

Press Release
Opening Ceremony of NLSIU's Redeveloped Law Library

August 26, 2023
Bengaluru

On August 26, 2023, the redeveloped library at the NLS campus was inaugurated by Her Royal Highness Princess Sonam Dechan Wangchuck, Founding President of the JSW School of Law, Bhutan, President of the Bar Council of Bhutan, and President of the Bhutan National Legal Institute, along with Hon'ble Chief Justice of India and the Chancellor of NLSIU, Dr. Justice D Y Chandrachud.

The opening ceremony, which was held from 9 am to 10 am on Saturday, was attended by Shri Manan Kumar Mishra, The Chairman, Bar Council of India and Smt. Sudha Murty, Founder, Infosys Foundation and Chairperson of the Murty Trust.

The Shri Narayan Rao Melgiri Memorial National Law Library was first established in 2005 with the generous assistance of Smt. Sudha Murty of the Infosys Foundation. The library houses a collection of over 50,000 books and 20,000 journals covering a wide range of general and special subjects, comprising textbooks, reference books, back volumes of journals and reports, apart from current legal periodicals.

Spread over 30,000 sq.ft. built-up area, the Library has been a central node of the NLS campus, and seated at least 250 persons. On account of the incremental development on campus, the Library needed to be integrated with the New Academic Block and its surrounding precinct in a usable manner.

In Academic Year 2022-23, we completely redesigned the Library to respond to our community's needs for a space that could be used for teaching and self-study, as well as social use. The Library can now seat 600 persons across its three floors and the terrace. Modernisation of the Library has improved accessibility, and now accommodates increased use of devices, with revamped display and storage features. The Library precinct too is being redeveloped to allow for a seamless connection between the outdoors and the Library space.

This Library, which is among the best academic libraries in India, has been reimagined to be the hub of intellectual life on campus, with emphasis on collaboration and collective learning. It accommodates the growing student, research and faculty community and is organized into Zones adapted to various uses.

This massive project was possible because of the support of the Infosys Foundation, the Government of Karnataka and Smt. Sudha Murty among others. The architects' team at Venkataramanan Associates developed designs, and contractor teams working with the University teams led by our COO, Mr. Shailesh Agarwal with support from Ms. Meenakshi Chauhan, Manager - Projects and Facilities, have delivered this project. With its proximity to the

New Academic Block and the Halls of Residence, the Library will be the hub of University student life, to be augmented with the development of the Student Activity Centre later this year.

Phase I of the Library Redevelopment was completed in May 2023. This included:

Zoning:

- With a mix of soft seating and workstations, the Lower Ground Floor (LGF) is the most informal, social space of the Library. The Student Bar Association (SBA) Common Room and common areas for students are located here, and the Library's light reading/ fiction section shall be housed in the LGF.
- The Ground Floor (GF) houses user seats, the reference section, dedicated research areas, meeting rooms and the dedicated room for Specially Abled Persons. Books on social science topics are located on this floor, along with spaces for displays and exhibits. The balcony is accessible from the GF.
- The First Floor (FF) is intended for quiet reading and working. This floor houses books on legal topics, workstations and an enclosed quiet reading room for users. The Library Terraces are accessible from the FF.

Accessibility:

A key goal of the Library redevelopment was to increase ease of use for all, but especially our Specially Abled users. All floors of the Library have been laid with tactile pathways to allow for independent navigation. The Library lift offers access to all floors. Lastly, a designated room on the Ground Floor is equipped with Braille printers, JAWS Talking Reader, desktop magnifiers, smart readers and an Online Daisy Player.

Terraces:

For the first time, the Library's terrace areas are accessible to users, and have been set up with furniture for working, small meetings and grabbing a quick snack in between. While a small tuck shop will serve snacks on the terrace, no food or beverages are allowed inside the library building.

Access to Books/ Journals:

The Library's collection of print volumes has been split between closed stacks (i.e compactors) and open stacks (i.e display bookshelves). Compactors are located in the Lower Ground Floor and the NAB basement, and are accessible for the Library staff.

Digitisation:

The University has been working steadily towards digitising its entire holdings, wherein all out-of-copyright books and documents are being scanned and uploaded to the Internet Archive where they will be accessible by the public. We have completed the digitisation of 25,000 volumes already by June 2023. The University has enabled access to visually impaired

students, and plans to extend the digital lending platform to all students shortly. The Library's extensive digital materials will be available through <https://eresources.nls.ac.in>