

OUR
NATIONAL
ARCHIVES
A GLIMPSE

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

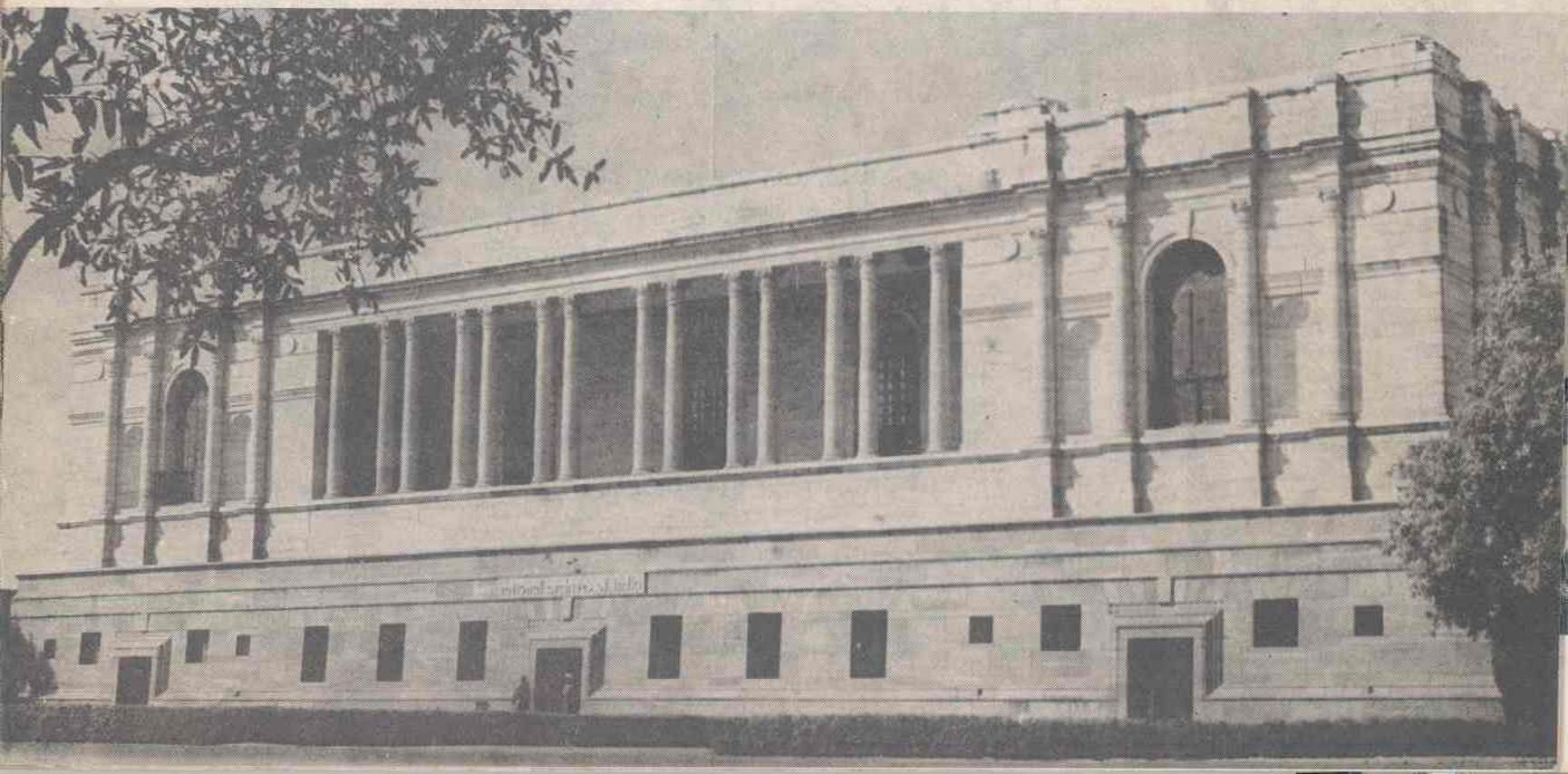


National Archives of India, New Delhi

Established as the Imperial Record Department over 93 years ago on 11 March, 1891, National Archives is the repository of the Central Government records of permanent value. Kept here are millions of files, some of them nearly three centuries old, which occupy about 30 kilometres of shelf space. Hailed by scholars as 'probably the best historical material in the world' these records are supplemented by a growing collection of private papers of eminent Indians and a microfilm collection of documents of Indian interest acquired from abroad.

The Department has three regional offices at Jaipur, Bhopal and Pondicherry.

National Archives of India (Front View)



Stack Areas

The stack areas have steel racks and comprise three floors. The records are kept tied between two pieces of plywood boards and log-line or in carton boxes. The volumes are suitably supported by volume rests.

Naphthalene bricks are kept on the shelves as insect repellents. The records are cleaned at site by the use of vacuum cleaners.

The stack areas are equipped with smoke detector Alarm System and Fire-Fighting Arrangements.



A general view of the stack area

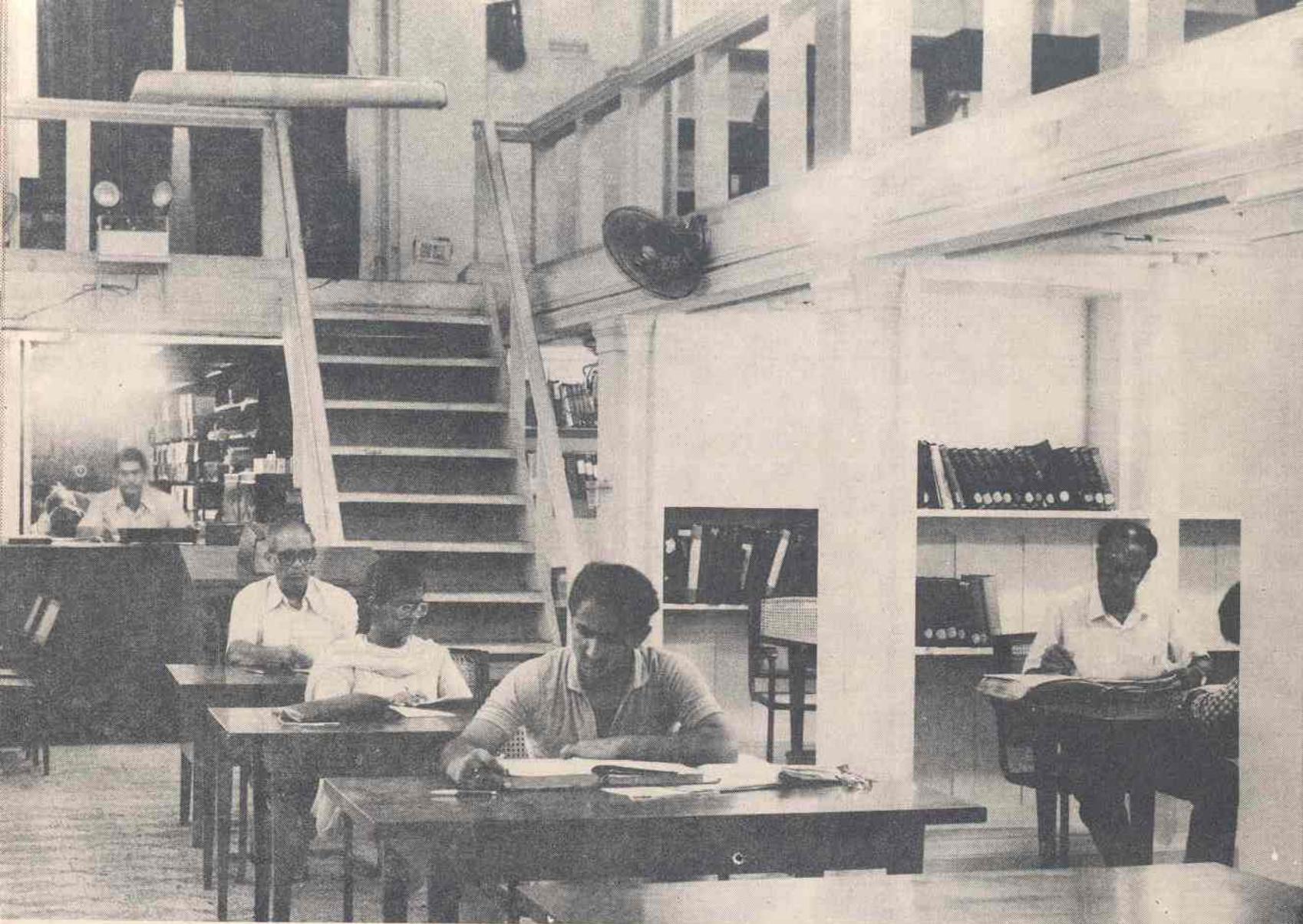


Research Room

Records contain a mine of information on administrative, economic and social affairs. Since they were created in the ordinary course of business entirely unconscious of their present destiny as sources of history, they present facts, authentic and unbiased.

The Department has its own regular Publication Programme and also provides necessary facilities for research among its records.

The Department also has a fine library of rare works on 18th and 19th century India.

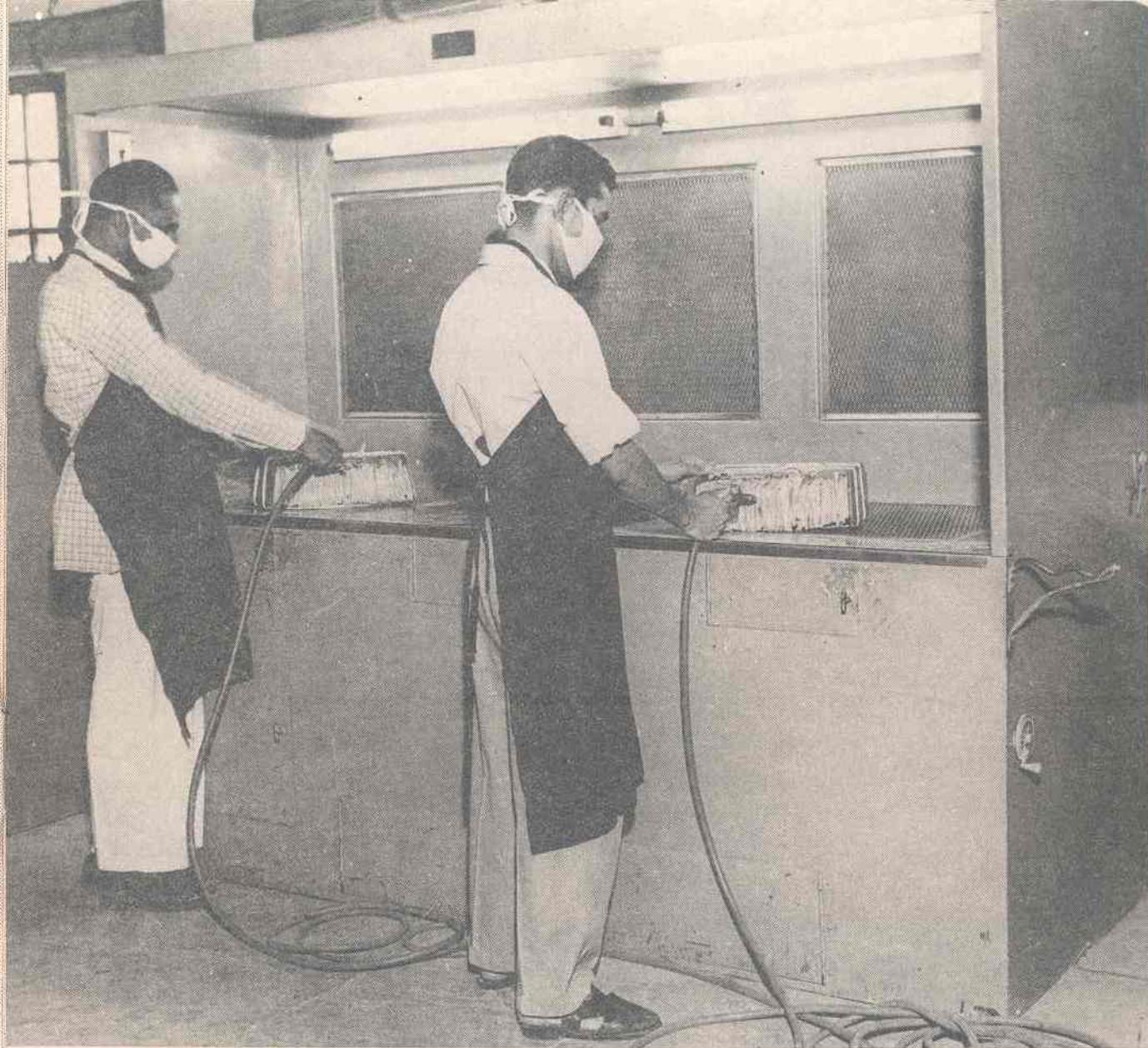


A view of the Research Room

Cleaning

In addition to being unhygienic, dust particles cut down the fibres of paper and act as nuclei for condensation of acidic moisture in polluted atmosphere, thus reducing the life of paper.

Cleaning is done with the help of vacuum cleaners or air-cleaning equipment.



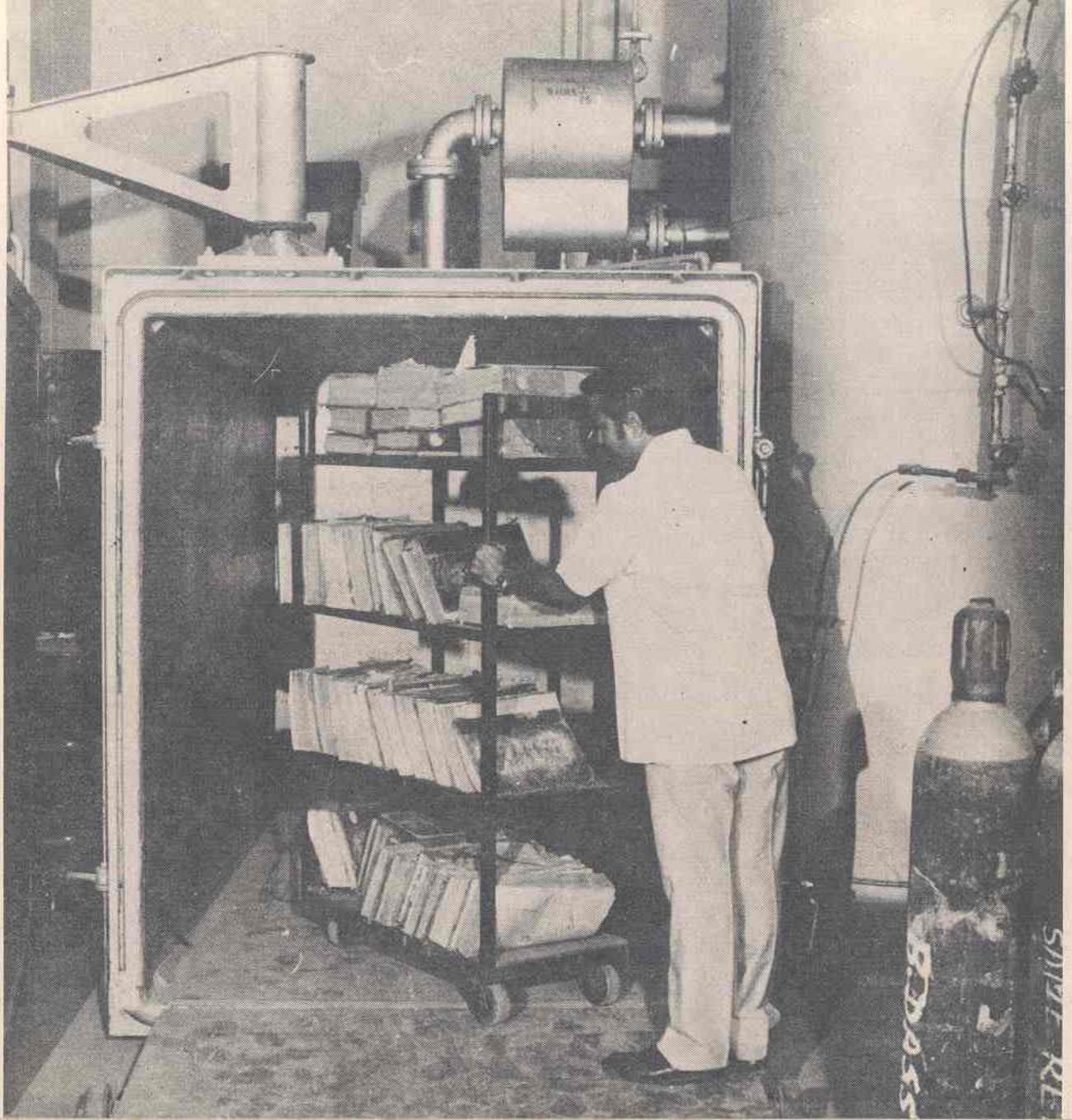
Air—Cleaning Unit



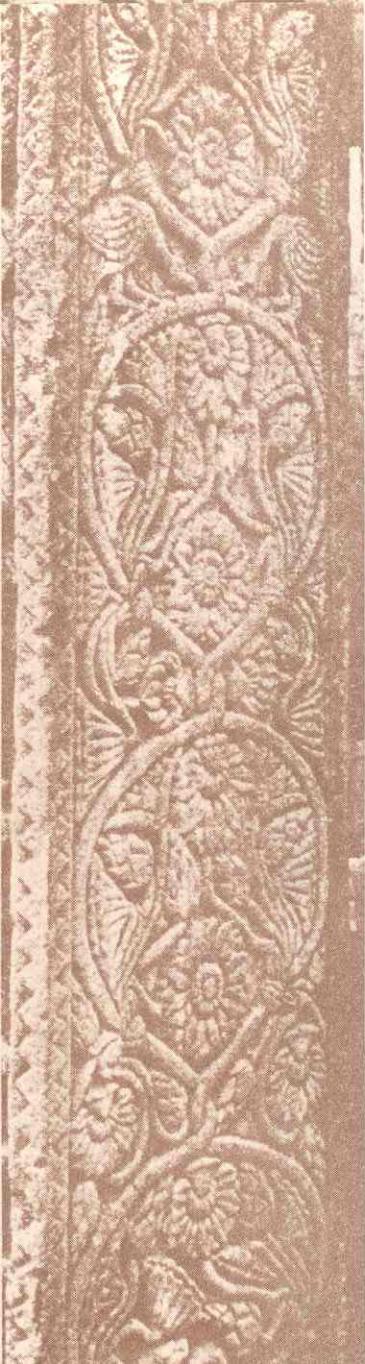
Fumigation

Since insect and fungoid infestation is a serious problem in a tropical country, fumigation of records at regular intervals is essential. Among the methods available, vacuum fumigation is the most effective as it destroys not only the living insects but also their eggs.

All in-coming records are cleaned and fumigated before they are sent for storage.



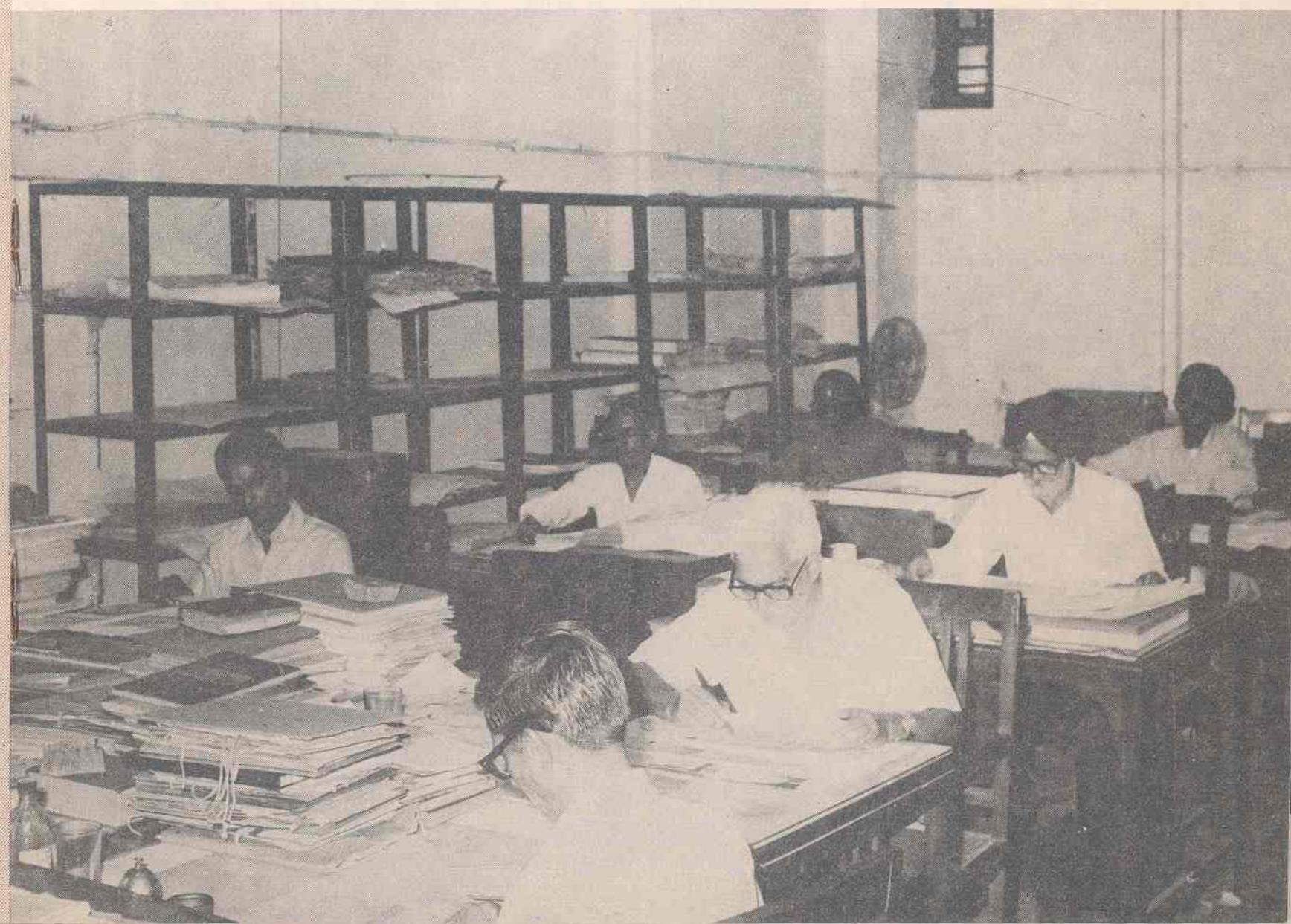
Vacuum Fumigation
Chamber



Restoration of Manuscripts

Restoration of fragile, brittle and insect-eaten papers is a delicate job and may involve diverse processes like humidification, separation of stuck-up sheets, pagination, deacidification, filling-up of eaten or missing portions, repairs by full-paste, tissue paper, chiffon or lamination process etc.

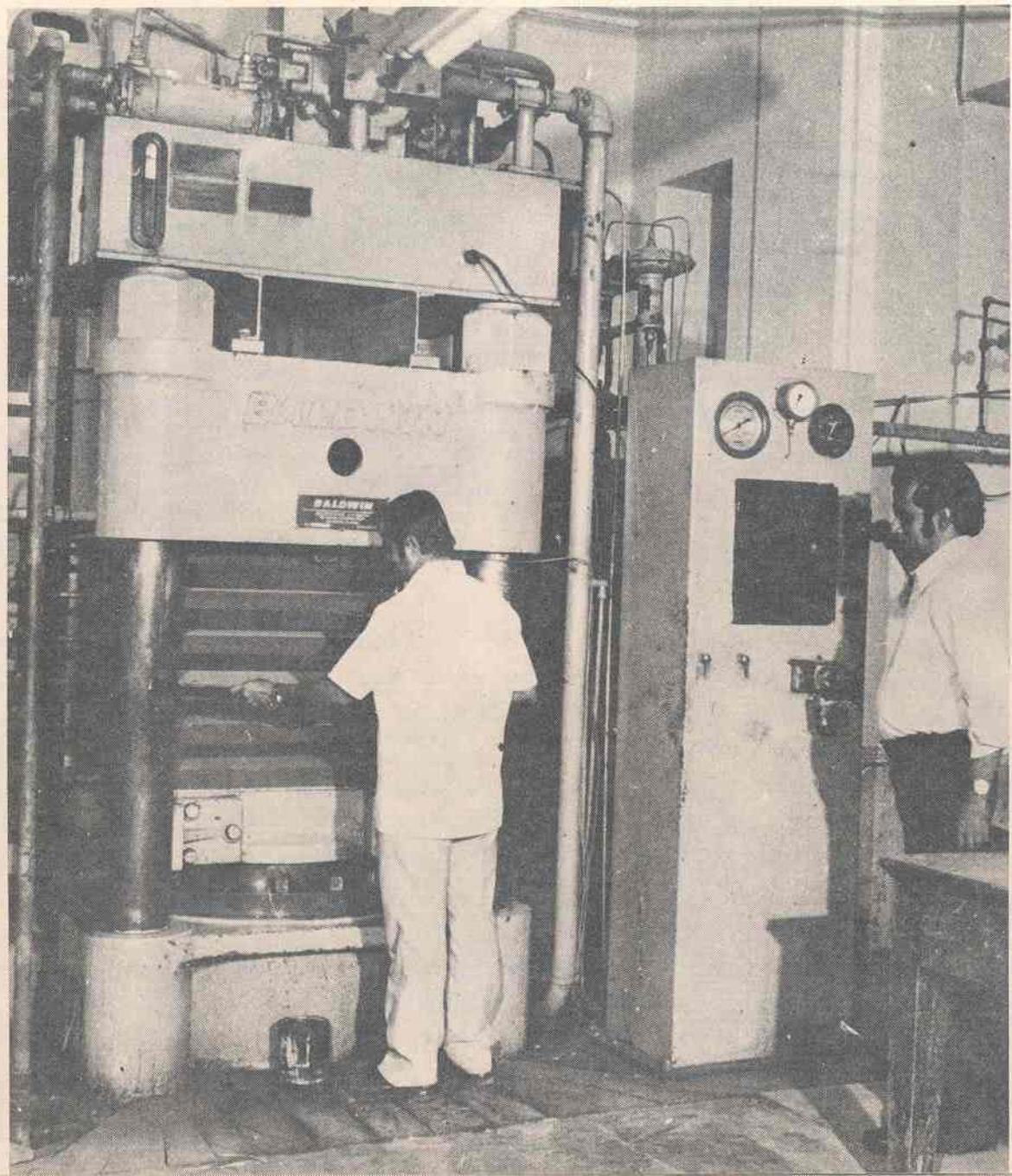
A general view of the Repair Section





Restoration (Mechanical)

Due to a very large bulk of records requiring rehabilitation, the Department makes use of a Hydraulic Laminating Machine and an Impregnator-Laminator for lamination of brittle documents with cellulose acetate foil and tissue paper under heat and pressure.



Hydraulic Laminating Machine

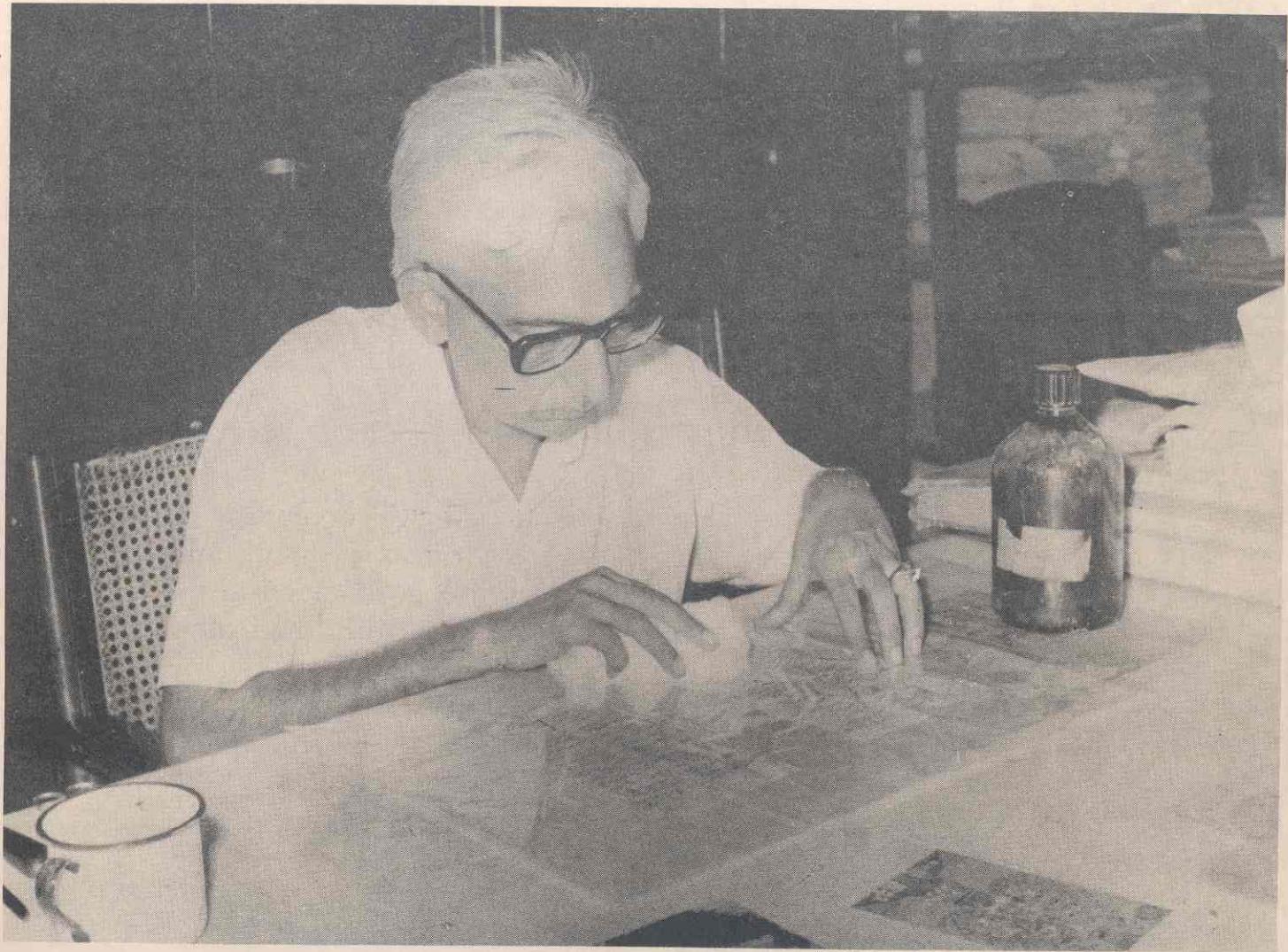


Hand/Solvent Lamination

This process which makes use of Cellulose Acetate foil, tissue paper and acetone was developed in the National Archives of India and does not require elaborate and expensive equipment.

This process is particularly useful for laminating documents with seals which would be obliterated under pressure and those written in inks which are liable to decomposition under heat. Another advantage is that each document receives individual attention.

On account of the simplicity of the process it has been widely adopted and commended.



Hand/Solvent Lamination

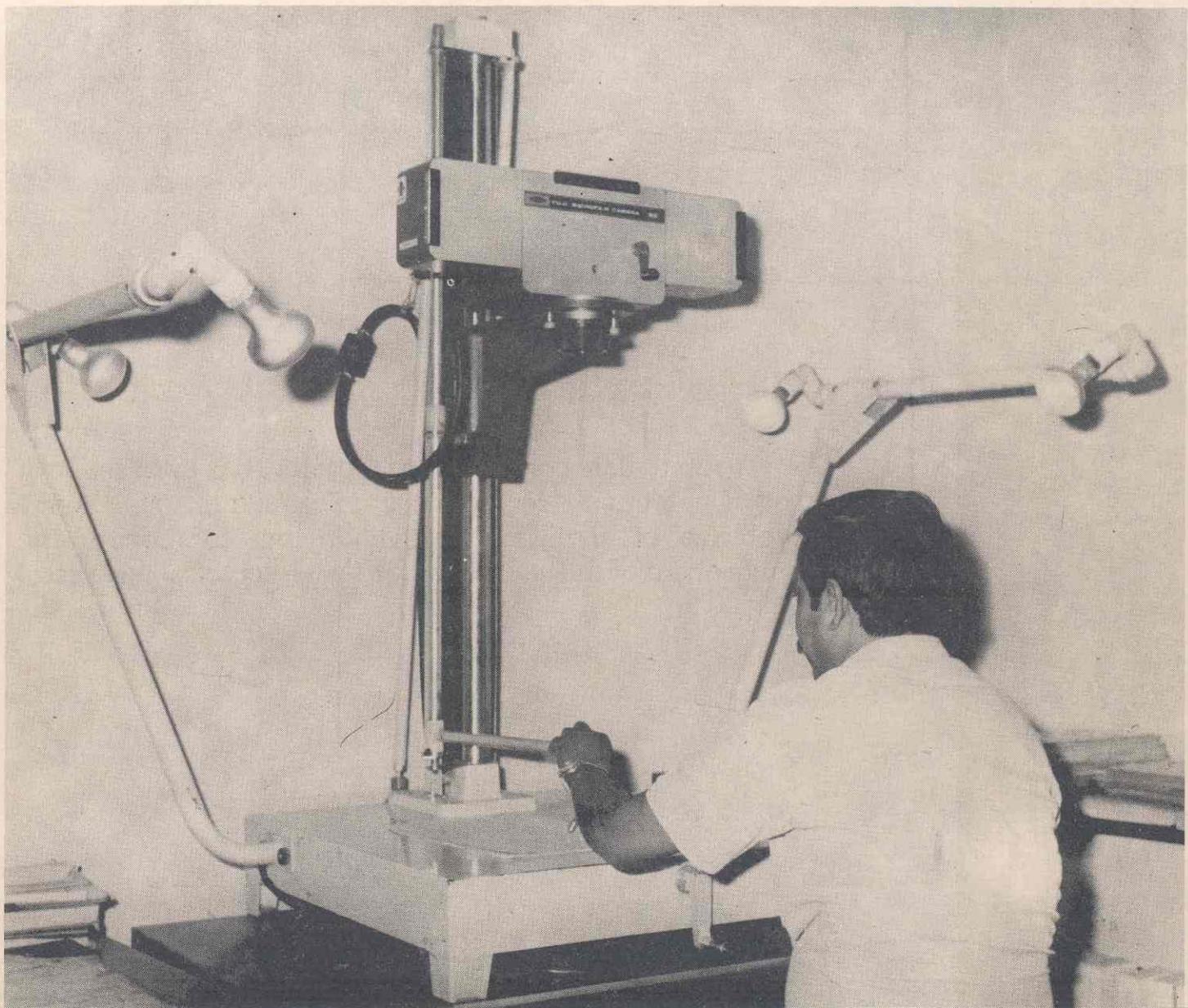


Reprography

The Department has a well-equipped Reprography Section. Xerography, microfilming on 35 mm film and photographic techniques are used to serve the Research Scholars as also to produce security and other microfilm copies of its rich collection of records.

Arrangements are also available for microfilming of out-station collections at site.

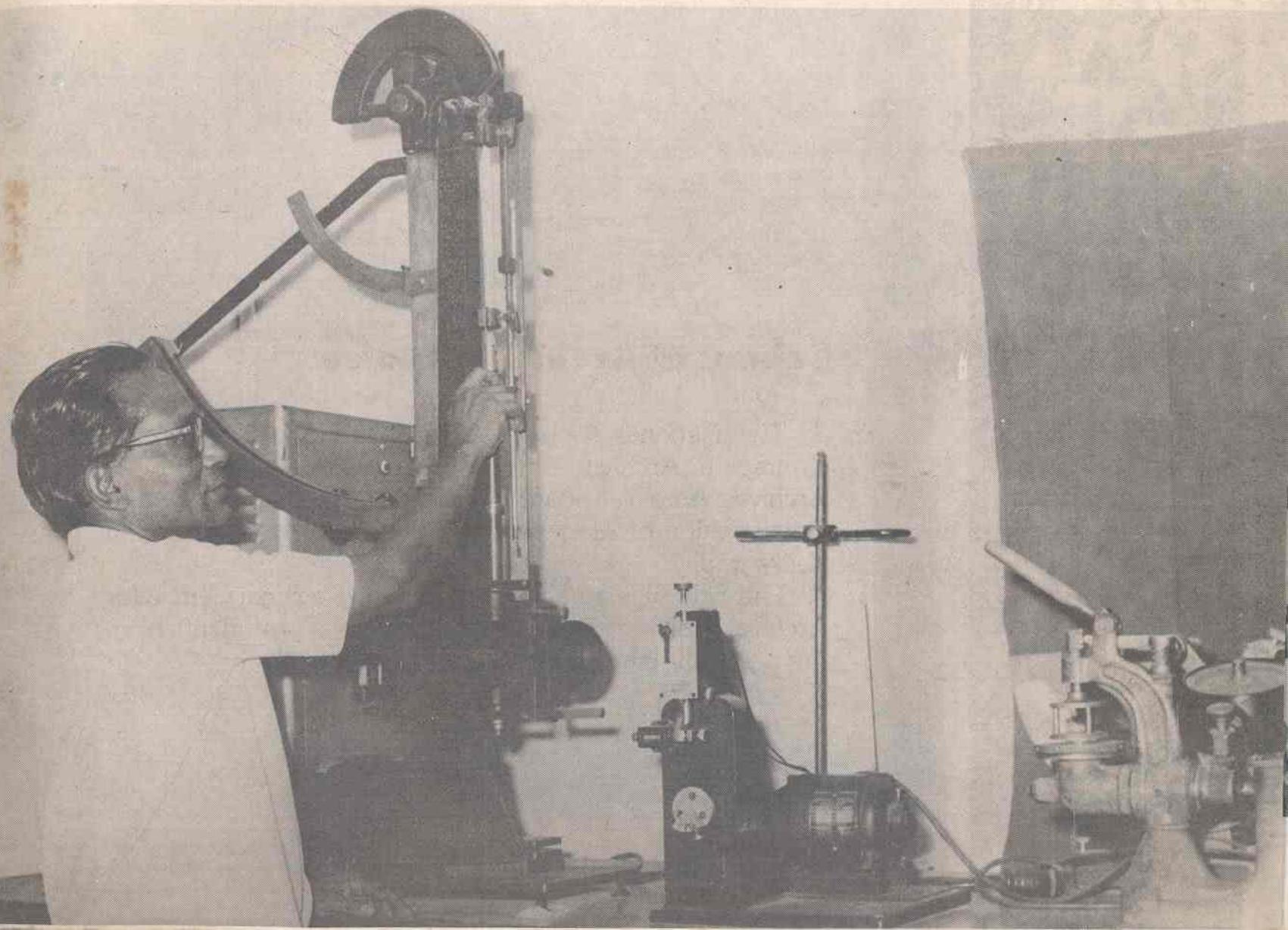
Microfilm Camera





Conservation Research Laboratory

An up-to-date conservation laboratory has been set-up in the Department to conduct experiments on various problems of archives preservation and to monitor the atmosphere of the stack area for taking remedial measures.



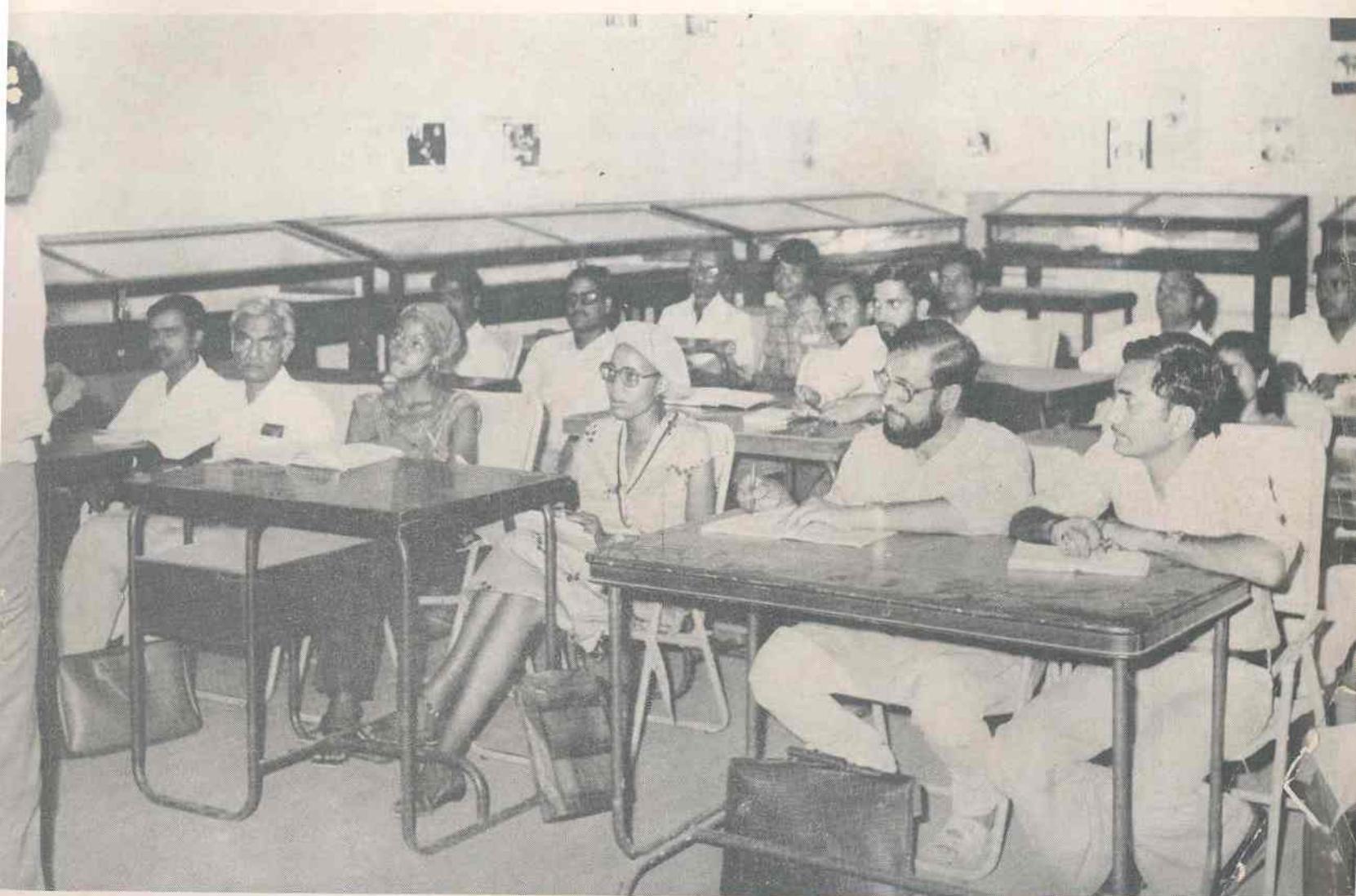


School of Archival Studies

The National Archives of India conducts a Diploma Course in Archival Studies and Certificate Courses in Archives Administration, Records Management, Care and Conservation of Manuscripts, Books and Archives and in Reprography.

The School is an Unesco approved Regional Centre for Archival Training for South Asia and attracts students from the neighbouring and African countries.

A class in progress



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National Archives of India and its proposed Annexe

The design of the Annexe to the National Archives of India was selected after a nation-wide architectural design competition.

The first phase of the Annexe building is nearing completion. Besides providing latest facilities to Research Scholars, an additional shelf-space of nearly 40 km will become available for storage of records. It is proposed to air-condition the storage areas to prolong the life of records.

