



IASLIC NEWSLETTER

Indian Association for Special
Libraries and Information Centres



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Quote of the Month

*“Books are the means by
which we build bridges
between cultures”*

— *Bharat Ratna Sarvepalli
Radhakrishnan,
Philosopher and statesman*

Appeal to Readers

News from different regions / states are solicited from IASLIC members for inclusion in the newsletter. Send such news to the Editor.

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IASLIC ACTIVITIES

25th IASLIC - Ranganathan Memorial Lecture

The 25th Ranganathan Memorial Lecture of IASLIC was held on July 15, 2021 through online mode. Prof. Shantaram Gajanan Mahajan, former Librarian, Jayakar Library and former Professor and Head, Department of Library and Information Science, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, Maharashtra, delivered the lecture on "Eleven Habits of a Successful Librarian". Welcoming the programme chair Prof. Narendra Lahkar, President of IASLIC, the speaker Prof. S G Mahajan, members of the Governing Body (GB) and Executive Committee (EC) of IASLIC and all other library and information professionals attending the lecture meeting, Shri Abhijit Kumar, General Secretary, IASLIC, pointed out how IASLIC was organizing Ranganathan Memorial Lecture Series since 1993. He also introduced the speaker. Prof. Narendra Lahkar expressed sincere gratitude to Prof. Mahajan, a 90+ years old professional, for agreeing to deliver the lecture.

Prof. Mahajan started his lecture by extending thanks to IASLIC for providing him the opportunity to deliver the lecture named after Dr. S R Ranganathan. He also briefly mentioned about his association with Ranganathan in his early days at Documentation Research and Training Centre (DRTC), Bangalore. He also mentioned about his long association with IASLIC starting from 1962. Focussing on his topic, Prof. Mahajan listed the following 11 habits which, he said, were necessary to become a successful library professional:

Habit 1: Having information about books on various subjects, various languages and by various authors;

Habit 2: Maintaining a collection of newspaper clippings on topics of interest to the users;

Habit 3: Compilation of bibliographies of books, periodicals, etc.;

Habit 4: Developing a collection of rare books and grey literature;

Habit 5: Developing a collection of reference sources, local history materials;

Habit 6: Teaching subjects(s) of LIS curriculum;

Habit 7: Preparing entries under topics of interest;

Habit 8: Contributing papers in conferences/seminars.

Habit 9: Taking initiatives in various activities of the organization;

Habit 10: Being a life-long learner; and

Habit 11: Establishing and maintaining good relationship with the scholars.

He elaborately discussed each habit by sharing his real-life experiences. According to him, emphasis should be given on reading habit by a librarian to enrich himself. He advised the librarians to read at least one English newspaper of national importance daily for building up English language proficiency and becoming aware of important current political and economic

events of the country. He said that a librarian should be acquainted with the recent occurrences in his own locality, district, state and country as it helped to accomplish the compilation work of newspaper clippings in order to provide current awareness services to the users on different topics of their interest. A librarian should also carry out the task of compiling bibliography, he added. Prof. Mahajan stressed on the importance of developing collections of rare books, grey literature, institutional publications and government publications as they were not available in the market. He opined that a librarian should be involved in teaching at least one paper at undergraduate or postgraduate level as it helped develop thorough knowledge, share valuable experiences with the learners, and develop presentation skills. Librarians should also write research papers and make presentations at seminars / conference as these provided opportunity to make study on new topics, express new ideas, share personal experiences, and gain professional recognition, he said. Prof. Mahajan also advised the librarians to take initiatives in various internal and external activities of their own institutions and thereby show their leadership quality and executive prowess. He felt that librarians should be life-long learners who could make friendship with the new technologies and adopt changes in changing environment. Librarians needed to build up a good relationship with scholars so that topic based resources could be easily exchanged through the collaborative discussion and in this way they could achieve the joy of providing the reference services, he said.

After Prof. Mahajan's lecture, Prof. Lahkar requested the professionals attending the lecture to share individual thoughts and experiences relating to the topic of the lecture. Prof. C R Karisiddappa, former Professor, DLIS, Karnataka University, Dharwad, appreciated the effort of IASLIC in getting a person like Prof. S G Mahajan as a speaker and thanked Prof. Mahajan for delivering the wonderful lecture. Prof. Susmita Chakrabarty, Professor and Head, DLIS, University of Calcutta, asked Prof. Mahajan to share more memories about Dr. S R Ranganathan. Prof. Mahajan requested her to read the book written by him narrating his personal experience of meeting S R Ranganathan.

In his concluding remarks, Prof. Narendra Lahkar expressed his gratitude to Prof. Mahajan for his very enlightening, contemplative and factual lecture in which roles and responsibilities of the librarians had been clearly explained quoting real-life examples and experiences in a very systematic manner. Finally, Shri Pradip Kumar Sarkar Joint Secretary, IASLIC, proposed a vote of thanks. Around 100 professionals attended the lecture programme. Shri Biswaranjan Manna and Shri Sujan Saha extended technical support in conducting the programme.

List of New Members

Institutional Members

1. Apex University, Jaipur, Rajasthan
2. G L Choudhury College, Barpeta Road, Assam
3. Kakching Khunou College, Umathel, Manipur
4. Nabajyoti College, Kalgachia, Assam
5. St. Berchmans College, Changanassery, Kerala
6. United Theological College, Bangalore, Karnataka
7. Women's College, Kolkata, West Bengal

CONFERENCES / SEMINARS / WORKSHOPS

National

Koha Training Programme

An Online Training Programme on 'Library Automation using Koha (Open Source Software)' is being organized by Prof. Ram Dayal Munda Central Library, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak Lalpur, Dist. Anuppur (M.P.) during September 3 -7, 2021. For details email to: koha@igntu.ac.in

INFLIBNET Programmes

INFLINET Centre, Gandhinagar, will organize the following programmes in online mode during September - November 2021:

- (1) Research Evaluation and Research Support Tools (September 6 - 8)
- (2) e-Resources Access, Management and Usage Analysis (September 13 - 17)
- (3) SOUL 3.0 Installation and Operations (September 13 - 17)
- (4) Bibliometrics and Research Output Analysis - Advanced Training (September 20 - 24)
- (5) Creation and Management of Digital Library using Open Source Software (September 27 - October 1)
- (6) SOUL 3.0 Installation and Operations (October 4 - 8)
- (7) Research Information Management System (October 11- 13)
- (8) e-Learning : Learning Management System and MOOCs (October 20 - 22)
- (9) Open Science Framework: A Tool for Research and Collaboration (November 1 - 3)
- (10) Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (November 10 - 12)
- (11) Shodhganga and Plagiarism Issues - Advanced Training (November 15 - 17)

For more details visit: <https://hrd.inflibnet.ac.in/training2021.php>

International

Conference on Transformation of Libraries

The 4th I-LISS International Conference on 'Transition or Transformation of Libraries due to COVID Pandemic: Lessons to Learn' 2021 is being organized in virtual mode by International Library and Information Science Society (I-LISS), in association with Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, Chennai, JISTaP, Jeonbuk National University & Keimyung University, South Korea, during October 7 - 8, 2021. For details visit: http://www.i-liss.org/4th_iliss.html

Conference of Asian Special Libraries

The 7th International Conference of Asian Special Libraries (ICoASL 2021) on 'Envisioning the Future of Library in the Post-Coronavirus Era' will be held during November 24 - 26, 2021 at the National Library of Korea, Seoul. For details visit: <https://connect.sla.org/asia/events/icoasl2021>

Conference on Digital Libraries

The 23rd International Conference on Asia-Pacific Digital Libraries (ICADL 2021) will be held in online mode during December 1 - 3, 2021. The theme of the conference is 'Towards Open and Trustworthy Digital Societies'. For details visit: <https://icadl.net/icadl2021/#dates>

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

ACLA Book Release & National Lecture

Assam College Librarians' Association (ACLA) organized a Book Release-cum-National Lecture programme on July 10, 2021 in virtual mode. At the outset a book entitled '*Librarianship in Changing Environment: Festschrift volume in honour of Professor Narendra Lahkar*' was released by Prof. Alaka Buragohain, Retired Professor, Department of Library & Information Science, Gauhati University, Guwahati. Prof. Buragohain, in her speech after releasing the book, narrated how Prof. Lahkar became a successful LIS educator and congratulated him for being honoured with publication of a festschrift volume. Referring to the problems faced by the people in pandemic in obtaining reading materials, she urged the LIS professional bodies to think about reaching reading materials to the people who need them for recreation, inspiration, motivation and solace. Prof. Lahkar expressed his happiness for the honour bestowed on him and expressed his gratitude to Prof. Buragohain for the help he had received from her in going ahead in the profession. He said, "we must feel proud of our profession and at the same time we should prepare the next generation professionals to take this profession ahead". The book release was followed by a 'National Lecture' on an important topic 'Paradigm shift in libraries vis-à-vis LIS education in India', which was delivered by an eminent LIS educator of the country, Prof. Amitabha Chatterjee, Retired Professor, Department of Library & Information Science, Jadavpur University, Kolkata. Prof. Chatterjee, in his lecture,

highlighted the changes that have taken place in libraries and library environment, including change in the focus of libraries, causing a paradigm shift. He mentioned about the new roles that librarians needed to play in the new paradigm. He then pointed out the shortcomings in the present LIS education system of the country and suggested measures to remove them. He also emphasized the need for introducing a mechanism for accreditation of LIS schools and courses to maintain the quality of training. Lively discussions followed the lecture, in which eminent personalities in the field of LIS, viz., Prof. C R Karisiddappa, Prof. N Laxman Rao, Prof. K P Mazumdar, Dr. Mukesh Saikia, etc. commented on different aspects of present LIS education scenario in the country. The programme was chaired by Shri Srimanta Madhab Bora, President, ACLA, and was moderated by Dr. Dhruvajit Das, Working President, ACLA. The programme ended with a vote of thanks offered by Dr. G B Devchoudhury.

Orissa LIS Forum Celebrates Librarians' Day

Librarians' Day was celebrated online by the "lisforum_orissa" - a web based national forum for Library & Information Science professionals - on August 12, 2021 commemorating the birth anniversary of Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, the father of library science in India. To mark the occasion a conclave was organized on the topic 'Librarianship at the Crossroads.' Two eminent librarians, namely, Dr. Nabi Hasan, Librarian, IIT, Delhi; and Dr. Kishor Chandra Satpathy, Chief Librarian, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata, were the Guest Speakers. They shared their rich experiences with the participants while discussing on the topic. On this occasion a national level online quiz competition was also organized on August 8 and first three competitors were awarded prizes and certificates. Dr. Sunil Kumar Satpathy, Deputy Librarian, NIT, Raipur. was the moderator of the programme, while Shri Premraj Mishra, Sr. Manager, TISCO, Jamshedpur, and Dr. Debraj Meher, Librarian, OUAT, Bhubaneswar, served as anchors.

Schools hold 'Library Langar'

To encourage students to develop the habit of reading, the government schools in Punjab's Nawanshahar district recently organized 'Library Langar' on their premises and at public places in the vicinity of the educational institutions, says an *Indian Express* report. Teachers, with loads of books in their personal vehicles, went door to door to handover the books of their choice to the students. As per information, around 40,000 books were distributed among students in the district through this initiative. DEO (Secondary) Jagjit Singh and Deputy DEO (Secondary), Amrik Singh said that through this initiative they aimed to reach out to maximum number of students to promote reading and ensure that books of their choice were handed over to them. "Besides, the initiative holds more importance now as students are bound to be at home due to the pandemic. Thus, it will help in engaging themselves productively without the exposure to screens," they said, while adding that poster campaigns via social media sites and announcements from gurdwaras and public places were made to sensitize students and their parents regarding the event. A range of books on

different subjects was put on display not only for students, but also for parents. An overwhelming response was witnessed from the students, parents as well as the community, said the education officers. Besides, meetings with block nodal officers (BNOs) and Parho Punjab Parhao Punjab (PPPP) teams were organized online and different teams were deputed for schools, so that parents and children faced no problem and the event could be a big success. "We have received a great response. Now, the endeavour would be made a regular feature," the officers said. For original report visit: <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/nawanshahr-govt-schools-library-langar-7401911/>

Private Party to develop Heritage Library

The development and operation of the Dara Shikoh Library building in the national capital has been awarded to 'Monument Mitras' under the 'Adopt a Heritage' project, an official statement said. The Tourism Ministry statement said that the 28th MoU under the "Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan" project has been awarded for the Dara Shikoh Library, says a report in the *Times of India* quoting IANS. "The project will be implemented by the government stakeholders, including the Union Ministry of Tourism, and the Delhi government, and the private entities - Monument Mitras, The Arts and Cultural Heritage Trust (TAACHT) and the Museum and Arts Consultancy (MAC) acting in a joint consortium," it said. The ministry said that under this MoU, Monument Mitras planned to take up development, operations, and maintenance of basic amenities such as cleanliness of building and outdoor area, including provision of garbage bins, benches, toilets, interpretative signs and directional signage, drinking water facilities, illumination, landscaping, provision for ease of access or barrier-free monument, accessibility for all (differently-abled friendly toilets, ramps, wheelchair facility, Braille signages). Monument Mitras will also set up galleries including interactive and experiential curation (projections, photo booths, touch screens and walls), set up the room for reserve collection of antiquities/artefacts, organize security and advanced surveillance system and offer advanced amenities such as cafeteria (outdoor cafe), souvenir shop, brochures and leaflets, library and reading area, art installations, website designing, app based multilingual audio-guide, and wi-fi. "The duration of the MoU is for an initial period of five years, extendable based on the performance of the Monument Mitras," the statement said. For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/books/features/adopt-a-heritage-private-party-to-develop-dara-shikoh-library/articleshow/81547515.cms>

Bathinda to have 100 Modern Libraries

The Bathinda district administration has planned to open 100 state-of-the-art libraries for the youth in the district at a cost of ₹ 15 crore, says a story by Sukhmeet Bhasin in *The Tribune*. Under this project, the first digital library has already been set up in Bathinda city at ₹ 90 lakh, which is getting a good response from students. The hi-tech air-conditioned library is a multipurpose facility equipped with all facilities concerning the

users of the modern era. The library has quality study and reference materials, and competitive books as well to help students prepare for competitive exams. Apart from books, the library has a lab with 20 computers, a recreation area, a pool table and a music room with a hi-tech piano. This is the model, on which other libraries in 100 villages would be set up in the district. Bathinda Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Paramvir Singh, whose brain child is this project, said: "The district administration library at the Zila Parishad office is lying defunct, so I decided to open a modern library to provide youth a platform to get quality knowledge." The ADC said, "The project is aimed at rediscovering how public and academic libraries move forward and adapt to the new technologies and users' needs." He said they had fixed the membership fee at ₹ 500 per month to make it a self-sustainable project. At present, the library had a seating capacity of 70 as they had targeted 100 members initially, he said. "We are seeing a good response as membership number has reached 160 so far, and we have started extending the facility. A library will come up at the ground floor as well to increase its capacity," he said. The second library at the third floor of the Zila Parishad office would have a capacity of around 200, he said. For original story visit: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/schools/100-state-of-the-art-libraries-in-bathinda-district-soon-282089>

Digital Library in every AP Village soon

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has directed the officials to start establishing digital libraries in every village across the state, says a *The Times of India* report. He wanted them to start the work from August 15, marking the 75 years of Independence. The Chief Minister addressed the officials during the review on IT and digital libraries at his Tadepalli camp office last month. He told the officials to provide high speed Internet facility to every house keeping in view the work from home concept followed by several companies due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Chief Minister said that the digital libraries in the villages should have materials for students and youth to prepare themselves for all competitive exams. He also told them to provide high speed Internet in all village secretariats and the Rythu Bharosa Kendras. Jagan Mohan Reddy wanted the officials to provide high speed Internet to the schools too at the primary level for easy learning. The officials told the Chief Minister that the action plan was ready to establish the digital libraries by December 2021. The chief minister instructed the officials to provide three desktops, UPS, desktop barcode printer, scanner, laser printer, software, anti-virus software, unlimited bandwidth Internet along with minimum facilities in all the digital libraries. The State government will be spending ₹140 crore for providing infrastructure facilities and computer equipment in 4530 digital libraries in the first phase. For full report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/vijayawada/digital-libraries-to-be-set-up-in-all-villages/articleshowprint/85016944.cms>

Youth sets up Village Library

While people donating immensely for temples, gurdwaras, or other development work is common site these days, a

youngster putting in efforts and showing zeal to open a library is rare! Mandeep Singh (26), who is a government employee and an avid reader from Sultanpur Lodhi, is a fine example of such an initiative, according to a story by Aakanksha N Bhardwaj in *The Tribune*. For those who have never had any chance to read, or those who are beginners, or want to prepare for competitive exams, the library will prove to be a blessing for them. 'Pind di library layi kitaba di madad kro ji' - a poster is doing the rounds on the social media where Mandeep has urged people to donate books for the library he is going to start at Jabbowal village in Sultanpur Lodhi of Punjab. The library will be named 'Tera Tera library'. Mandeep has dedicated his own space for the library. He has also reached out to writers and artists to support him in this initiative, and has been getting a good response in this regard. "Until now, I have received more than 250 books from writers and publishers. The library will start soon," he said, adding that now, he had books in Urdu, Punjabi, English literature, apart from various magazines and newspapers. He has also got books from the Languages Department. "The books will be given for free and youngsters will be able to come here to prepare for their competitive exams and if any writer wants to have discussions, it will happen in the library," he said. For full story visit: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/jalandhar/he-is-making-books-accessible-to-all-with-tera-tera-library-268270>

Karnataka Village Libraries to be WiFi Zones

In a bid to bridge the digital divide and enhance attendance in online classes, the state government has decided to temporarily convert all 6,000 gram panchayat libraries in the state into educational hubs, says a *The Times of India* report. The government plans to improve access to gadgets and the Internet in rural areas, especially in remote villages, by equipping these libraries with a steady WiFi connection. Children can come to these centres and attend online classes. This comes on the heels of the government saying it will set up 'mobile banks' with the help of voluntary organizations, to help students access online classes. While the state government has been trying to address mobile network issues in remote and hilly regions of the state, it is still falling woefully short of ensuring all children have access to the Internet to attend online classes. Since all libraries, besides the local GP office, are connected under the BharatNet project, the government is looking to install devices to ensure children who have no access to the Internet or Doordarshan can come and learn at these libraries. Talks are in the advanced stages and the education department is holding parleys with rural development and gram panchayat officials who have ownership of these libraries. For full report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/gp-libraries-to-get-wi-fi-connection/articleshowprint/84358152.cms> 3/3

Karnataka reviving Panchayat Libraries

To ensure children stay connected with books amid the pandemic, the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department of Karnataka is reviving libraries in gram

panchayats through the Oduva Belaku programme, which was launched in November last year, says a *The Times of India* report. So far, nearly 9.7 lakh children have enrolled themselves in libraries across the state and borrowed 2.6 lakh books. Priyanka Mary Francis, Commissioner, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, told *TOI* that children were the most affected, socially, emotionally and academically, by the pandemic. "Schools have remained closed and the learning that has been imparted to them for all these years is fading. In the worst case, kids are being pushed into child marriage and child labour, as reported by various media outlets. To prevent further damage, it is the need of the hour to revive GP libraries as knowledge centres of rural areas. The initiative was launched under the guidance of principal secretary Uma Mahadevan," she said. "We are aiming for 100 per cent enrolment of children in the age group of 6-18. Enrolment at GP libraries is for free. Panchayats have been directed to have in place a separate children's section, with books specifically chosen for the age group of 6-18. Libraries that are given a facelift can have new and used books which are in a decent condition, provided by well-wishers and NGOs. Digital libraries are also being set up. Activities must be taken up to develop scientific temper among children, and NGOs can contribute in this regard. Efforts should be made to sustain libraries as knowledge centres, even after the pandemic," Francis said. The number of digital library users is 42,507, and gram panchayats have collected around 3.2 lakh books through donations. Of the 6,009 GPs, 5,622 have libraries. They have also been asked to install television sets so that children can attend classes telecast on Doordarshan Chandana. For full report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mangaluru/9-7l-children-enrol-in-gp-libraries-read-2-6l-books/articleshowprint/84102216.cms>

Cafeteria Library at Patna Varsity

Patna University (PU) is all set to have a cafeteria library for the benefit of its scholars. The e-library, first of its kind in the state, has been constructed adjacent to the PU central library on its western side and has also been furnished. Now the authorities are awaiting installation of computers with Internet connectivity for declaring it open, says a *The Times of India* report. PU Chief Librarian Abhay Kumar said that the decision to open a cafeteria library on the campus was taken during the centenary celebrations of the PU library in 2019 and its foundation stone was laid in February last year by the then vice-chancellor Rash Bihari Prasad Singh. The construction work was delayed for some time due to Covid-19 pandemic. But, now it was complete, he said. He pointed out that as many as 35 computers were to be installed in the cafeteria in the first phase and the university was striving to mobilize funds for purchasing the same. He said that VC Girish Kumar Chaudhary had assured that the funds for the installation of the desired number of computers would be made available soon. Narrating details of this library, Kumar said that the library would remain open round the clock. Students would be given a chance to visit the library in shifts of one or two hours. Girls would be given to use it preferably during day hours, while boys would be welcome round the clock. "This e-library will be connected to the

National Academic Depository which will allow students to access millions of books and research journals,” he said. For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/patna/pu-all-set-to-have-cafeteria-library/articleshowprint/84954681.cms>

Library turned to Shelter

Eleven years after it was inaugurated, a government library at Sembedu in Tiruvallur district of Tamil Nadu is in shambles, being used as a temporary stay, a gym and a rain shelter. It is rarely used for the purpose it was built, says a *The Times of India* report. “It was a blessing for us and used by government school kids,” said 27-year-old T Madhivanan, who used it when in college. “The then village president converted it into a temporary stay for migrant workers when a construction project began. It was later used as a gym by youngsters. During the rain, it is used as a shelter. There are very few books now, all of them destroyed. Recently, some youngsters wrote to the chief minister to revamp and open it for the public. A petition was also sent to Tiruvallur collector Alby Jhon who has promised action,” he said. Meant for children of the Sembedu Government School and the elderly, it was built at ₹5 lakh in 2010. At that time, panchayat secretary C Ekambaram told *TOI* that one library had been set up in each village under the Anaithu Grama Anna Marumalarchi Thittam (AGAMT) and the panchayat was tasked with running it. From 2007 to 2011, under the AGAMT, ₹2,038 crore were spent to set up libraries at ₹20 lakh each, that included the purchase of books, furniture and construction, in 10,108 villages. “This library was functioning well for a few years. But after the librarian appointed died, we couldn't find a replacement as the salary was just ₹1,000. Now, we will pay ₹1,500 and appoint one soon,” he said. Madhivanan said that most of the libraries set up under the scheme since 2012 were shut. “The libraries are supposed to be open from 8.30am to 10.30am and from 4.30pm to 6.30pm. But due to lack of maintenance, all libraries were either deserted or used for other purposes,” he said. For full report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/tamil-nadu-govt-library-in-tiruvallur-goes-to-see/article/showprint/85261615.cms>

Cop's Friends donate Money for Library

A group of friends who lost schoolmate Abhignan Mukherjee - an inspector in Kolkata police's traffic department - to Covid last year, donated ₹75,000 to a school in Purulia on the death anniversary of their friend, says a story by Jhinuk Mazumdar in *The Telegraph*. Most of the students at Bhalopahar School in Purulia's Bundwan block, about 300km from the city, are tribal and first-generation learners. Their parents barely earn a few thousand rupees a month. Mukherjee's school friends - 10 of them - handed over the money to the school recently, exactly a year after the inspector succumbed to the disease. They said that they wanted to do something in memory of their friend for a

school, because “school is where their friendship had been founded”. The Purulia school, which depends on contributions, runs classes from Nursery to VIII and has 220 children on the rolls. The pandemic has shattered the aspirations of many of the children and their parents as the school had to be closed as a precaution against Covid. Kamal Chakraborty, 77, the co-founder and secretary of Bhalopahar School, plans to set up a library with the money. “No one reads now, but still I want to set up a library with the money,” said Chakraborty, who founded the school with Jayati Chakraborty. For full story visit: <https://www.telegraphindia.com/west-bengal/calcutta/covid-victims-friends-donate-money-to-purulia-school/cid/1823889>

Library for Cops at Muzzafarnagar

For the first time, a library stocking more than 1,000 books has been set up in the police line in Muzaffarnagar for policemen and their families. It was inaugurated recently by the daughter of a head constable in the presence of SSP Abhishek Yadav, says a *The Times of India* report. Several children living in the police line were invited to the event. “The library is stocked with more than 1,000 books from varied fields ranging from school examination to competitive exams, finance, health, fitness, autobiographies, spiritualism and fiction,” said SSP Yadav. “A lot of police personnel prepare for competitive exams while working and we have tried to create a storehouse of books to aid them and a space to study peacefully since the barracks are rarely quiet or peaceful,” he added. Now, police personnel and their family members can go to the library to browse through newspapers and magazines and also study in the quiet environ. Children can attend online classes from there as a Wi-Fi facility has been set up in the library. SSP Yadav told *TOI*, “Apart from a large range of books, the library has an e-learning centre with four desktops that allow free access to the Internet to those interested in studying online or pursuing MOOCs (massive open online course).” The access to the library's reading rooms is free. Those who wish to get a book issued in their name and take it home will have to pay a monthly fee of ₹ 50 for a membership card. For full report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/meerut/mngr-police-dept-opens-library-for-cops-kin/articleshowprint/84508321.cms>

Kerala CM for Home Delivery of Books

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan recently urged libraries to diligently engage in a task of delivering books to children at their homes, says a *The Times of India* report. Bringing them library books during the Covid times could phenomenally help children to face the Covid-induced stress, he said. The CM was inaugurating the 'reading week' observation jointly organized by the State Library Council and P N Panicker Foundation in connection with the 25th death anniversary of P N Panicker, founder of library and

literacy movement in Kerala. “P N Panicker had played a stellar role in popularizing the library movement in Kerala. His slogan read and grow has timeless relevance. The formation of Kerala Grandhasala Sangham was the culmination of P N Panicker's efforts towards establishing a linkage of libraries in Travancore region. He also worked as the first general secretary of Grandhasala Sangham. I V Das Master was another legend who contributed voluminously towards library movement,” CM said. For full report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/thiruvananthapuram/giving-library-books-to-kids-can-help-tide-over-covid-stress-cm/articleshowprint/83674979.cms>

TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Google ends Poly Platform

Internet search giant Google has ended support for its 3D-object creation and library platform Poly on June 30, 2021, says a report available on timesofindia.indiatimes.com/gadgets-news website. The company had announced that it was going to do this last year in December. "Poly will be shut down on June 30, 2021," the company said on its support page. The platform was shut for users for any uploading of 3D models to the site since April 30, 2021. To recall, the platform was launched in 2017 and enabled users to upload, browse, and distribute 3D content created using tools like Tilt Brush and Blocks. Earlier this month, Google had announced that it was pulling the plug on its AR-based Measure app. The company has already removed the Android app listing on the Play Store search, and a direct link to the listing shows a new message in the description: "This app is no longer supported and will not be updated. Users who previously installed this app can continue to use it on compatible devices." Earlier this year in March, Google discontinued its most affordable VR headset Google Cardboard. The Cardboard VR headset is no longer available after five years of its first release. “We are no longer selling Google Cardboard on the Google Store. We will continue to help the community build new experiences through our Cardboard open source project,” a message on the Google Store page said. For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/gadgets-news/google-ends-support-for-3d-object-creation-and-library-platform-poly/articleshowprint/83998714.cms>

New Features of Zoom

Zoom has added some new features with its latest update for desktop, iPad, and Zoom Phone, according to a story by Vineet Washington available on gadgets.ndtv.com website. These include a new Focus Mode, the ability to transfer meetings from mobile to desktop, limiting screen-sharing for meetings with external participants, and automatic reactions from gesture recognition for iPad users, who can now use 'Raise Hand' and 'Thumbs Up' reaction to make the video call feel more organic. The feature-rich update also brings chat

sidebar enhancements as well as a new admin experience. To improve the video-calling experience, which will likely remain crucial for the foreseeable future, Zoom has added several new features with its latest update. Focus Mode has been designed with educators in mind and allows participants to only be able to see themselves, the host/ co-hosts, and the content they are sharing. Hosts and co-hosts can also choose to view all the participants simultaneously in a gallery view. Zoom users can now also transfer their calls from desktop to mobile phones and back without disconnecting. Admins can now apply restrictions to specific users or groups to stop them from screen-sharing when a participant joins a meeting as a 'guest'. Users will still be able to share their screens when there are no guest participants. For full story visit: <https://gadgets.ndtv.com/apps/news/zoom-update-raise-hand-thumbs-up-gesture-ipad-focus-mode-mobile-desktop-call-switching-rollout-2519645>

SPECIAL FEATURE

Library of Trees!

A library disseminates knowledge - knowledge available through its resources. In the print era, it could provide mainly theoretical knowledge, but with the advent of audio-visual and digital media, it can now even impart practical knowledge. More recently, we hear about a new kind of library that provides first-hand knowledge about an important natural resource, viz. trees. Tree library or library of trees is not just a tree shaped library or a library curved out of a tree trunk, which are often little free libraries (*see* special feature on 'Give and Take Library' in March 2018 issue of this newsletter). It is not even a library atop a tree (*see* special feature on 'Library atop a Tree' in November 2017 issue of this newsletter). It is indeed a library where there is a collection of live trees instead of books. Nevertheless, such libraries of trees are not commonly available. Possibly there are now only two specimens of such libraries in the world at the moment.

The first library of trees, named Biblioteca degli Alberi (literally the 'Library of Trees') extending over an area of 9.5 hectares, came up in the Italian city of Milan in 2018. Biblioteca degli Alberi was conceived in 2003, but political and financial setbacks delayed its opening until October 2018. Not only does it contain a rich library of plant life with over 135,000 plants that include 100 different species and 500 trees, its layout is entirely unique. “It features a geometric design of interlacing paths (strewn with botanically themed phrases), irregularly shaped fields and clusters of circular forests that form green 'rooms', areas for play, contemplation and events.” There is plan to plant three million new trees by 2030 in the library area. The Library of Trees of Milan provides a scope to visitors to get first-hand knowledge about innumerable kinds of trees, plants and shrubs. Not only that,

the library's Vertical Forest area has “attracted more than 20 species of birds and the shade provided by the 800 trees, 4,500 shrubs and 15,000 plants mean that residents rarely have to put on air conditioning, even during the peak of Milan's clammy summers.”

The second library of trees is located in India's cultural capital Kolkata. The library, conceptualized and now being developed by Housing and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HIDCO), a state government undertaking, in association with West Bengal Pollution Control Board and State Forest Department, in New Town area of the city, aims to display specimens of all indigenous species of Bengal - 3,580 species belonging to 1300 genera and falling under 200 families. Each tree will display its Latin name, unique characteristics and importance. The library was formally inaugurated on August 1 last year by the residents of Snehadiya - an old age home located nearby - by planting a few saplings of arjun, karanja, amlaki, jarul and rubber. It is expected that since the location of this 'Tree Library' is not far from the wetlands of east Kolkata, the library will attract different species of birds and the library will soon turn into 'Nandan Kanan' to the delight of Kolkata residents.

Besides these physical libraries having live trees in their collections, there are also a few digital libraries dealing with trees, which provide digital resources online to educators, students and even lay persons. One such library is 'Canopy Tree Library' (<https://canopy.org/tree-info/canopy-tree-library/>), with its headquarters at Palo Alto in California, USA. It provides information about 384 types of trees,

which help common people to select appropriate tree for planting at their yards or gardens. Not only that, it also provides information about how to care and protect the trees. It even provides a list of arborists who can be hired to look after the trees that one has planted or wants to plant (Sorry, this service is not available in India). Another such digital library is TreeLib Tree Library (<https://treelib.ca/>), again headquartered in USA, which boasts of having information and photographs of 349 genera and 1277 species from across the world in its dendrology database.

The advantages of a library of trees are many. Such a library not only helps the young learners get information about different species of trees, but also provides a green and open space which is very much needed for the residents of any crowded city. The starting of such a library has been made in Kolkata. Let local governments in other places also come forward to carry forth the mission with which the libraries of trees have been started.

[Sources: <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/articles/milan-green-lung-biblioteca-degli-alberi>, <https://www.architecturalrecord.com/articles/14068-biblioteca-degli-alberi-by-inside-outside>, <https://phys.org/news/2018-12-tree-milan-ambitious-cleaner-greener.html>, <https://www.telegraphindia.com/west-bengal/library-in-new-town-to-learn-about-trees/cid/1695638>, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/new-town-tree-library-to-be-the-one-stop-destination-for-info-on-indigenous-species/articleshow/70440002.cms>, <https://www.getbengal.com/details/new-town-to-get-first-tree-library-of-india>, <https://binj.in/science/kolkatas-new-town-gets-a-3-acre-tree-library/>]

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