

DHAKA FRIDAY DECEMBER 13 1985

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT IN THE SECOND PLAN PERIOD

The commissioned additional floor space of 11,446 sq ft included Childrens Library and Administrative Block covering 5,723 sq ft in the ground floor and additional Book Stack in the first floor with the same floor-space. The other work components of the project include improvement of lawns and the surrounding land area compound wall, internal roads and repair of the existing building.

The project was officially completed by June 1984 and the Public Works Department undertook to complete the remaining works including electrification and water supply arrangement in a short while.

THANA PUBLIC LIBRARY-CUM-AUDITORIUM

Finding an appalling dearth of proper facilities for public reading and recreation during his extensive tour of the rural areas Late President Ziaur Rahman made a solemn commitment to the nation for the setting up of one Library-cum-Auditorium in each Thana. Subsequently in implementation of the Presidential commitment the local authorities were entrusted with the task of establishing the Thana libraries.

But the Divisional Development Board with their limited resources could only go for the construction of the buildings for the proposed Thana-Library-cum-Auditorium with no provision for equipping the same with necessary books and furniture, without which this infrastructural facility was absolutely inoperative.

The Ministry of Sports and Culture now Culture Affairs Division therefore, undertook a project entitled 'Development of Thana Public Library-cum-Auditorium' under the Second Five-Year Plan for furnishing these

Libraries with required books and furniture. To supplement effectively the poorly equipped institutional Libraries of the locality it was decided to supply 2,500 books initially selected to meet the local requirements, and necessary furniture to each Thana Library-cum-Auditorium. The cost of books and furniture for each Library estimated at Tk 30,000/00 and 70,000/00 respectively would require total sum of Tk 470.00 lac for the whole country. To avoid the resultant resource constraint the project, therefore, proposal to undertake 100 Thanas at the rate of 5 Thana in each district

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which would involve Tk 100.00 lac in course of the Second Plan period.

Thus the Second Five-Year Plan project: Development of Thana Public Library-cum-Auditorium was sponsored by the Ministry of Sports and Culture at an estimated cost of 101 lac including Tk 1 lac as cost of survey inspection etc and its execution was entrusted to the local authorities by the target date of June 1985.

The cumulative progress made against the project during the Plan-period was the equipment of 68 such Thana Library-cum-Auditorium with books and furniture at a cost of 42.66 lac. The funds for procurement of furniture totalling Tk 20.40 were utilised by the concerned Thana Library through the respective local administration while the National Book Centre was entrusted with the task of supplying books to 68 Libraries at a

DEVELOPMENT OF CHITTAGONG DIVISIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Chittagong Divisional Public Library owes its origin to the promulgation of Chittagong Muslim Institute Ordinance 1959 on the strength of which the Ministry of Education took over the Institute with a view to setting up a public library with free reading hall and an auditorium. The resultant establishment of Chittagong Public Library in pursuance of Key Report during the second Pre-independence Five-Year Plan was rather small with a reading hall floor-space of 2038 sq ft only which with the gradual increase in the reading public soon appeared quite inadequate. The Plan for rehousing the Library which was undertaken in first Five-Year Plan after liberation had to be deferred among other reasons due to lack of decision in respect of site-selection. Finally it was decided in 1981 that the Library would be rehabilitated in a new building at the Muslim Institute premises.

Accordingly the Second Five-Year Plan Projects: Development of Chittagong Divisional Public Library sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Division aimed at raising a four storied building with a total floor-space of approximately 46,000 sq ft with provision for further expansion. The tenure of the project proposed to extend beyond the second Plan period was scheduled from July 1983 to June 1988. Unfortunately two financial years in the Second Plan period expired without much progress. However a sum of Tk 15 lac was allocated in the year 1984-85 and steps were being taken to the ground-work of the project at the close of the Second Plan period.

DEVELOPMENT OF RAJSHAHI DIVISIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

In the wake of Government efforts for the setting up of a divisional-level Government Library at Rajshahi in pursuance of Key-Plan since pre-independence days, the First Five-Year Plan project for the Development of Rajshahi Divisional Public Library was revised for implementation in the Second Five-Year Plan. The project aimed at completion of the work left over after the Two-Year Approach Plan period for opening the Library to the public within the Plan period.

Of the total project cost of Tk 116.40, Tk 48.61 lac was already incurred up to June 30, 1980 and the remaining Tk 67.79 was committed in the revised Second Five-Year Plan project. The work components of the revised project was the completion of the main Library building with a total floor space of approximately 34,100 sq ft, other construction work including prayer hall, cycle-stand, canteen compound wall etc residential buildings, furniture, machinery and equipment purchase of books and pay and allowances of Officers and staff during the Plan period.

By June 1982 the work of the functional building was almost complete but though the organizational structure containing a manpower of 29 Officers and staff was approved no action could be taken for their recruitment and as such it was not possible to make the Library function before September 1982. About this time the Library was informally opened to the public as if by the touch of a magic wand with the assets and manpower of the erstwhile Bangladesh Parishad Rajshahi Centre and the remaining work, viz Canteen Cycle-stand internal roads and staff quarters was being expedited. The project was finally completed by June '83, of course eliminating the prayer hall and the auditorium from the plan.

EXTENSION OF KHULNA DIVISIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

In pursuance of Key-Report the Khulna Divisional Public Library was set up as back as 1965 with a modest floor-space of about 11,000 sq ft. The Key-Plan it may be recalled proposed for setting up three government Libraries, one each at Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi with the Central Public Library at the apex.

After liberation government designated the Khulna Divisional Public Library as the copyright Depository Library of the Division under the Copyright (amendment) Act, 1975. The function of the Library thus enlarged faced acute space shortage to accommodate all the copyright books as well as increasing number of books and reading public in its original function as a public Library.

As a result, a Tk 49.28 lac project entitled 'Extension of Khulna Divisional Public Library' was taken up under the Second Five-Year Plan with a view to meeting the increasing requirement of additional space for readers as well as other aspects of Library service. The project was finally revised in the year 1983-84 for Tk 61.15 lac and approved on April 1984. Sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Division the project's execution was entrusted to Public Works Department and Bangladesh Central Public Library, which was already declared the controlling agency with the amalgamation of the country-wide Library network belonging to the erstwhile Bangladesh Parishad.

THE most spectacular development witnessed in the field of Public Libraries during the Second Five-Year Plan period was the setting up of the long cherished chain of libraries in the country with the Central Public Library at the apex. For as much as this development did not take place as a result of a conscious planning process, it was it a part of the Second Five-Year Plan. But when the process was initiated it needed only a single administrative order for such unification of all Government-managed libraries which otherwise would have taken years of planning and implementation. Before the details of this new development is discussed we must deal with the salient features of the Second Five-Year Plan itself.

THE PLAN

In addition to undertaking the remaining works of the Central Public Library the Second Five-Year Plan envisaged the completion of Rajshahi Divisional Public Library, building the extension of Khulna Divisional Public Library, development of Thana Public Library-cum-Auditorium and construction of a new building for the Chittagong Divisional Public Library.

CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARY
The development of Bangladesh Central Public Library, a 90.90 lac project included the construction of third stack in the main Library building a six-flat staff quarters and the remaining work of the auditorium. In course of a lengthy period of 12 years from 1968 to the expiry of the First and Approach Plan period in 1980 the construction work of the functional building except the third stack was completed. The structural construction of the auditorium was also almost complete.

The revised Second Five-Year Plan entitled 'Development of Bangladesh Central Public Library' was therefore designed to complete the remaining works of the Central Public Library as per original Plan and design. Duration of the project was scheduled from July '80 to June '84 and the project cost was estimated at 90.90 lac. Sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Division the project was being implemented by Public Works Department and Bangladesh Central Public Library.

It was however felt that the normal function of the Library could not be fully operated as the manpower approved in the 'Rehabilitation of the Central Public Library' project had not been recruited so far for some reason or other. Hence in course of the implementation of the new project the recruitment of the required manpower was considered to be one of its main objectives.