Chapter 4  
Status of Public Libraries & other Information Mass Media

4.1 Introduction

The service of public Libraries and the other information mass media of Bhutan are still at infancy. All these mass media were introduced just four or five decades ago. The Bhutanese are belonging to oral tradition, and the growth of print media is going sluggish. Except Dzongkha and the Lhotshammikha (Nepali) language, the all other Bhutanese languages have no script. Because of this reason the people like to use radio and television rather than reading newspapers. According to the Media Impact Study (MIS) – 2003, conducted by the Ministry of Information and Communication, the television, particularly international channels had the strongest impact on urban society, especially on the youth. Radio has been the main influence on the rural population and the print media reached the literates and policy makers. The radio service reaches 77% of the population (MIS - 2003), 75% of the population having music tapes, of which rigsar is the popular one. All films are produced on digital video films. (Centre of Bhutan Studies: 2007)

4.2 The National Library & Archives of Bhutan

- Introduction and Background

The National Library & Archives of Bhutan (NLAB) is located in Thimphu, the capital of the Himalayan Dragon Kingdom is a major scriptural repository with a number of important functions dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the rich cultural and religious heritage in the country. The national scriptures and documents are fundamental sources for Bhutanese history, religion and culture.

The National Library was established in 1967 at the central tower (utse) of Tashi Chho Daong under the noble patronage of late Her Majesty, the Royal Grand Mother, Ashi Phuntsho Choden with only 140 volumes of old religious texts as its first holding. The primary objective of the library is to collect, preserve and promote literary works relating to religion, culture, history, philosophy and traditions of the kingdom. The multi-functional library now can boast itself on being a modern library with a number of services and research facilities. It accommodates a sizeable and a steadily growing stock of books,
scriptures and written documents as well as a huge amount of wood printing blocks for religious books. It treasures one the largest holdings of Mahayana Buddhist literature in the world, originally written in classical choekad choekad (chos skad), the lingua franca of the Lamaist world. The library also holds a representative collection of English and other languages; books mainly related to the Himalayas, Bhutan and Buddhism.

Initially affiliated to different ministries (such as the Ministry of Finance and the Home Ministry, Ministry of Social Services and finally the Home Ministry again) it was first accommodated within the premises of Tashichodzong but later in other localities. Due to its ever-expanding collection - in 1984 the library was relocated permanently on the present site under the National Commission for Cultural Affairs (NCCA).
The present library complex of the National library & Archives comprises a towering four-storyed white stone building. It mainly houses sacred Buddhist scriptures/texts written in the classical chokey language and Dzongkha. The scriptures symbolize one of the three aspects of Buddha that is sung, meaning the speech of the Buddha. These kinds of books are frequently found in monasteries and temples, so that the NLA building and its premises and precincts are designed in the form of a Lhakhang (monasteries and temples). The physical aspect of Buddha is represented by statues and paintings decorating the inside of the building. Each floor has a small traditional altar with images and mural paintings to provide an appropriate spiritual environment for the volumes of Buddhist scriptures.

- **Aims & Objectives**

The National Library of Bhutan has the goal that all Bhutanese, wherever they are, will have access to both Bhutan’s documentary heritage and to the information resources of the world. To achieve this, the National Library builds up and maintains a national collection of Bhutanese materials with the aim to provide an effective gateway to national and international resources of information in the near future. To achieve this plan, the National Assembly of Bhutan passed the Legal Deposit Act in materials to deposit them in the library.

The Library was established in 1967 and merged with the National Commission for Cultural Affairs in 1985. The National Library carries out the following functions:

- **Collection and preservation of ancient Bhutanese Literature on religion, cultural, history and social traditions.**
- **Preservation of old and rare books.**
- **Provision of facilities for research and other academic pursuits.**
- **Preservation of traditional xylographic blocks.**
- **Research and documentation of literary works and stories inherited through traditional and oral communication method.**
- **Promotion and publishing of literary works on traditional and contemporary themes.**
• Present Status:

The complex includes a two-storied building which houses the administrative wing where most of the staff are accommodated, the offices, technical equipment such as computer, the micro-film section as well as a special room housing the many wood blocks.

The archives building has the facilities of air-conditioning and fireproof with moveable shelves imported from Denmark. The NLA also has a fumigation house.

The National Library now has various sections like digital library and internet section, reference section, periodicals section, publications section and binding section. In digital library section the microfilming and word carving work has been taken place. The library also has an archives section which is newly established with a Trongza branch having 10,000 volumes of books.

The NLB is publishing a Newsletter for twice a year. The NLB also practices the traditional way of producing books by woodcarving. To generate some funds and ensure availability of rare and precious books, NLB has a small book shop. It sells books in chokey and other languages on Bhutan by Bhutanese.

• Library Sections and Collections:

Presently English books section has more than 6000 volumes mainly on Buddhism, Bhutan and neighbouring countries. In addition there are periodicals, magazines and news bulletins. The library also has 40 volumes of a Tripitaka in Pali (The Three Baskets of Buddha’s Teachings) in Burmese script and 50 volumes of a Sanskrit Tripitaka in Devanagari script. Books in English section have been classified according to Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme.

While 60% of the books are purchased by the library with its annual budget rest 40% are received as donations mainly from Japan Foundation, Taiwan, Germany and many other countries. The management has made a major effort to build a national imprint collection as well as a collection of other language materials especially in English, to meet the information needs of the nation.
The ground floor of the library has the world largest published book, recorded in Guinness World records, entitled BHUTAN, conceived, designed and produced by Michael Hawley, the faculty of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) published by MIT and Friendly Planet of Cambridge in 2004. This book, Bhutan measures 5x7 feet, weighs nearly 150 pounds, and presents an entire gallery exhibit of spectacular photographs in a single monumental volume.

The National Library has over 10000 volumes of religious texts in Choekey, one of the largest collections on Vajrayana or Mahayana Buddhism in the world. It covers the various subjects which are fundamental sources of philosophy, history, religion, mythology, paintings, astrology, medicine, culture. All these valuable texts are classified on the basis of the four major sects of Mahayana Buddhism (Nyingma, Kagyu, Sakya, and Gelug) and Bon Tradition (pre-Buddhist religion) in order to give convenient and prompt services to our distinguished scholars at home and abroad. Classification of Chokey books is difficult, it takes considerable time to catalogue and classify a single volume as there are so many sub titles and different authors. Frequently we find 10 to 15 authors and 20 to 30 different sub titles in one volume. So far no one has succeeded in developing a prefect system for Choeked materials.

The Bon Kanjur and Tenjur, published by Mirig Petrunkhang, China, were acquired through funding from the DANIDA Project. So far, there is no written record on the existence of Bon Tenjurs and Kanjurs in Bhutan.

Amongst the entire collection 6 sets of Kagyur, 4 sets of Tengyur, and one set of Bonpo Kagyur and Tengyur, and 13 volumes of scriptural manuscripts written in gold are considered as special collection, which have been transferred recently to the new Archive section. Here it is very important to mention that most of the scriptures that have been written in gold are up to 500 years old.

The national library has a plan to extend its database to include all important texts kept in other districts, by creating a centrally accessible body of texts as well as a national union catalogue of manuscripts and block prints.

A Choekad/Dzongkha font has been created by the project computer expert in close cooperation with our local calligraphers. Subsequently, this font has been approved by Royal
Government as the future standard for computer fonts to be used by all ministries and organizations.

- **Library Hours**

Two different schedules are practiced in the library. Every year during the period of March to October the library working hours for Sunday to Thursday is from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. In November to February the working hours for Sunday to Thursday is from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. The Library shall remain closed on Fridays, Saturdays and Government Holidays. The Library is open to all to browse in the Reading Room.

- **Membership**

There are two categories of users of Library Books. The first category is general readers and the other one is members. The general readers may browse through books, magazines and newspapers, but they are not permitted to take books out of the Library. The Members will be permitted to take books on loan, as well as to use the general facilities in the Reading Room.

- **Branch Library**

The National Library has a branch library in one of the palaces of the second king, Kunga Rabten is located on the way to Zhemgang District approximately 25 kms away from the main Trongsa town. This branch library is a depository library and has only Choekad collections. One copy each out of three copies of Choeked books purchased is deposited there for collection by the National Library.

- **Ongoing Projects of NLAB**

The project activities have taken place at NLAB in Thimphu. A scientifically reliable registration of the enormous holdings being the projects' key focal point, wherefore a NLB-customized classification and genre-based cataloguing system relevant to making inventory on a database, has been developed and implemented. Guidelines for the classification and cataloguing of the scriptural holdings have been applied to the specific development, programming and set-up of a WINISIS literary database. This is a
UNESCO-developed advanced non-numerical information and retrieval software system, programmed concomitant with the development of Bhutanese and chos skad fonts, invented and installed by one of the project experts.

The database, now is installed in the Library, database has proved to function well. It is unique of its kind in dealing with the specific character of the data found in the literature of this country.

In the course of the first three years of the project (1996-1999), technical equipment was procured and installed, followed by workshops and training in classification, methodology and computer science. After the new classification scheme had been approved, the staff were trained in the data input procedure of books and scripts, all taken from the library holdings, using the new classification and cataloguing system. By the middle year 2000 over 35,000 detailed so-called MFN-entries were registered in the database.

The second three-year project phase (1999-2001) was mainly dedicated to research and a mobile survey including scanning of documents. A 3 year III Phase project (2002-2004) is under review and will be implemented in July 2002 if approved. (National Library and Archives of Bhutan: 2006: 1-5)

- Archives: National Memory Bank

The National Archives is responsible for collecting and preserving important past, present and future documents on Bhutan for future generations.

In July 2000 Denmark signed an agreement with the Royal Government Bhutan to support the National Archives to provide assistance for the construction of a modern archive building. This two storied building, which was completed in 2004, is equipped with a modern security and fire alarm system as well as temperature and humidity control.

The repository rooms of the archives now house many important documents including old records, old letters and around seven thousand important photographs. The archives also hold microfilms of many other important documents. Particularly rare and important books and manuscripts from the National Library collection are also kept in the secure and controlled facilities of the Archives. Thus the archive is the foundation of a National Memory Bank.
• Microfilming Facility & Service

The National Library & Archives offers a free microfilming service for institutions and individuals within Bhutan holding important rare texts and documents. We actively encourage anyone holding such documents to bring them to the library for microfilming in order to ensure the long term preservation of the contents of these documents should anything happen to the original. Upon microfilming the original text or document will be returned to the provider along with one microfilm copy, and one copy will be held in our Archives in safe and secure controlled storage conditions.

• Conservation & Preservation

The Archives primarily deals with paper documents. Paper is composed of organic materials which deteriorate with the passage of time. Documents printed on modern paper often contain bleaches and other chemicals which can speed up this deterioration. Similarly photographs and film often contains chemical traces left over from processing which can cause deterioration. Therefore, when documents or photographs are selected for preservation it is important that they are treated to neutralize harmful these chemical residues.

Many old documents come to us in a fragile or damaged condition and must be carefully conserved or strengthened to ensure their long term preservation.

• Future Plans

In the 10th five year plan the National Archives plans to carry out a nation wide survey to determine where records of national importance are located; and in what form, shape and condition these records are being maintained. If such records are not being taken care of properly we will endeavour to assist the owners and custodians of these records to ensure their proper preservation.

The archives also plan to create special Oral History Tradition and Audio Visual Unit to survey, create and maintain Oral History and Audio Visual documentation for the nation.
• Outreach

To improve the service to the public and community, the National Archives plans to develop outreach programs for schools, institutions, scholars and the general public. This will include holding meetings, exhibitions and seminars; visiting schools, TV and Radio broadcasts, providing information through the press, as well as helping in the development of reading materials and textbooks. The archives also plan to make some of the interesting and important material held in our National Archives available online. (http://www.library.gov.bt/archive/index.html)

4.3 Public Library of Bhutan

The Jigme Dorji Wangchuk library is the only public library in Bhutan established in 1978. The library was established in collaboration with the Bhutan-India Friendship Association. From Aug 2000, the library is functioning under Thimphu City Corporation. The total area of the library building is approximately 150 mtr squires.

• Present Status

The population covered by the library is approximately 50000 people. The library has 260 registered members till the mid of October 2006. About 50 per cent of the members are children and students, 25 per cent are home makers and the rest are men. The membership fee is Nu. 50 for adults and Nu. 25 for children.

The library has different sections like Reference section, Periodicals section, Children section, Ladies section, and a Publications section.

At present the library has a collection of over 15500 volumes of books. The library collection of books has been arranged according to the Dewey decimal classification. In the periodicals section, there are very few magazines and newspapers are found. Except Time magazine all are from Bhutan and India.

At present, there only three staff are working in the library. They are one librarian with the qualification of BA. B.L.I.Sc., a library assistant with class X and a peon with class VI to serve the public.
Apart from the regular services of the library like circulation, reference services, the library also conducting some special programmes like Library talk. The library conducts a children’s reading program on every Saturdays and Mondays at schools in Thimphu.

Although the library is located in the center of Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, the library stands aloof and suffers from insufficient funds, lack of space and qualified staff, and a dire want of readers. Merely fifty percent of the books have not been catalogued due to lack of staff. The library has yet not been computerized. (Kuensel: dt. 22.10.2005: 5)

- **Budget**

The library has received Nu. one lakh in 2003-04 from the Ministry of finance, and then it has been raised to two lacks per year. In this current financial year the library has also received $10000 as donation from some of the International bodies.

- **Working Hours**

In summer the library remains open from 12.30 pm to 6.30 pm on week days that is from Monday to Friday and on Saturdays 11.00 am to 3.00 pm. In winter it opens from 12.30 pm to 5.00 pm on week days and from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm on Saturdays. The total number of working days is 245 days per year.

- **Future Plan**

The library is planning to make it as fully computerized library. The library also has an idea to produce mobile library services to reach out the rural areas to encourage people to read books.

**4.4 Monasteries & their book Collections**

In Dzongkha, a monastery is called a *goemba*. In Bhutan, the goembas are built atop rocky crags, caves or on remote hillsides. The primary reason for selecting the location is to keep the monks in peace and solitude. There are hundreds of goembas (monasteries) were built in Bhutan at the sacred caves that had previously been places of meditation. These monasteries have a good collection of books for its traditional education for the public. But at present all these books are used only for the monks and lamas.
Some Monasteries and their book collection

The national Library and Archives of Bhutan is doing a survey of monasteries and their book collection. So far the national library has released a catalogue on monasteries for seven dzongkhags. Some of the important monasteries and their book collection are as given in the table 4.1:

Table 4.1: Important monasteries of seven dzongkhags and their collections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Dzongkhag</th>
<th>Total No. of Monasteries</th>
<th>Total No. of Books</th>
<th>Name of the Important Temple/Lhakhang/Goenpa</th>
<th>No of Books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thimphu</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2085</td>
<td>Thangthong Doechhen Zhing Goenpa</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dodeydra Goenpa</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hongtsho Tashigang Dechen Lhakhang</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chi Zhi Goenpa Samtemchoeling</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paro</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>Paro Wangchhang Gewog Gorin Tsuglak Lhakhang</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paro Rinpung Dzong Chhang Dzed Lhakhang</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sanga Chhoekor Goenpa</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paro Taktshang Zangthopelri</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasa</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Gasa Dzong</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gasa Goendamji</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhukha</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Tsamdrak Goenpa</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Darjay Chhoeling Goenpa</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shelma Meyser Mangki Lhakhang</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haa</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>Chhuzarkha Lhakhang</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Haa Sangbey Sichha Goenpa</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Terbay Goenpa</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bumthang</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>Tang Ugyen Chhoeling</td>
<td>96</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shingkhar Dechenling</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chhumey Zhubey Lhakhang</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samtse</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Jangchub Chhoeckhorling Lhakhang</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(National Library & Archives of Bhutan, 2006)
Taktshang (means Tiger’s Net) in Paro and Kurjey in humthang are the two famous examples that were built around caves where Guru Rinpoche is believed to have meditated for extended periods. The Taktshang monastery is shown in the picture 4.1.

All Bhutanese geombas are different, but they all possess certain common features. They are self-contained communities, with a central lhakhang (building / primary chapel) and separate quarters for sleeping. The lhakhang is at the centre of the dochey, similar to that of the dzongs. The dochey is used as a dancing area by the monks during festivals. Some goembas have several lhakhangs within the central building. (Armington, 2002. pg: 152)

4.5 Other Information Mass Media

Mass media in Bhutan confined to Radio, Television, Cinema and Newspapers. All these mass media serving the country as the sources of entertainment as well as the sources for disseminating information. While television, newspapers, cinema and newspapers are largely utilized in urban areas, Radio is the only medium of information for the rural people.

- Newspapers & Periodicals

At first, “KUENSEL” was started as a bimonthly, internal government bulletin in the year 1967. It was upgraded into a newspaper format with a weekly edition in Aug 1986. It is the national newspaper of Bhutan. The predominant readership is the educated urban community. It publishes three simultaneous editions in different languages: English edition 12000 copies, Dzongkha edition 3000 copies and Lhotshammikha (Nepali) edition 200-300 copies.
The government initiated the process of launching the privately-owned newspapers on the advice of His Majesty the King in September, 2005. As a result the first privately owned newspaper “Bhutan Times” was launched on 30th April 2006 followed by “Bhutan Observer” on 2nd June 2006. Now all the three newspapers were published in English as well as Dzongkha. Kuensel is published twice a week and other two newspapers coming once a week.

The other newspapers available in the market are entirely dominated by Indian English language publications. They are Times of India, Telegraph, Economic Times, Hindustan Times, The Hindu, and so on. Mostly government organizations, educational institutions, corporate bodies, and a few private sectors are subscribing these newspapers. Some of the Indian magazines in English available in the border towns and Thimphu and most recently these magazines were found in other towns too but very limited copies. (Phuntsho, 2001 pg: 179)

- **BBS: Radio and Television**

The Bhutan Broadcasting Service is the national radio and television service in Bhutan. Run by the state, it is currently the only service to offer both radio and television to the Kingdom, and is the only television service to broadcast from inside the Bhutanese border.

For many years, Bhutan did not have modern telecommunications. The first radio broadcasts commenced in November 1973, when the National Youth Association of Bhutan (NYAB) began radio transmissions of news and music for a half-hour each Sunday, under the name “Radio NYAB.” The transmitter was first rented from a local telegraph office in Thimphu. The government took over Radio NYAB in 1979, and renamed it the Bhutan Broadcasting Service in 1986, with expansions in radio scheduling as well as construction of a modern broadcast facility occurring in 1991. (Phuntsho, 2001 pg: 179)

As of April 2004, BBS FM radio service is available in 15 dzongkhags. Installation of FM transmitter in the rest of the 5 dzongkhags will be completed by the end of the ninth five year plan. Radio service (NYAB radio) in Bhutan started in November 1973 in the initiation of youths who formed National Youth Association of Bhutan (NYAB) led by a Royal female member. The station was operational only on Sundays with 30 minutes of
news in English and music. The NYAB club office was transformed to announcing studio on weekends and increased to an hour a week after a few trial weeks. The 400-watt transmitter was rented from a local telegraph office. The station was called Radio NYAB. In 1979, the Royal Government recognizing the importance of the radio for development communication embraced the station under the Ministry of Communications. Then it started three-hour programme on every Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday: 1.5 hours in Dzongkha, and 30 minutes each in Nepali (Lhotsamkha), Sarchhopkha (Tshangla), and English. In 1986 Development Support Communication Division (later changed to Development Communication Corporation) was set up to help in the development of media. With the commissioning of a 10kw short-wave transmitter and a small broadcast studio, Radio NYAB was renamed as Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS) in the same year. Daily broadcasting was introduced with three hours of programming that reflected the national character. Radio was then controlled by BBS. BBS/DSCD worked jointly under MoC until 1992 when they were transformed to corporation. In the same year UNESCO also provided BBS 10W SW transmitter. The radio transmission reached to most part of the country. In 1991 radio station relocated to India sponsored new complex with 50w SW transmitter. Since then, its programmes reached 30 hours per week. To strengthen the radio service to al parts of the country, government initiated the establishment of FM station merely means for relay of national broadcast. In 1987 local FM stations were set up in Thimphu with the aid of UNESCO. (96 and 98 MHz). In 1989-92 periods DANIDA and UNESCO provided 1.14 million assistance for development of media in Bhutan. In March 1991 that BBS acquired a permanent seat and a professional look with the commissioning of a 50kw short-wave transmitter station and a studio complex-cum-office block. In June 2000, BBS introduced FM radio service for Western Bhutan as well with the inauguration of the main FM station at Dobchula and yet another one at Takti in the south. The FM service was extended to central Bhutan in January 2001 and plans are underway to cover the whole country by the end of the ninth five-year plan. At present broadcast, the radio has 12 hours broadcast service including 1.5 hours traditional music only; 4.5 hours in Dzongkha, and 2 hours each in Nepali (Lhotsamkha), Sarchhopkha and English.

Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS) has seven-member National Editorial Board with 130 employees, 1/3 of them in administration section. It controls radio, television and FMs. It was corporatized in 1992. Government provides all most all funds for its functioning. In
2004 sources, it generated 3% revenue from advertisement. There are very rare ads from private sectors that also appear during the King’s birthday, coronation anniversary, or the national day.

Apart from giving the daily news bulletin in four languages (Dzongkha, Sharchhop, Lhotsamkha and English) in radio and in Dzongkha and English on television, BBS devotes 75% of its programming on development issues such as new farming methods, health and hygiene, environment preservation, distance education, rural development, women and child care.

Bhutan Broadcasting Service, established in 1973 and given its current name in 1986, operated under the auspices of the Department of Information; it offered thirty hours a week of shortwave radio programming in Dzongkha, Sharchhopkha, Nepali, and English. There was daily FM programming in Thimphu and shortwave reception throughout the rest of the nation in the early 1990s. In 1991 there were thirty-nine public radio stations for internal communications. There were also two stations used exclusively for communications with Bhutan's embassies in New Delhi and Dhaka and thirteen stations used by hydrologists and meteorologists. There were no television stations in Bhutan in the early 1990s. As of 2005, FM and shortwave radio service reaches about 75 percent of the country. The service plans to reach the rest of Bhutan by 2010.

For a long time, Bhutan was the only nation in the world to ban television. The first night of television broadcasts finally occurred on June 2, 1999, on the night of the Jigme Singye Wangchuk's silver jubilee. At present, news, documentaries, and entertainment programs were originally broadcast for ten hours on week days (6.00 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m.), and thirteen hours on week ends (6.00 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m.). Most of the programming is aired in Dzongkha, but some current events and news programs are also aired in English. Apart from BBS, the cable TV service which was also launched in 1999, providing a greater diversity of programmes. At present, there are hundreds of foreign TV channels were being telecasted throughout the country. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhutan_Broadcasting_Service)
• Cinema

The first cinema was started in 1960 in Samdrup Jongkhar followed by MIG in Phuentsholing, Chukka Dzongkhag in 1964, and Losel in Gelephu and Luger in Thimphu in 1972. Most of the cinema theaters casting Bollywood productions, but in Phuentsholing, the English movies were screening. All the films are purchased from Indian distributors. These films are not censored in Bhutan because the Censor Board of India has passed them and the same is permissible for Bhutan too. The Bhutan films are at least 12 were produced in a year.

Apart from Cine films, there are number of video libraries are available in many Dzongkhags. The programmes and documentaries produced by the Development Communication Centre were among the first local audio-visual entertainment productions of Bhutan. The first tele-film was produced by a private company in 1988. The documentaries and other Bhutanese films are being screened in public halls or some times at the government institutions, etc instead of the Cinema theatres. (Phuntsho, 2001 pg: 179)

• Internet

As Bhutan is landlocked on Himalayas, even the inland transportation is also not so easy. It is far away from the access of news or information of the out world. This emerges the need of Internet to the country.

The idea for Internet access was hatched when the Bhutan Ministry of Communication's Division of Telecommunications met with program staff from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). IDRC, through its Pan Asia Networking (PAN) programme, promotes the development of communications infrastructure. Internet access was introduced to Bhutan on June 2, 1999, the 25th anniversary of the fourth King's coronation. The catalyst for the eventual PAN-Bhutan project and the first Internet service provider in the country, called DrukNet.

The arrival of internet in Bhutan has encouraged the government departments, private organizations and the individuals of the whole country, to review their IT needs. (http://www.bhutan.gov.bt/government/newsDetail.php?id=144)
• Comments

From this study we observe the following:

Indeed the library and other mass media in Bhutan are not able to fulfill the requirements of the people. Since the national library and the public library of the country are located in the capital, it gives very limited access to the people. The national library serves as the depository rather than providing service. The library should serve the people at leisure time and not at the regular office hours. The total number of working days for the public library is very less. It is good, if the library works throughout the year including government holidays, excluding some important national holidays. The information resources in the public library are quiet insufficient. It requires more budget allocation. The newspapers are published as weekly and the prices of the newspapers are not affordable by the laymen. The Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS) of radio and television play and important role. However radio meant for oral communication and the television is not on fulltime service. The Cinema halls are for entertainments only but it is very limited in the production of Bhutanese movies. The function of mass media in general is to disseminate information to the public. As far as Bhutan is concerned, the role played by media is ineffective.

Therefore, all the above mentioned limitations convey the fact that there is an urgent need for the vital media in the form of public library system for the country.