

CHITTAGONG UNIVERSITY LIBRARY



A treasure trove of knowledge

SHAHADAT HOSSAIN

Chittagong University Library is one of the richest libraries in the country with collection of rare books, journals, audio-visual materials, manuscripts and Braille books for the students with disabilities.

The library started its journey in November 1966, with the inauguration of the university with limited staff and only 300 volumes of books at a temporary building.

Md Ataur Rahman was the first assistant librarian.

Shamsul Alam, first librarian, and 20 staff were appointed on October 16, 1968.

The library was shifted to the present administrative building in 1973 and its own building in November, 1990.

It has now 2,72,818 books, 31,470 journals, 2,157 rare books, 565 manuscripts and 200 Braille books.

The three-storied library building has separate reading rooms for the researchers, teachers and students of different faculties and institutes.

There is an administration section, office of the librarian, processing section, binding section and arts reading room on the ground floor.

Science reading room, BBA, Law and Social Science Reading Room, Manuscripts and rare books section are on the first floor and reference section, periodical section and research room are on the mezzanine floor.

There are 24 rooms for individual study and research for M Phil and Ph D students in the library.

The library remains open from 8:00am to 8:00pm in the working days.

A total of 66 staff and officials run the library.

Most of the 20,000 students use the library as buying of all books is not possible for them. Around 400 to 500 students use the library daily.

There is also an auditorium in the library for holding cultural programmes, meeting, seminar and symposium.

The library is providing the students and researchers with latest information through Internet services that encourage the students and teachers to increase their reading habit. Researchers from home and abroad also use the library frequently.

Most of the students use the library as buying of all books is not possible for them. Around 500 students use the library daily.

The photocopy section provides the service of photocopy at lower cost to the students as they are not allowed to take books outside the library.

There are rare collections of manuscripts in Bangla, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Urdu written during the period from 1872 to 1953.

Besides, there are around 2,157 old and rare books of Bangla, Persian, Urdu, French, Russian and Arabic languages. Apart from

these, there are around 1,200 audio-visual materials.

In the rare and old book sections, there are around 4,000 old magazines including Onusandhan, Prabha, Purbavash, Praci, Sourav, Al Islam, Arya Darshan, Bulbul, Nabya Bharat, Dilruba and Protiva. Abdul Karim Shahitya Bisharad collected these magazines during the period from 1878 to 1953. After his death, his nephew Dr Ahmed Sharif presented these collections to the CU library.

Almost all the national and local dailies are found in the library.

Rafiqul Islam, a student of history, said, "I think CU library is one of the largest and richest libraries in our country and it is greatly helping the students to spread their world of knowledge". He urged the authorities to enrich the magazine section of the library with magazines from home and abroad.

The university should modernise the library with full air-conditioned services as excessive heat of summers hampers the study here, said Simu Dey, a student of Social Sciences Faculty.

Around 35 students with disabilities are studying in the university. The university authorities opened a 'Disabled corner' in the library on December 4, 2010.

Zahirul Islam, a visually impaired student, said they are grateful to the authorities for opening a corner for them.

He said if the authorities provide more books in the corner for the students with disabilities related to their academic studies it will be more helpful for them.

Acting Librarian S M Abu Taher said they need more funds to enrich the library further.

He also asked the organisers and the officials to maintain quality in work at the meeting at Circuit House auditorium.

He was addressing the high officials of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC), Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), Power Development Board (PDB).

Meanwhile, CDA officials at a press conference said the construction work of approach road to Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium would be completed within mid-February. They, however, said to complete the beautification work it will need February.

He also urged the hawkers to open accounts in the Krishibank.

Mahiuddin, an adviser of NHL, Chittagong,

advised the hawkers to keep in good terms with the agents as well as the owners of the newspapers.

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