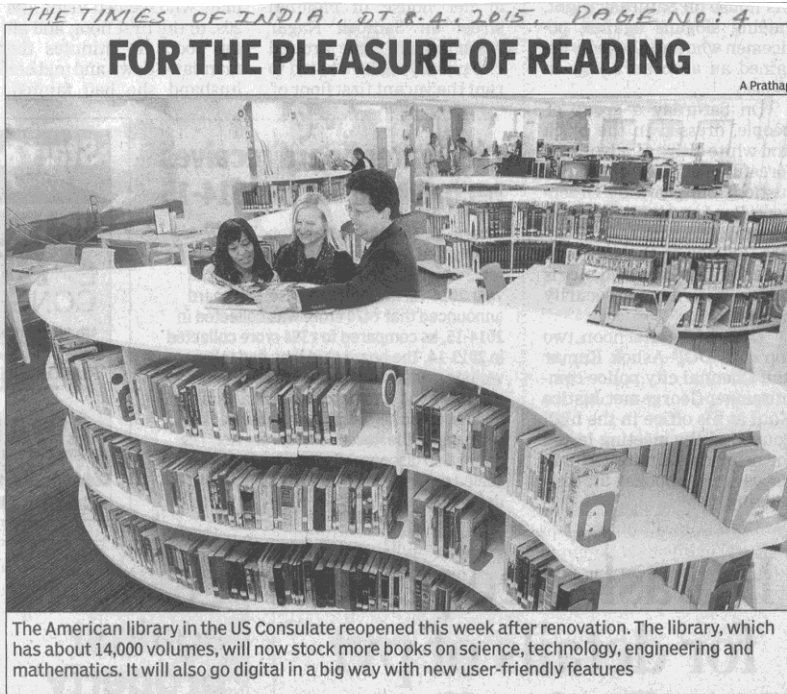


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# US library in city grows with science and tech collection

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** The 68-year-old American library in the US Consulate that took on a new avatar this week will now focus on stocking more books in the disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), besides children's books.

The library has about 14,000 volumes under various topics. Library director Meena Reddy said so far the focus has been on arts and humanities. "Now, we plan to focus on STEM topics, too, catering to public demand," she said.

The library established in 1947 is set to go digital in a big way with a new user-friendly feel to attract more members. One of the main features of the renovated library is 'program space' with a 'video wall' that enables interactive experience from across the world.

Public relations officer

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Ariel H Pollock said this is a new addition through which they hope to link the audience in the library to audiences across the world. "People can put forth suggestions of interesting topics for our information sessions and can connect to us through social media. We are also working on live streaming our interactions online," she said. Other features include viewing pods to watch movies, and an online public access catalog (OPAC) through which visitors can browse through digital kiosks for details of books they may want to read or borrow.

Inaugurating the library on Tuesday, US consul general Phillip A Min said the library is an important place to learn about the history of the United States, and its relation with India. "Although the feel of a traditional library may not be there, one aspect that will not change are the people who come in to the place. We hope to bring Indians more into this space," he said.

Designer of the library, Siddharth Chandrashekhkar, said that it was rebuilt with an intention of creating an open atmosphere for its users with separate coves along with a vibrant children's section. The library has about 2,000 members, a small number considering its age. While many users said the high level of security at the consulate has been a dampener, the library managers attribute the low membership to lack of awareness about the facility.