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Kousik Samanta

The University of Burdwan, comlisk@gmail.com

Subhas Chandra Majhi

Kazi Nazrul University, subhasmajhi@gmail.com

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Conservation and Preservation of Manuscripts in the Nazrul Academy Town Library: A Study and Proposal for their Modernization



Kousik Samanta

M.Phil Scholar, Dept. of Library and Information Science, The University of Burdwan,
Email: comlisk@gmail.com



Subhas Chandra Majhi

Library Assistant, Central Library, Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol-713340.

Email: subhasmajhi@gmail.com



ABSTRACT

Presently information technology age, most of user's are dependent on digital information, but we have to go to library for very rear and ancient information. Manuscripts are the major source of information to know about the historical facts, cultural heritage and bygone traditions of the previously. Libraries are the only safe place were preserved manuscripts, old

records like hand written, poems, documents, letters etc. The manuscripts collection and preservation are influence to the human community, researcher can measure the usefulness of worth collection, who they are able to access them. The present study represents to conserve and preserve the available of manuscripts and rear documents of Kazi Nazrul Islam adopted at Nazrul Academy Town Library, West Bengal, India. The paper also highlights the present status and management of collection, services, staff strength, budget and policy of Nazrul Academy Town Library and find out the gap of awareness about the collection, which are facing many problems at the present time.

Keywords: Manuscripts, Conservation, Preservation, Digital Preservation, Nazrul Academy Town Library.

Introduction

The human brain is incredible gifted by the nature, because the human mind stored the various knowledge/information in his brain, when the writing and storage materials were not invented. After the invention of writing media the scholars were store their knowledge in various media i.e. stone, wood, leather or in the form of manuscripts like papyrus, parchment, palm leaf, vellum and paper, which are the primary sources of the traditional knowledge in the present era. It is our responsibility to preserve them and to save for the next generation, because the ancient valuable resources are symbolizing our significance of cultural and tradition, which are describe the history of development of earlier civilization. The invention of writing media, handmade Paper was the very important media for storage the information in the earlier time, handmade paper was dominate in every area of the life. Most of the earlier information/knowledge is available in the form of handmade paper manuscripts, which are stored in the museum, library, temple and monk. Now the present time, it is a very serious problem related to conservation and preservation of these valuable resources. Library is a house of knowledge, where knowledge is stored in organised form. The library is fulfil the general and special need of users.

Nazrul Academy Town Library, India which is unique in its holdings of more than 17412collection, most of them are huge the rare value. This library also possesses several rear ancient manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. Other collection are books, periodicals, newspapers reference-books, journals, maps and others printed materials.



Review of Related Literature

Agarwal (2000) pointed out the problems related to the preservation of manuscripts in Southeast Asia like lack of awareness of the importance of manuscripts, lack of technical knowledge, lack of facilities, lack of funding, etc.

Kumar & Shah (2004) & Ramana (2005) discussed various efforts taken in preserving manuscript in digital format and preservation techniques which are currently in use. In their paper,

Gaur & Chakabarty (2009) not only discussed the modern concept of preservation and access but also the institutional and individual efforts in the field of preservation.

Mazumdar (2009) highlighted the initiatives taken by U.S. in India for digital preservation of manuscripts. He also discussed about the emphasis given by different professional bodies on digital preservation by organising seminars and conference by taking it as a theme or sub theme.

Warraich and Tahira (2010) focused on the issues of conservation and preservation of the rare manuscript collection.

Mishra (2012) has given a brief overview of indigenous methods used for conservation of manuscripts. The author has mentioned some methods like the use of turmeric, black cumin, cinnamon, neem leaves, eucalyptus oil, etc. The author also mentioned that use of these indigenous materials was eco friendly, no side effects may occur by these materials and the same time these are not so costly.

Devanathan, R. (2013) gave in detail the information about the herbals and natural products such as some of the plants and their products, which have been acknowledged from the ancient times for their germicidal properties and insect repellence potentialities, used for the conservation of manuscripts.

Mahawar and Kuriya (2013) investigated the policy for the conservation and preservation of the oriental collection in Saulat Public Library (SPL), Rampur. It was recommended by the author that new tools and technique related to ICT should be implemented in the library.

Sahoo & Mohanty (n.d) attempted to summarize the effectiveness of various traditional practices like Indian herbal pesticides and insect repellents which are being used by different organizations or could be used by the organizations to seize the growth of insect infestation in the manuscript repositories. In spite of the advent of technology has also given rise to greater concerns of preservation of manuscripts by adopting modern technologies but still the traditional methods of preservation are in vogue.

Objectives of the study

1. To know the Standing position of collection and services are available in Nazrul Academy Town Library.
2. To know availability of staff and accessories in the NATL.
3. To know the Budget and Source of funding body of NATL.

4. To know the position of Nazrul collection in NATL.
5. To know the condition of the Library Building and Furniture related to conservation and preservation for the Manuscript.
6. To know the position regarding maintenance and treatment Policy for the Manuscripts and Status of Library restoration plan in the NATL.

Research Methodology

A survey method is used in the study and a questionnaire is used as a tool to collect data from Nazrul Academy Town Library. Also discuss with the library committee, chairman, secretary and members by using interview, observation method to get the way in preservation and conservation of historical resource to fulfilled researcher needed information.

The oriental of rebel poet vibrant rhythms collection of the Nazrul Academy Town Library Churulia is prosperous and valuable, due to the importance of oriental collection a detailed study is conducted of Nazrul Academy Town Library (NATL) in the birthplace of rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam Churulia. This study makes a clear picture of the present status of the collection, problems related to deterioration and conservation of Manuscripts, to study the various internal and external factors which are responsible for deterioration of oriental collection.



Definition of Preservation and Conservation

The term preservation and conservation are often used interchangeably to mean the process of keeping an object safe from harm or loss, damage and maintaining it in sound condition for its present and future use. Conservation has three aspects viz. careful examination of an object (rare document/ manuscript) to determine its condition ;preservation through adoption

of appropriate measures to maintain object in good condition and to prolong its life to extend it as much possible and restoration through appropriate remedial treatment of already affected object. Thus, conservation is an activity of which preservation is one aspect. In common practice, preservation deals with maintenance and conservation deals with remedial treatment and restoration of the already damaged specimen. Conservation is mainly concerned with manuscripts and other rare documents.



Conservation and Preservation Policy

The Nazrul Academy Town Library (NATL) has no facility of laboratory and any agency for conservation and preservation of the library collection, due to many reasons. The library uses a few confidential procedures for the conservation and preservation of manuscripts and collection i.e. regular dusting, use of Nephthalene balls, Gamaxine powder, Tamakpata (Tobacco) etc. The library used the general wooden and iron book racks for stored the manuscripts collection of the library. The Nazrul Academy Town Library has not much present-time tools and techniques are available for the modernization of the library.

Manuscripts

A manuscript is a written document that has been manually created as opposed to being printed or reproduced in some other way. The word ‘manuscript’ is derived from the Medieval Latin term ‘manuscriptum’ that means hand written documents (www.wikipedia.in). Manuscript is a hand written composition on bark, cloth, metal, palm leaf, paper or any other material that has significant scientific, historical or aesthetic value. Manuscripts are found in hundreds of different languages and scripts (www.indianetzone.com). Manuscripts of modern period also refer to autographs, correspondences and type written materials. The manuscripts have a long history of its existence. According to the Chambers Dictionary, “Manuscript is a book or document written by hand before the invention of printing” (Allied Chambers (India) Limited, 2000). So manuscripts include all types of early writing, which are not printed and published. In other

words hand writings of any kind whether on paper or any other material in contradiction to printed materials are called manuscripts.

Types of Manuscripts:

- Palm leaf
- Bamboo Leaf
- Banana Leaf
- Birch Bark Sanchi Pat
- Bhoj Patra
- Cloth
- Parchment
- Ivory
- Metal (Gold, Bronze, Copper, etc.)
- Paper

Factors Responsible for Deterioration of Archival Materials

Environmental Factors : Temperature; Relative Humidity, Sunlight, Darkness and moisture.

Biological Factors : Insects like cockroaches, silverfish, lice fungus, moulds, rat etc.

Natural Factors : Natural disaster, flood, earthquake, fire etc.

Human Being : Invasion at the time of war, terrorist attack etc.

Methods of Preservation and Conservation

- Documentation of Traditional Knowledge;
- Captured and Recording Traditional Knowledge;
- Microfilming of Traditional Knowledge;
- Digitalization and Digital Preservation.
- Centrally Air –Conditioned building of Libraries, Archives and Museums conducive for the documents and manuscripts, artefacts etc.

Indigenous Material of Preserving Manuscripts

- Along with bundles of manuscripts pieces of Vasambu or dried ginger are kept to save these from insect attack.
- Dried and powdered leaves of Aswagandha in small packets are kept with the manuscripts covered in clothes to repel insect attack.
- Coatings of lemon-grass oil are given to strengthen the leaves of manuscripts and destroy the growths of micro-organisms.
- In some repositories people use vermilion or kumkum fruit powder (which is red in colour) that act as a very good insect repellent.
- Oil extracts of some natural products like black pepper, sandal wood or clove facilitate in the restoration of flexibility to the palm leaf manuscripts.
- The mixture of neem leaves, karanja, nirgundi and citronella are known to have insecticidal properties for which it could be used in the manuscript libraries
- Mint leaves also repel ants and cockroaches.
- Sandal wood dust is commonly used by many libraries to ward off insects.
- Application of turmeric paste to the seasoned palm leaves is well known for its disinfecting effect.
- Black-Cumin (Kala Jeera) which gives a strong aromatic smell also used as an insect repellent. Scattering of the seeds at the manuscript storage keeps away insects.

Need to preserve and conserve manuscripts and rare documents

- To fulfill the objective as stated in 'Constitution of India - 1950' In Part IV-A under fundamental Duties in article 51A "It shall be the duty of every citizen of India- (F) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture."(Govt. of India,2015.)
- To help preserve memories of human progress from the ancient past available in rare collections and manuscripts and to facilitate its transfer for more and more generations to come.
- To maintain the precious thoughts and experiences of eminent personalities and philosophers in writings over a long period of time.
- To provide the best way to offers historical footprints to our next generations as all rare documents and manuscripts have historical significance.

- To preserve emotional values and faith of a person who donates manuscripts to libraries to look after their precious heritage.

History of Nazrul academy Town Library

Nazrul Academy Town Library (KATL) was established in 1963 with 1200 documents are collected and received from community by a social worker of Churuliavilleagers. Presently it is situated in birthplace of rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, beside of Churulia Panchayat OfficeKabithirtaChuruliaPaschim Bardhaman district of West Bengal. Nazrul Academy Town Libray start his journey as a village library and in 1971 government affiliation as a Rural Library and also promoted as Town Library in 1982. Kazi Abdul Hai (1963-1970) is the first librarian of Nazrul Academy Town Library then Kazi Golam Kibria (1970-2013)and after retainment of Adwip Kr. Chatterjee (16-02-2016 to 31-01-2020) no librarian and library support staff posted in vacant position, without staff Nazrul Academy Town Library function partly through library committee. Finally, library not meet to users' information needs through library resources.



Collection in NATL

The library has rich collection in cultural and intellectual heritage. The NATL having great collection of books, newspaper, periodicals, reference books journals, manuscripts etc. also rebel poet vibrant rhythms and religious books collection. Nazrul Academy Town Library contain approximate 17,000 collections(books, periodicals, newspaper, reference books,

journals, maps etc.), out of them 700 are Nazrul Collection, 600 Religious collection, which also includes rare and handwritten copies. Some manuscripts or rare books are written by Kazi Nazrul Islam. As for it collection of manuscripts and rear documents, the library are received of Shera Garanthagar Samman 2019, Paschim Bardhaman award. The library has precious collection but there is no technical staff of Curator, Restorer, and Conservator, it is main problem for the library and the library is not well equipped with the modern equipment such as Air Condition, Photocopier, Vacuum Cleaner, Climate Meter, Fumigation Chamber, Theft Detector, Binding Machine, etc.

Table 1: Countrywide collection

Indian Collections	17156
Bangladesh and Other Collections	247
Total Collections	17412

Table 2: Collection type

Books	Collect from Bangladesh	Rear books (from 1985-)	Nazrul album	Hand writing book (Kazi Nazrul Islam)	Magazine (Type)
16979	247	180	02	02	02

Staff

Sl. No.	Sanction Post Name	No. of Post	Present Status
1	Librarian	1	0
2	Library Staff	1	0
3	Book Binder	1	0
4	Night Guard	1	0

Sanctioned total post 4 to maintain stander library services of Town Library Users, but presently all post is vacant, without staff Nazrul Academy Town Library users not fulfil their information needs through library resources.

ক্রমিক নং	সভাপতি	সম্পাদক	প্রোগ্রামারিক	কমিটির সময়কাল
১)	কাজী সামসুজ্জোহা	কাজী সামসুল কাদের	কাজী আব্দুল হাছিম	1963-1.12.70
২)	অধ্যাপক বজীজুল আলম খান	আনোয়ারুল হক	কাজী আব্দুল হাছিম	2.12.70
৩)	অধ্যাপক মজীজুল আলম খান	কাজী রেজাউল করিম	কাজী গোলাম কিবরিয়া	1970-1975
৪)	শ্রী অম্বয় দাসগুপ্ত	কাজী রেজাউল করিম	কাজী গোলাম কিবরিয়া	1975-1986
৫)	কাজী রেজাউল করিম	কাজী আবুল ফজল	কাজী গোলাম কিবরিয়া	1986
৬)	শ্রী জীবনধন রায়	কাজী আবুল ফজল	কাজী গোলাম কিবরিয়া	1989
৭)	শ্রী জীবনধন রায়	আনিতা কুমার গোস্বামী	কাজী গোলাম কিবরিয়া	1995
৮)	শ্রীমতী প্রভাটী বহনিয়োগী	আনিতা কুমার গোস্বামী	কাজী গোলাম কিবরিয়া	1996-98
৯)	শ্রীমতীমোহন রায়	সেখ সালাউদ্দিন	কাজী গোলাম কিবরিয়া	1998-2000
১০)	শ্রী মনোজ দত্ত	সুপ্রিয় কাজী	কাজী গোলাম কিবরিয়া	2005-06
১১)	কাজী মুন্সহা হোসেন	অদীপ কুমার চ্যাটার্জী	২০০৬-২০১২ (অবসর)	2014 পর্যন্ত
১২)	প্রদীপ মুখার্জী		অদীপ কুমার চ্যাটার্জী	11.04.18 পর্যন্ত
			৩১.01.2020 (অবসর)	12.04.2018

Budget and Source of funding body of NATL

State Government renders financial assistance to the Nazrul Academy Town Library Rs. 44,000/- per years for services rendered to common people but last fund received only Rs.34,000/- on three year back.



Library Member

Total 600,

Types-4

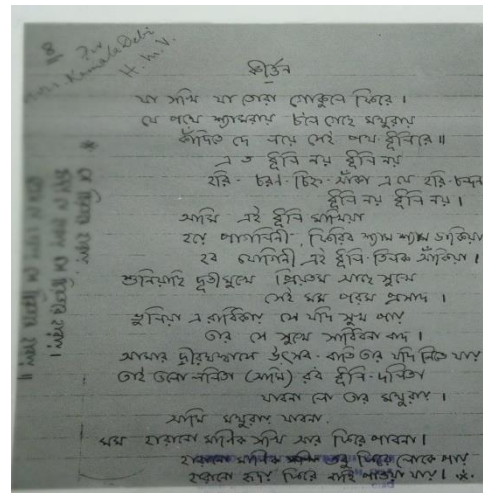
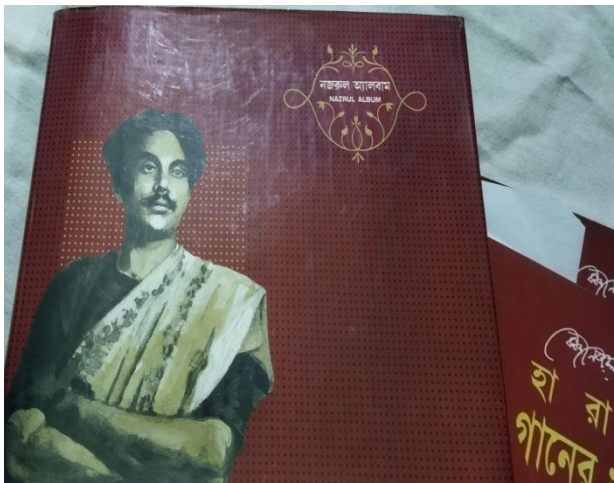
Child	General	Senior Citizen	Special Pearson / Global
1-18 years	18-60 years	60-...years	Minister, MP, MLA, VC

Position of Nazrul collection in NATL

As on May 1986 total only Nazrul Collection are given below;

Books Written by Nazrul	Poet-26, Song-50, Story-5, Translation-3, Drama-7, Essay-4, Letters-2, child's literature-6
Books on Poet Life & Literature	Biography-36, Literary Criticism-22, Music Discussion-5, Nazrul affairs magazine-17
Translation of Nzrul Kavya	English-6, Urdu-1, Rush-1, Oriya-1
Manuscript and Hand written	9

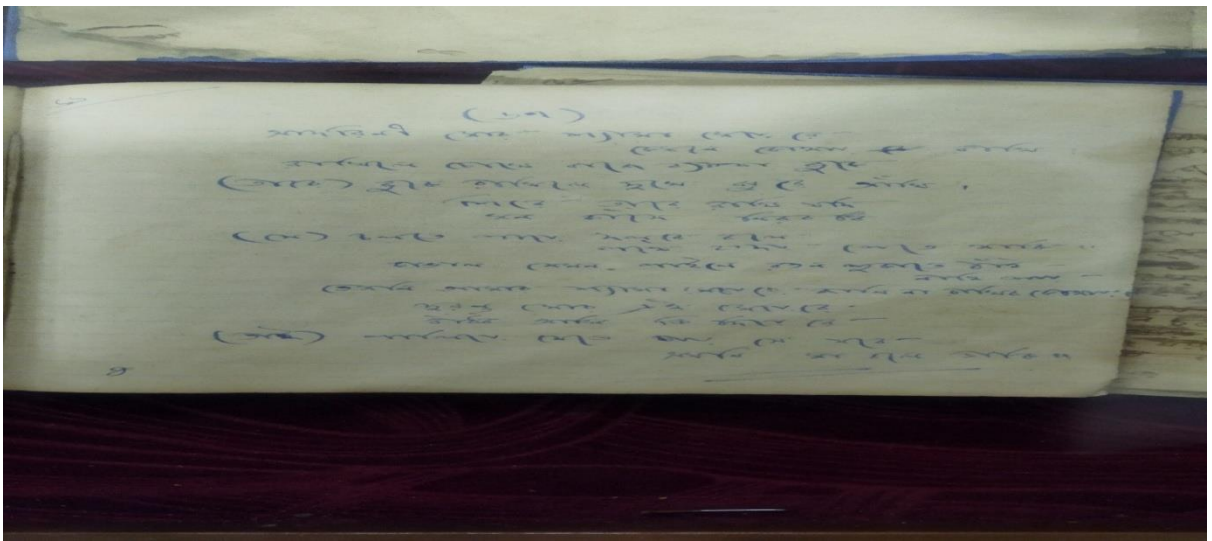
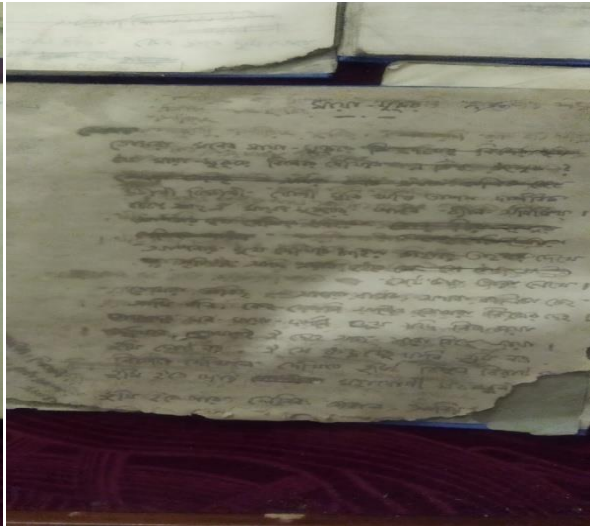
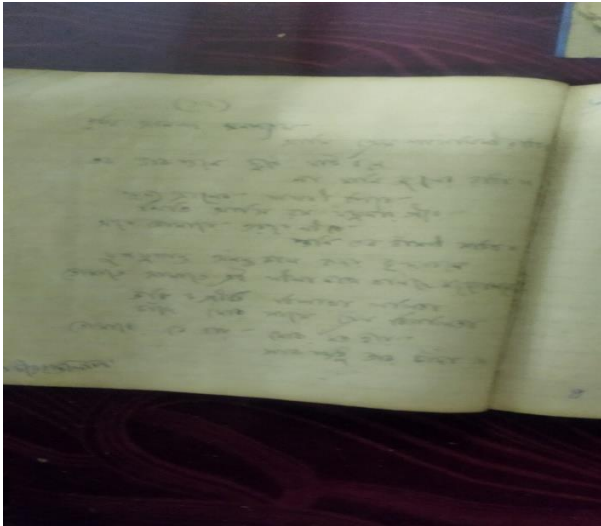
“Nazrul Album” published in 1994 by Album Committee, University of Dhaka Bangladesh. It provides a summary of the contain, collection of Bengali, Hindi, Urdu hand writing by rebel poet and front page of popular books, memorable photos.



Nazrul album

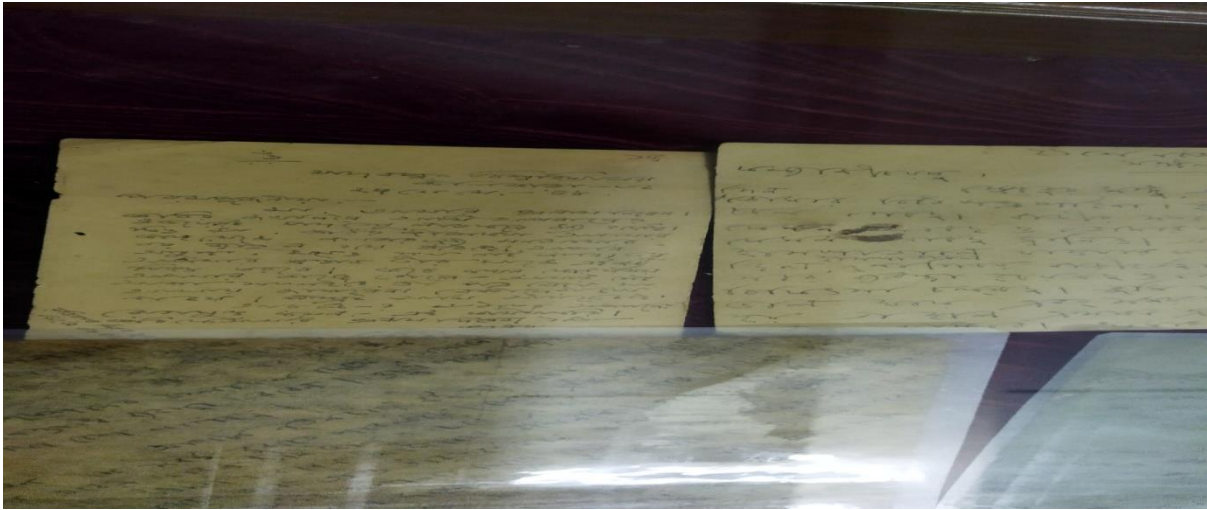
“HaranoGanerkhata” published in 1997 by Nazrul Institute, Dhaka Bangladesh. It provides a summary of the contain hand written manuscript poetry by Kazi Nazrul Islam in digitalis print formats.

These two valuable manuscript collections and all poetry published in “Dhumketu” Patrikapreserved by Nazrul Academy Town Library. Presently total Nazrul Collection is 675.

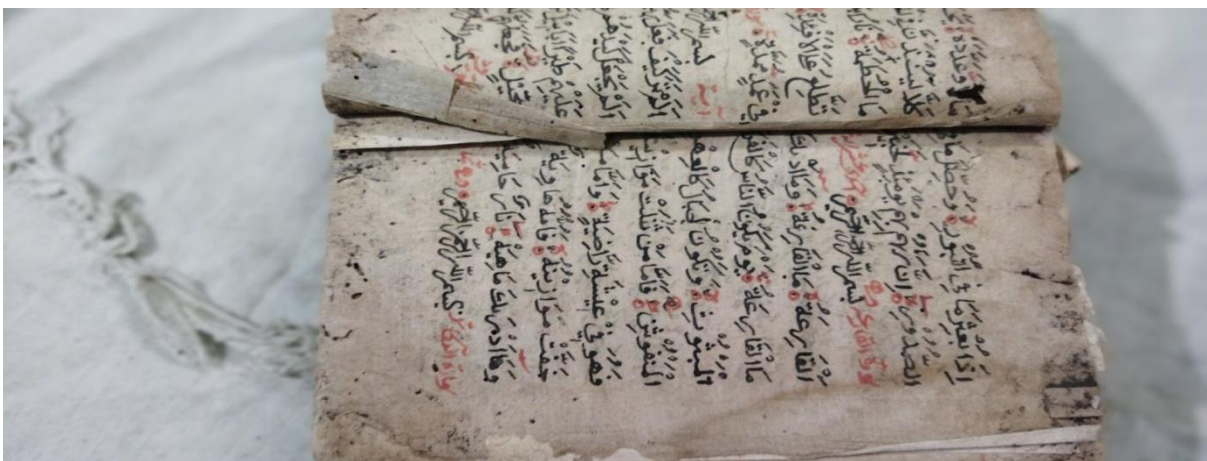
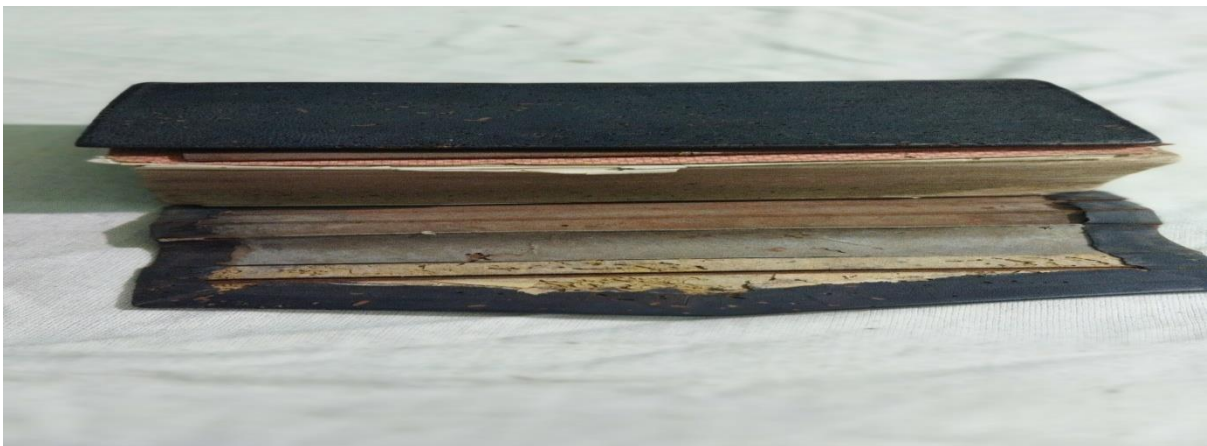


Hand writing (Kazi nazrul islam)





Letters



Hand writing Quran Sorif

Condition of the Library Building and Furniture related to conservation and preservation for the Manuscript

The building has some facilities such as sufficient arrangement for ventilation, lighting, safe Windows by weather and rain, few fire extinguisher are install near the stack room, office and reading section for the protection of the valuable collection and section of the library like acquisition, processing, circulation, newspaper, manuscript etc. fire detection system are not installed in the library building.

Position regarding maintenance and treatment Policy for the Manuscripts in the NATL.

The information about the element of failure of the collection in NATL, the failure element is like silver fish, book-worm, termites, fungus, wood borers, etc are found in the library, important collection is tolerated from separate types of deteriorations such as holes, old repair, stains, acidity, charring, yellowing, brittleness, darkening of papers, fungus, termites and silverfish etc. The NATL tolerate from the Physical, Chemical and biological factors, which are the prime cause of the failure of the important collection.

Barriers of Conservation and Preservation

Following barriers are to found in conservation and preservation of valuable collection in Nazrul Academy Town Library;

1. Lack of financial grant.
2. Lack of trained library staff.
3. Lack of basic treatment.
4. Lack of modern technologies use
5. Lack of national level collaboration.

Some suggestion and recommendations

1. The NATL should need to pay more attention towards the better conservation and preservation of valuable collection by adopting the latest techniques.
- 2 The NATL should be need to trained staff for the conservation and preservation of oriental collection, who has knowledge of the nature of library collection.
- 3 The NATL need fund from some National funding agencies, which are working for save the intellectual and cultural heritage of nation.

4 The NATL need to take up **digitize** plan of the rare collection.

5 The National authority should help and support for the upcoming generation for the nation by providing them with fund

6 Fumigation: It is a method of pest control, process of destroying germs and insects with fumes of chemical. Thymol vapors use for this process. Thymol is common name of the 2-isopropyl-5methylphenol is a phenol. Its vapor kills the fungus without any effect on papers.

7 Pagination: For conservation process, we need to separate all the pages, and at last, again we rebind it. At this stage, we put page number to all the pages from beginning to end before its binding.

8 Dry brushing: Some documents may contain dust / dirt on their surface then can be cleaned easily by dry brushing.

9 De-acidification: It is the process of washing documents in plain and lime water (Calcium Hydroxide solution) to reduce acidity. Some times to remove adhesives, de-acidification is carried out. For de-acidification, various chemicals used may include magnesium hydrogen carbonate, barium, magnesium methoxide, calcium hydroxide or magnesium oxide, diethyl zinc, Cyclohexylamine carbonate, morpholine, amines and ammonia etc. Many of these are in liquid forms with considerable degree of vapour pressure or are gases, to make them useful for mass processes of conservation of manuscripts and rare documents.

10 Drying Process: After de-acidification process, Blotting paper is used to dry de-acidified pages. This process is used to absorb moisture.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it is clear that the use of the new tools and technique related to ICT should be implement in the library, because the Nazrul Academy Town Library has important manuscripts and rare collection, which is intellectual property of our nation. Manuscripts are the primary sources of our culture and tradition, the collection of manuscripts are available all over the maximum part of the country. Today most of them face many problems due to many reasons, in the past we have also lost a big number of manuscripts due to lack of awareness. Manuscripts cannot survive without proper care, so it is our duty to conserve and preserve those manuscripts, save for the next generation. Because library material is a repository of science and technology in the past, present and future.

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