

# Experts for e-library to preserve age-old manuscripts

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**PATNA:** Experts on Wednesday voted for upgrading the existing libraries in the state into well-equipped and tech-savvy study centres for serving the twin purposes of preserving and digitising printed materials and age-old manuscripts in the e-libraries. They also suggested making the libraries user-friendly to cater to the needs of different categories of readers.

The speakers also stressed on immediate implementation of the Library and Information Act (2008) that was still waiting to see light of the day despite having been passed four years back. "The implementation of the act would make it obligatory on the part of the government authorities to maintain libraries as per the best prevalent standards. It would also strengthen e-library movement to suit the modern day academic and research needs of visitors," said SF Rab, course director from the Institute of Objective Studies (IOS), Patna.

Rab added, "Forget about modernisation and computerisation of study materials, the state libraries do not even fulfill basic criteria like documentation, cataloging and maintenance of books as per set norms and guidelines."

Earlier, speaking as the chief guest on the inaugural day of the five-day training programme for librarians and

library science students, principal secretary of planning and development department Vijay Prakash said establishment of e-libraries should be made mandatory to encourage e-learning and meet the need-based and user-friendly demand of students and readers. "But digitisation and strengthening of library sciences call for well-acquainted professionals to man the modern services and techniques. The state government's decision to offer pay to librarians at par with professors and teachers is only a step ahead in the direction to attract, equip and retain trained manpower to handle the demanding situation," said Prakash.

Prakash also called on library authorities to form a consortium for collective ordering and buying of books at cheaper rates.

Inaugurating the programme, vice-chancellor (VC) of Knowledge Aryabhata University Prof SN Guha said students should be exposed to e-learning since young age so that they could make appropriate use of the technologies. Director of Khuda Bhaksh Public Oriental Library Prof Imtiaz Ahmed, former VC of Maulana Mazharul Haque Arabic and Persian University, Patna, Kamar Ahsan and **director of NIC, Patna, PK Upadhvaya** also addressed the gathering. Director of AN Sinha Institute of Social Studies DM Diwakar presided over the meeting.