activities

06

6.1. Sri Lanka Library Association Promotes Reading Culture through National-Level Engagements

In line with its continued commitment to promoting a strong reading culture across Sri Lanka, the Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA) actively engaged with the public through a series of significant events held in celebration of National Reading Month and Library-related commemorations in 2025. These initiatives reflected SLLA's leadership role in advocating reading, library development, and community engagement.

As part of the National Reading Month, the Department of the Auditor General organized a special program on 16th October 2025 under the theme "Are People Moving Away from Reading?". On this occasion, the President of the Sri Lanka Library Association, Mr. Sugath Gunathilaka, delivered a special lecture addressing contemporary reading trends, challenges to reading habits, and the evolving role of libraries in sustaining a reading society.

On 15th October 2025, the Aquinas Library marked Reading Day by introducing an innovative concept titled "Let's Make Every Space Gap a Reading Environment." As part of this initiative, an unused area beneath the library staircase was creatively transformed into an inviting reading corner using old and rare books. The event was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Dr. Sylvester Ranasinghe, Vice Chancellor of Aquinas College, in the presence of Special Guests Prof. Ruwan Gamage, Mr. Sugath Gunathilaka, President of SLLA, and Senior Professor Sandagomi Coperahewa, highlighting the importance of creative library spaces in fostering reading habits.

Further extending its outreach, Gampaha Parakrama Maha Vidyalaya celebrated Patakabhimani 2025 – Library Day with enthusiasm at the school's main hall on 4th November 2025. The highlight of the event was a special guest lecture delivered by Mr. Sugath Gunathilaka, President of the Sri Lanka Library Association. The event was further distinguished by the participation of Ms. Visakha Narmada, General Secretary of SLLA, underscoring the Association's support for school library development and reading promotion among students.

Collectively, these engagements demonstrate the Sri Lanka Library Association's active representation in public and educational spaces, reaffirming its mission to strengthen reading culture, enhance library visibility, and inspire communities to embrace reading as a lifelong practice.

6.2. First School Library Automated in the Eastern Province

The Library of Vincent Girls' National School, Batticaloa has been successfully automated using the Koha Integrated Library Management System by Mr. M N Ravikumar, Senior Assistant Librarian, Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

The library has been upgraded and equipped with modern facilities, and all books have been classified and organized according to the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system, aligning the library with international standards. Mr. M N Ravikumar, provided technical support and consultancy for this remarkable project.

This is the first school library automated in the Eastern Province, Sri Lanka. The official launch of automated library system was held on 24th September 2025 and was graced by the Zonal Director along with the principal teachers, SDC members, alumni, and students, marking a significant milestone for the school and the Eastern Province. This project was fully funded by the generous contribution of a proud past pupil of the school. It is a great step forward for school libraries in the region.
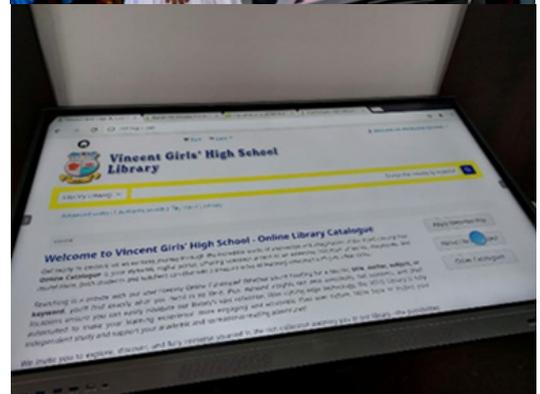
6.3. School Library Week Programs Promote Reading Culture among Students

In line with ongoing efforts to promote reading habits and effective library use among school students, two School Library Week programs were successfully conducted in schools in the Matara education zone during October 2025, with the participation of the Sri Lanka Library Association representative.

Malimbada Sri Sumedha Maha Vidyalaya organized "Vikasitha Semarum" Library Week 2025 on 30th October 2025, attracting nearly 200 students. The program aimed to encourage reading habits and the effective use of library resources among learners. Ms. Sakunthala Senevirathna, Senior Assistant Librarian of the University of Ruhuna, participated as the Chief Guest and delivered an informative address highlighting the importance of reading books and the effective utilization of library services. In addition to a reading camp, the program included several competitions and activities, such as awards for the most frequent library reader, best short story and novel scriptwriter, best poet, and best art drawing. The students' enthusiastic participation contributed significantly to the event's success.

Similarly, Matara Jamburegoda Maha Vidyalaya organized a School Library Week on 31st October 2025, with the participation of nearly 80 students and members of the teaching staff. Ms. Sakunthala Senevirathna participated as the Chief Guest and Resource Person, delivering an insightful address on the role of literature in maintaining a balanced and meaningful life. Students actively engaged in the program activities, making the event an enriching and educational experience.
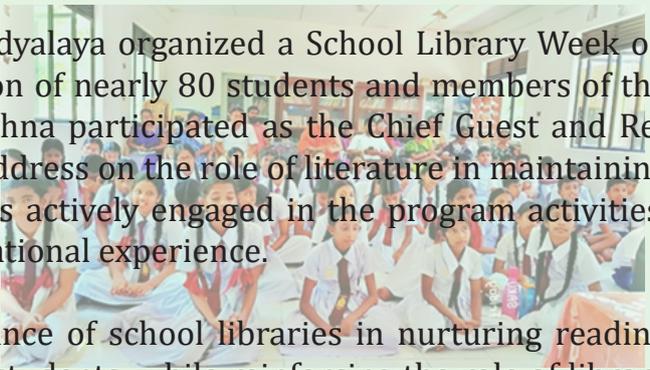
Both initiatives highlighted the importance of school libraries in nurturing reading habits and literary appreciation among students, while reinforcing the role of library professionals in supporting school-level literacy and learning.

6.4. Professional Contributions to Research Skills and Public Library Development

Mr. M. N. Ravikumar contributed to professional development initiatives through two workshops conducted in October and November 2025, supporting both academic research activities and public library services.

As part of efforts to enhance research skills among students, Mr. Ravikumar conducted a workshop titled "Citing Literature using Mendeley Reference Manager" for final-year students engaged in research projects. The workshop was held on 4 November 2025 at the E-Resources Unit of the Main Library. The session focused on effective citation practices and the use of the Mendeley reference management tool to support academic writing.

In a separate initiative, Mr. Ravikumar served as the resource person for the workshop on "Modern Library Management Practices," organized by the Manmuni Pradeshiya Sabha, Arayampathy, on 15 October 2025. The workshop aimed to enhance the knowledge and professional skills of public librarians in modern library management. Public librarians from Manmuni, Koralaipattu West, Porativu Pattu, and Eravur Pattu Pradeshiya Sabhas participated in the program.

These initiatives reflect continued efforts to support capacity building in both academic and public library sectors through knowledge sharing and professional engagement.
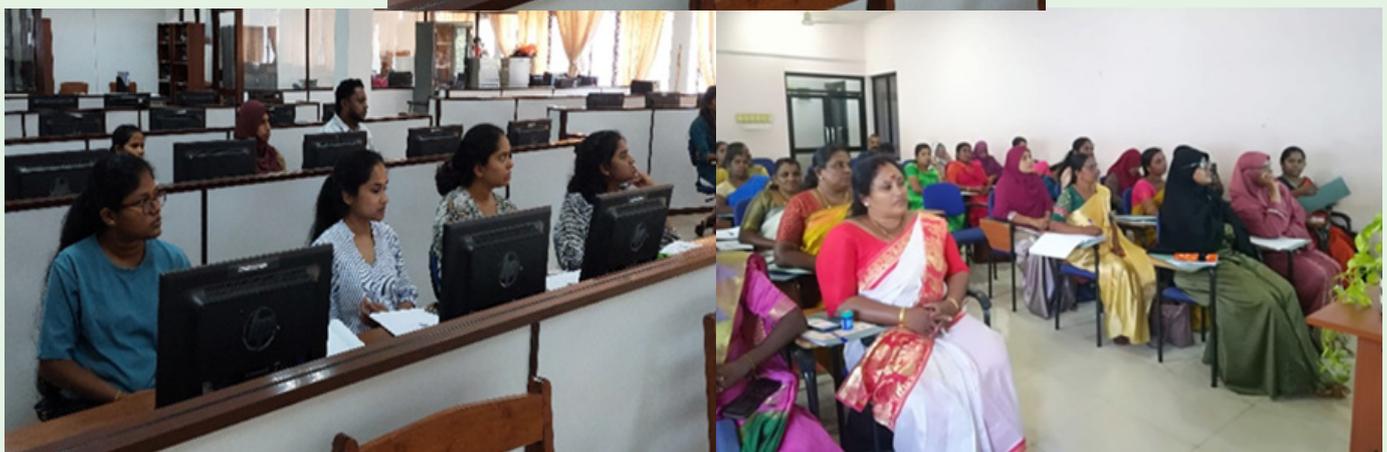
6.5. Workshop on Library Management for Effective Library Services

The Matara Municipal Council, through the Matara Kumarathunga Munidasa Public Library, organized a workshop on Library Management for Effective Library Services on 14th November 2025 at the Kumarathunga Munidasa Public Library. The program was conducted for staff members of the main library and its three branch libraries, with the participation of nearly 25 library staff members. Mr. Lal Pannila, Deputy Librarian of the University of Ruhuna, and Ms. Sakunthala Senevirathna, Senior Assistant Librarian of the University of Ruhuna, served as the resource persons. The workshop focused on enhancing professional competencies and strengthening the delivery of effective library services to the public.

6.6. Academic Leadership in International and Interdisciplinary Conferences

Ms. R. M. Nadeeka Rathnabahu, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Science, demonstrated academic leadership by serving as Session Chair at two major international and interdisciplinary conferences held in October and November 2025.

On 2nd October 2025, Ms. Rathnabahu served as Chair at the International Conference (ICULA 2025) organized by the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka, held at the Galle Face Hotel, Colombo. The conference was conducted under the theme "Navigating Disinformation and Misinformation: What's Next in Librarianship?", addressing critical challenges and emerging responsibilities of librarians in the contemporary information landscape.

In addition, Ms. Rathnabahu served as Chair of a Technical Session at the 2nd International Research Conference on Interdisciplinary Approaches (IRCIA 2025), held on 16th November 2025 at the NIIBS Campus. The session focused on "AI in Library Automation and Smart Services," highlighting the growing role of artificial intelligence in modern library systems and information services.

These engagements reflect Ms. Rathnabahu's active contribution to national and international academic discourse and her role in advancing scholarly dialogue in librarianship and interdisciplinary research.

4.   6.   **Any other News**   **07**

7.1. Paper Presentation at ICULA 2025

R. M. Nadeeka Rathnabahu, Senior Lecturer, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Kelaniya, presented a research paper titled "Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Approach to Library and Information Science Education in Sri Lanka: A Case Study" at the International Conference of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka (ICULA 2025), held on 2nd October 2025 at the Galle Face Hotel, Colombo.

7.2. Academic Service as Reviewer in National and International Platforms

Ms. R. M. Nadeeka Rathnabahu, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Kelaniya, serves as a reviewer for several national and international academic platforms, contributing her expertise to scholarly publishing and research quality assurance.

In 2025, she served as a reviewer for the 1st International Library Research Symposium (i-LRS 2025) organized by the University of Colombo under the theme "Social Responsibility of Librarians: Leveraging Information for Sustainable Development" (12th December 2025); the International Research Symposium 2025 organized by the National Institute of Library and Information Sciences, University of Colombo, themed "Innovative Libraries, Inclusive Communities: Building Bridges Through Knowledge" (30th October 2025); and the 15th International Conference of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka (ICULA 2025) held under the theme "Navigating Disinformation and Misinformation: What's Next in Librarianship?" (2nd October 2025). In addition, she serves as a reviewer for the Sri Lanka Library Review (SLLR) published by the Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA).

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