Noolaham Foundation
Project Report

Project Title	Digitization and Dissemination of Contemporary Tamil Magazines
Project Number	NF/PG/2011/0002
Project Location	Colombo and Jaffna
Sector	Digital Library, Collection Development and Print Publications Archive
Implementing agency and contribution	Noolaham Foundation
Grant Agency and Contribution	Noolaham Foundation
Total Budgetand Expenditure	Not Recorded
Project Period	2011 - 2013
Responsible Stakeholders	Team Leader - Shaseevan Ganeshananthan, Local Newspaper and Magazine publishers

Summary

The **Digitization and Dissemination of Contemporary Tamil Magazines Project** was carried out by Noolaham Foundation during 2011-2013 to digitize and display the current and past issues of contemporary magazines related to the Tamil speaking communities of Sri Lanka. It was a project undertaken by Noolaham Foundation in collaboration with various publishers. The main objectives of this project was to provide open access of contemporary and past issues of magazines, preserve and create wide global visibility of these packed valuable information.

This project was successful in collecting 59 titles of contemporary periodicals and making them available online through Noolaham Foundation's Digital Library at www.noolaham.org. As Tamil OCR is not available, Table of contents was manually inputted to enhance the search-ability of the content. A web portal (*annexure 1*) was also created at the digital library so that users could identify and access the issues easily and download in the user friendly interface. This collection of materials is not available elsewhere and is of both historical as well as scholarly value.

Introduction and Background

The periodical magazines are primary sources of information, but if they are not systematically archived, finding past issues and information are not that easy. Only a few libraries such as the National Archives keep past issues of magazines but accessing them from various geographical locations is not possible as they are usually not available through interlibrary loan and they are not going to be reprinted. Even with access to a magazine, unless it has been indexed, searching for the desired information can be a tiresome quest.

These magazines, typically published monthly, or as a quarterly, contain articles and fiction about society, culture, history and literature of different periods. They also contain news articles and feature articles on national and international issues as well as local issues. The

articles includes political events and personalities, business and finance, crime, and natural disasters, health and medicine, science and technology, sports, and entertainment, society, food and cooking, clothing and home fashion, and the arts. Furthermore magazines till greatly influence the formulation or the expression of public opinion by providing the necessary space for writers to express their personal views and to analyze political, economic, business or cultural events.

Digitization makes such primary information sources available for all and the search ability of digital libraries makes it even easier to access the desired information. No institution comes closer in terms of digitizing the documents among Sri Lankan Tamil speaking communities'. However, the status of preservation of Sri Lankan related published materials in general also leaves much to be desired. A combination of lack of resources, expertise and proper housekeeping has resulted in unfavorable conditions for the materials in Sri Lanka. Noolaham Foundation has been digitizing all publications related to Sri Lankan Tamil speaking communities since 2005. It has given special attention to digitizing periodicals archived by only a few other institutions. These periodicals are harder to access in the long run. Digitization of periodicals enables long term preservation and enhanced access.

Objectives and Achievements or Results
The main purposes for the 'Digitization and Dissemination of Contemporary Tamil Magazines' was to promote wider access to information among a large number of users, to preserve and conserve the national, regional and cultural heritage through digitization of back volume of Magazines, which constitute the raw materials of history, to provide user-friendly interface to access the information content and enhancing indexing and search ability of the Magazines, to search across the different Magazine titles and to draw together materials relating to a wide range of research and learning topics and to access to all or part of the content of different Magazines on the World Wide Web.

High quality digital images of 300dpi in 24bit color were scanned and master copies were archived. Derivative images were converted to pdf format and made available via the Digital Library. During the project NF followed guidelines based on digital library standards and best practices and provided efficient and effective info access and retrieval such as descriptive metadata and manually inputted table of contents were indexed for each magazine. A dedicated portal was also created where all digitized issues of the Magazines can be accessed with ease.

Contemporary magazines under 59 titles were digitized through this project and made available online through Noolaham Foundation's Digital Library at www.noolaham.org. Digitization initiatives will allow users to search collections rapidly and comprehensively from anywhere at any time. These precious collections are related to the Tamil speaking communities of Sri Lanka. It is a great cost effective opportunity to bring and link quality information and reading resources to Tamil speaking community and also they can access digital copies from anywhere and anytime. These collections will function as a repository where information seekers of all kinds, all over the world, may turn to for information related to their needs.

Number of Documents available for contemporary magazines

NO	Title	No of digitized Magazines
	Digitization and Dissemination of Contemporary Tamil Magazines 2011 - 2013	
1	Mallihai (மல்லிகை)	301
2	Kalaimukam (கலைமுகம்)	34
3	Kolunthu (கொழுந்து)	36
4	Chenkathir (செங்கதிர்)	53
5	Vadu(வடு)	14
6	Peruveli (பெருவெளி)	7
7	Vellimalai (வெள்ளிமலை)	12
8	Thayaham (தாயகம்)	64
9	Jivanathi (ஜீவநதி)	51
10	Thavira (தவிர)	4
11	Ulaga valaittalaayvu (உலகசோசலிசவலைத்தளஆய்வு)	6
12	Cemamatu Noolaham (சேமமடுநூலகம்)	6
13	Puthiya Noolaham (புதியநூலகம்)	12
14	London Thamizhar Thakaval(லண்டன் தமிழர் தகவல்)	21
15	Nadukai (நடுகை)	1
16	Panpadu (பண்பாடு)	35
17	Poonkavanam (பூங்காவனம்)	18
18	Padikal (படிகள்)	8
19	Maarutham (மாருதம்)	2
20	Puthuyukam (புதுயுகம்)	10
21	Maruka (மறுகா)	2
22	Nenchamayi (நெஞ்சமே)	**2**
23	Kalappai (கலப்பை)	29
24	Marupaathi (மறுபாதி)	4
25	Neenkalum Eluthlaam (நீங்களும் எழுதலாம்)	18
26	பொருளியல்நோக்கு	84
27	Siharam Thodu (சிகரம்தொடு)	8
28	Thamizhar Thakaval (தமிழர்தகவல்)	11
29	Vanakkam (வணக்கம்)	4
30	New Democracy	36
31	Ambalam (அம்பலம்)	2
32	Sankath Thamizh (சங்கத்தமிழ்)	6
33	Economic Review	75
34	Sugavalvu (சுகவாழ்வு)	51
35	Ethuvarai? (எதுவரை?)	1
36	Aasiriyam (ஆசிரியம்)	8
37	Kalaik Kesari (கலைக்கேசரி)	43
38	Thondan (தொண்டன்)	29
39	Thenral (தென்றல்)	5

40	Vaanavil (வானவில்)	2
41	Koopuram (கோபுரம்)	19
42	Urosai (ஊரோசை)	1
43	Artham (அர்த்தம்)	3
44	Sivaththondan (சிவதொண்டன்)	236
45	Inithu (இனிதுஇனிது)	1
46	Moli (மொழி)	2
47	Archuna (அர்ச்சுனா)	9
48	Samooka Veli (சமூகவெளி)	2
49	Munnanai (முன்னணி)	3
50	Saanakiyan (சாணக்கியன்)	6
51	Samooka Vinjjaana Katkai Vaddam (சமூகவிஞ்ஞானகற்கைவட்டம்)	44
52	Asservatham (ஆசீர்வாதம்)	6
53	Alai Osai (அலைஓசை)	5
54	Kadal (கடல்)	5
55	Kalingam (கலிங்கம்)	4
56	Akavilhi (அகவிழி)	65
57	Samakaalam (சமகாலம்)	27
58	Thina Makudi (தினமகுடி)	9
59	Vanna Vaanavil (வண்ணவானவில்)	21

Note: Not all issues here were digitized through this project. A number of issues were digitized through

Constrains / Challenges and lessons learned

During this digitization project NF has been confronted by a number of challenges

- Offering scanned images without any fully searchable text would only partially fulfill users' needs, as many (if not all) desire to search all of the texts available to them. It is necessary to consider providing navigation within the digital data through the use of indexing software even though NF provided metadata and content as well.

- During the project the project staff faced some difficulties on scanning, because the scanners were not enough in size to scan a magazine as a whole. When it was scanned, news and pictures that ran up to the middle of the page were broken and appeared onto the following when converted to pdf. Sometimes, viewers might be disappointed due to this problem.

- Due to the unstable political situation in Sri Lanka some of publications are not available at the publishers' and at the community level and an enormous amount of valuable information in published formats remains uncollected and risks being permanently lost. The recollection of rare publications seemed to be a hard task during this project period.

Suggestions and Recommendations

- Once the digital image has been created they need to be made searchable and accessible. The images have to be processed with optical character recognition software to make the magazines searchable. But there is no such software available in the market to satisfactorily offer the required results in Tamil. Still a better solution needs to be discussed and metadata must be created for each title, issue, image, and possibly article to help the users find what they are looking for.

- Noolaham Foundation should allocate proper funding to bigger overhead scanners or sophisticated scanners to implement this type of project without any technical interruption.
- The publications left out should be digitized and made available to the Tamil speaking community when resources are available and Noolaham Foundation should find those documents from the Tamil community and community based libraries with the help of its volunteers.
- Noolaham Foundation should collaborate more and more with other publishers and groups in creating digital content to share information and resources.

Relevant Attachment- A snapshot of the web portal for Magazine collections