

The University of Malaya Library: a Review of Developments in 1985

Abstrak: Pada tahun 1985 kemajuan Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya disokong dengan berkesan oleh pihak berkuasa Universiti dan masyarakat kampus. Sokongan ini ditunjukkan dengan pemberian kemudahan fizikal dan kewangan kepadanya. Bumbung yang lama rosak diperbaiki; dinding dibersihkan dan dicatkan semula; peralatan yang berharga disediakan. Tambahan pula, separuh daripada potongan peruntukan 1984 diperuntukkan semula; dan semua jawatan kanan yang kosong dipenuhi. Tahun ini sistem Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya, serta beberapa koleksinya, semakin bertambah besar. Perpustakaan merakamkan penghargaan yang tidak terhingga kepada semua pihak Universiti yang berkenaan.

1985 was significant in that a few major developments took place in the Library. Developments concern the library buildings and infrastructures; the collections; the library system; finance; and the staff.

LIBRARY REPAIRS AND RENOVATIONS

Roof Repairs

For the first time in over 20 years significant renovations were made to the library building. Leaks in various places have long plagued the Library. In recent years, books would be drenched, including valuable books in the Bahagian Koleksi Kebangsaan, and parts of the Library would be flooded after heavy rain.

From June/July, hundreds of square metres of roof were repaired. By December 1985, for the first time in many years, custodians of the books could continue to sleep peacefully in even the heaviest of thunderstorms.

Cleaning and Repainting

For as long as many of today's readers can remember, the Library has looked grimy and untidy on the outside, and gloomy and dreary inside. Walls were filthy, bits and pieces of skirting had long disappeared in places and the ceilings were splattered with dust-clogged air-conditioning vents.

Between June and December 1985, a complete clean-up job, inside and outside was effected. Years of grime have been washed away from the outside walls by heavy jets of water, and a fresh coat of anti-fungal paint applied.

Inside, the domineering black pillars that have added much to the gloom, were repainted, together with all wall areas, in lighter, more tranquil colours. A fresh coat of paint to all doors; a new coat of varnish to all wood areas; and cleaning of every pane of glass have dispelled much of the dreariness.

LIBRARIES AND COLLECTIONS

IPT Library

The Library of the Institute Pengajian Tinggi (IPT: Institute of Advanced Studies) was firmly recognized as being a component library within the general university library system. With the appointment of a Deputy Chief Librarian to the University who was also designated as the Librarian to the IPT, the IPT Library took off to a new level of expansion. Acquisitions policies were rationalized; research material and book collections were reorganized; and fresh acquisitive efforts were initiated to expand collections and bibliographical services in support of the Institute's research projects.

The Law Library

Initially one floor of the Phase IV of the library buildings situated near to the IPT had been allocated to the Law Library, with an estimated shelving area for 100,000 volumes. However, long before this figure was reached, the bigger-than-normal size of legal tomes threatened to overrun shelf space. By 1985 the 50,000 volumes in the Law Library were uncomfortably stacked and shelf accommodation had run out. The Law Librarian was immediately given the task of seeing to the expansion of the Law Library to two floors (levels 3 and 4) of Phase IV of the library buildings. This expansion should see the Law Library being able to accommodate about 150,000 volumes with some degree of comfort.

Bound Volumes Library

It was felt by the University administration that the 'red-spot' undergraduate reference collection (which since 1976, had been in the Phase IV library building), should better be relocated within the premises of the Main Library. With this shift, problems of shortage of

stacking space led inevitably to displacement of books from the main library stacks.

A Bound Periodicals Collection of some 120,000 volumes was therefore established, also in the Phase IV of the library buildings (in which is also located the IPT Library and the Law Library).

This exercise led to a general reshifting of all materials in the Main Library. It is conservatively estimated that about 800,000 volumes were shifted around and reshelved.

Non-Roman Script Collections

This period also saw the establishment of an Arabic script collection; and the location of five non-Roman script materials being placed on the same floor (level 4) in the Main Library. The Chinese, Korean and Japanese script collections (totalling 57,000 volumes); the Tamil script collection (estimated at about 20,000 volumes); and the Arabic script collection (totalling over 5,000 volumes); are now all shelved together on this level.

Engineering Library

Various problems at this faculty library resulted in the University Library being asked to take it over, and to incorporate it into the university library system. Staff have been assigned, and in November 1985 the newly constituted Engineering Library opened its doors to readers.

This Library will mainly cater to undergraduates in this Faculty. It will be the repository of the standards and patents collection on campus. It will duplicate a certain number of legal materials kept at the Law Library, especially those pertaining to industrial safety, patents, copyrights of inventions, etc.

EQUIPMENT

Computerization

1985 marked a year-long struggle by the Library to try to obtain a mini-computer system to implement a plan for an integrated computerization system within the Library. Some money has been funded and much of the paper work has been done. Hold-ups, however, at various levels have resulted in some disappointment as this project could not be realised by year's end.

However, to prepare for eventual computerized circulation processes, steps were taken in late 1985 to ensure that from 2 January 1986, the Library will begin barcoding all new books acquired.

The end of the year also saw another heartening note as the University released some library funds so that a personal computer (IBM PC-AT with 20 MB and printer) could be purchased. With this purchase

library staff are at last able to have hands-on experience on some minimal hardware and to effect some library processes such as inputting of original catalogue data, up-dating of certain listings, and processing routine work.

Microfiche duplicator

In June 1985 a longstanding request for a more modern microfiche duplicator was granted. For many years now each fiche has had to be developed manually under the most primitive methods, and probably none of the many libraries purchasing fiche from University of Malaya Library had realised this was one of the main reasons for delays in meeting requests.

With the installation of the new fiche duplicator in September 1985, better services from UML may be expected.

Guillotine

For some ten years now, since the re-location of the guillotine, bindery staff of the Library have had to make weekly trips to the university printing department to cut and trim, as the Library's small guillotine (Ideal 650) could only cut up to 2.5 inches (that is, good for only about 20% of the Library's total binding output).

In October 1985 a request to purchase a bigger guillotine which can cut up to 4 inches was granted. With the forthcoming installation of this new machine (by about April 1986) the many frustrations and delays would at last have been obliterated, and greater binding productivity is thus envisaged from 1986.

FINANCE

Tabung Penggantian Buku (Book Replacement Fund)

Up to this point in time, the University has taken the line that receipts to individual departments should be credited to the central coffers. With the support of Library Committee, and the general academic community, the financial authorities agreed to the Library keeping all subscriptions from the external membership; interest from deposits; fines and reimbursement in lieu of book losses. A fund was established solely for the purpose of replacing book losses. At year's end the fund stood at \$30,000, and book replacements have begun.

Book Vote

In 1984, the library grant for purchasing books and journals was cut by M\$500,000. Representations at various levels were made; and problems associated with library cuts explained to the highest university

authorities, who proved sympathetic. In 1985 half of this cut (\$250,000) was restored: the Library was enabled to resubscribe to 89 titles of 291 journal subscriptions cancelled in the previous year; and take on another 261 new journal titles.

A further point to note is a Council decision that from now on, where possible, the Library will be the *last* place from where cuts will be effected.* This decision alone places this University's administration as being one of the most enlightened to be encountered.

STAFF DEVELOPMENTS

1985 also saw some long-standing requests for upgrading of staff posts being effected. An upgrading exercise which had started in 1984 was finally finished in 1985. The total exercise resulted in twenty-two A22 officers being upgraded to the grade of A19; four A19 officers being appointed to the A11 grade; and five other officers to the A10 grade. The 1984/85 exercise also saw the Librarian and two Deputy Librarian posts being filled.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1985 therefore was a fairly good year for the Library. All these developments could not have been possible but for the help, support and encouragement from very many quarters and directions. We would like to

take this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge the help and support given to us by the Chairman and all members of the Library Committee. We are indebted to the top university administrators, especially those deciding on finance and development. As in the past, members of the Estates Office and security personnel were constantly supportive throughout the year. Without their help many shifts and changes throughout the year could not have been effected. Increased general interest by the academic community in the working, activity and problems of the Library has also been heartening, and has led, in many instances, to wholehearted support being given to the Library when needed. It is on this encouraging note that the Library looks forward to 1986.

SUPPLEMENTARY DETAILS

1. Repairs to roof	\$94,000
2. Painting of inside of Library	41,000
3. Cleaning and painting of outside of Library	19,730
4. Varnishing and polishing of all wooden surfaces in Library	9,850
	<u>\$164,580</u>

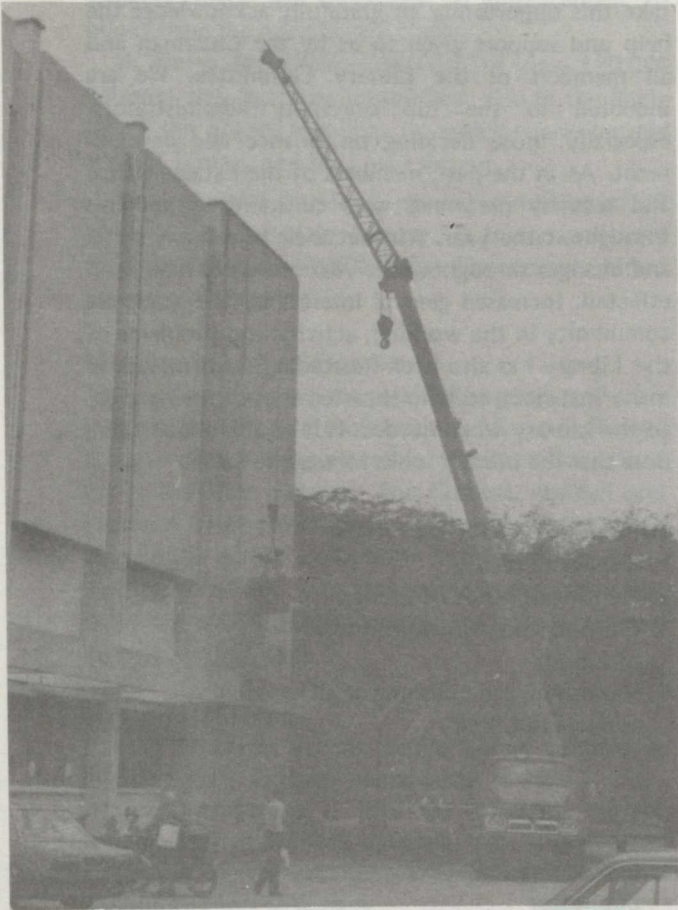
Equipment

1. Microcobra M1—Rotary fiche duplicator	\$24,200
2. Polar 76 SDP	32,000
3. IBM PC-AT (with basic accessories)	25,000 [†]
	<u>\$81,200</u>

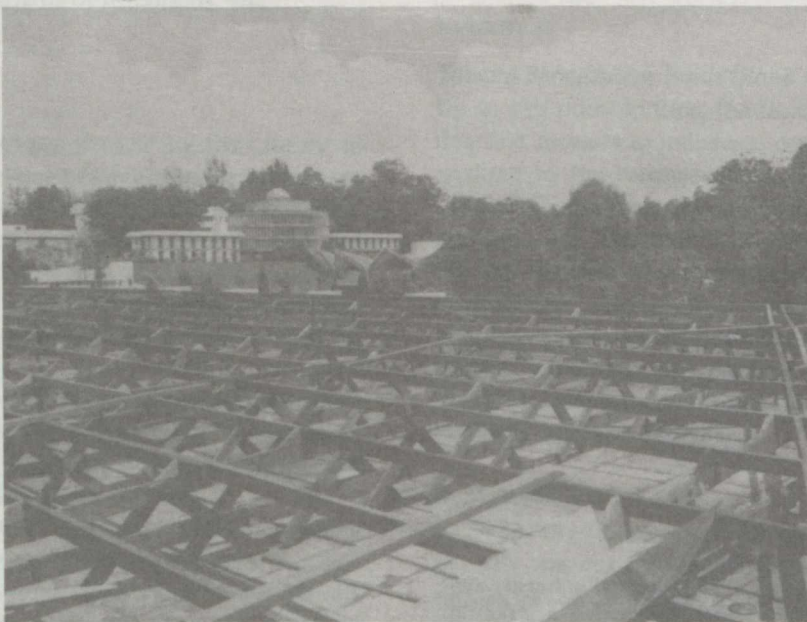
Chief Librarian.

*This has been borne out in 1986. The total university allocation has been cut; but the Library has received a 'standstill' budget.

[†]From Library's own accumulated funds.



1 & 2 Cleaning the outside of the library building.



3. Repairing the roof.