

A basis of a strong society : Role of Public Libraries in Sri Lanka

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Sri Lanka in brief

- ▶ Area 65,610 sq km
- ▶ 09 Provinces
- ▶ 25 Districts
- ▶ Population 21.2 million
- ▶ Literacy rate 91.7%

Sri Lanka is a multinational state and diverse in cultures, languages, and ethnicities

Ethnic groups –Sinhalese/Tamils/Muslims/Burgher:

Languages– Sinhala/Tamil/English

Religions– Buddhist/Hindus/Muslims/Christians



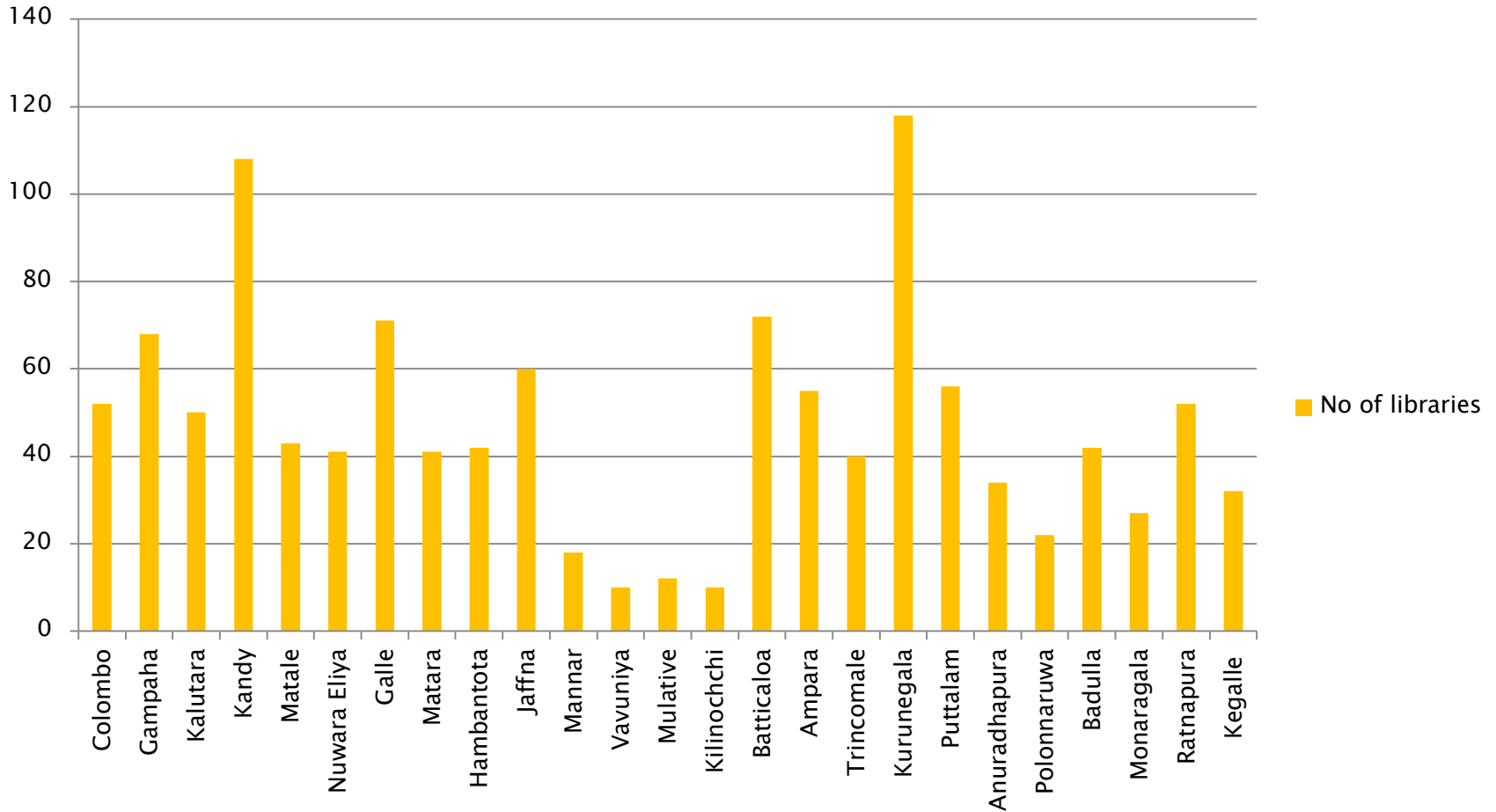
Information of Libraries in Sri Lanka

Libraries by Type	
University Libraries	58
School Libraries	6597
Public Libraries	1176
Pirivena Libraries	751
College of Education Libraries	19
Teacher Training College Libraries	08
Technical College Libraries	30
College of Technology Libraries	09

Public Libraries by Province	
Western Province	170
Central Province	192
Southern Province	154
Northern Province	110
Eastern Province	167
North Western Province	174
North Central Province	56
Uva Province	69
Sabaragamuwa Province	84
TOTAL	1176

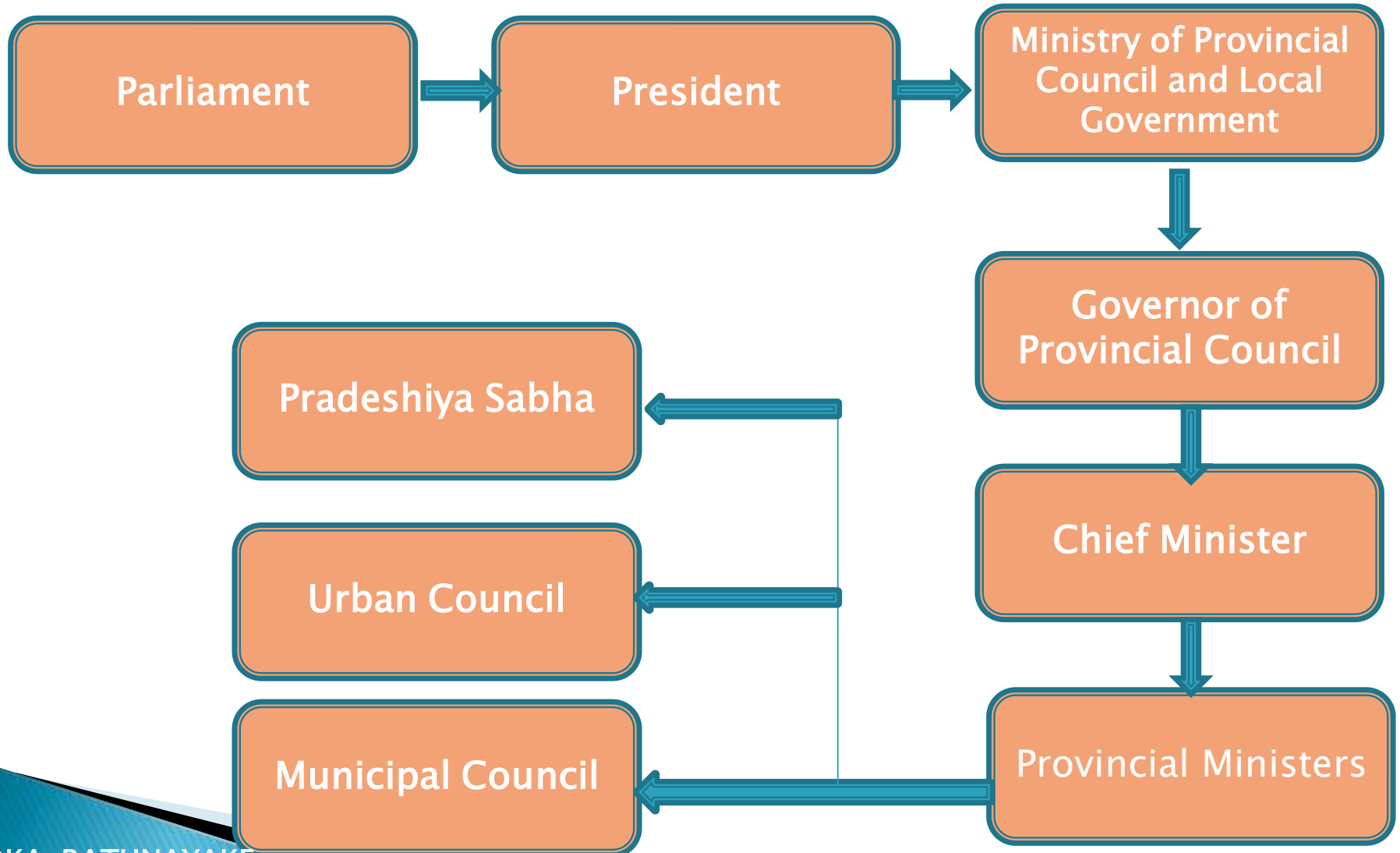
Source: National Library and Documentation Services Board

Number of Public Libraries by District



Source: National Library and Documentation Services Board

Public Library - Administrative Structure



History of Public Libraries in Sri Lanka



Colombo Public Library -
1925



Jaffna Public Library - 1933



Kandy Public Library - 1920

**Government Oriental Library
(1870) - Colombo Public
Library**

**Central Town Library (1841) -
Kandy Public Library**

The Mission and Objectives

‘The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups.’

(IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, 1994)

- ▶ The basic objective of a public library is to provide information to the general public to satisfy their informative, education and recreational needs.
- ▶ To provide up-to-date and authentic information on all subjects;
- ▶ To provide services free of cost or at nominal rates to each member of the society without any discrimination;
- ▶ To provide a harmless and elevating use of leisure;
- ▶ To be responsible for preservation and development of cultural and antiquarian heritage of the community

Role in Social and Personal Development.

1. Personality Development:

2. Human Adjustment:

3. Spread of education:

4. Self development:

5. Economic development:

6. Science and Technology:

7. Culture and leisure:

Services Provide

- ▶ Lending
- ▶ Reference
- ▶ Newspapers and Magazines
- ▶ Mobile Library
- ▶ Braille Library
- ▶ Advising
- ▶ Self Study facilities
- ▶ Reader service– Inter library loans/ CAS
- ▶ Academic & Research Support
- ▶ Education opportunities /Skill–Building Opportunities
- ▶ Extension services – Awareness/Promotions/Exhibitions
- ▶ Kids Corners
- ▶ Technology – Internet access /Audio & Video



English Learning



Art /Music /Entertainment



Public Lectures



ICT

Youth and Kids in Programs



Community service– River Cleaning



Community Service – Tree planting



Kids Clubs



Digitalization of Public Libraries

- ▶ **National Public Library Automation project.**
- ▶ **80 Public libraries have been digitalized**
- ▶ **20 ongoing**
- ▶ **Open public access to library database**
- ▶ **E books/e journals**
- ▶ **Colombo Public Library –2019**
- ▶ **Kandy Public Library – 2015**
- ▶ **e-center– To train librarians on IT**



Online Services

Virtual events

- ▶ Online Public lectures on current topics
- ▶ Live conversation with authors, writers, poets
- ▶ Book reviews
- ▶ Online literary competitions
- ▶ Ask a librarian
- ▶ Seminars/Webinars for professionals
- ▶ E- library services –online public access

We are on Social Media

<https://www.facebook.com/ColomboPublicLibrary>

<https://www.facebook.com/JaffnaLibrary>

<https://www.facebook.com/kandypubliclibrary>

<https://www.facebook.com/Public-Library-Nuwaraeliya>

<https://www.facebook.com/Kurunegala-Public-Library>

<https://www.facebook.com/MC-Public-Library-Bandarawela>



Thank you

