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JAMMU

4 out of 140 libraries digitalized in JK

The official, further added that the digitalization of the libraries has become a casualty of paucity of funds as so far only 1.36 crore were allocated for digitalization of main four libraries while other libraries are not in a good shape and some are even functioning from the rented accommodations.

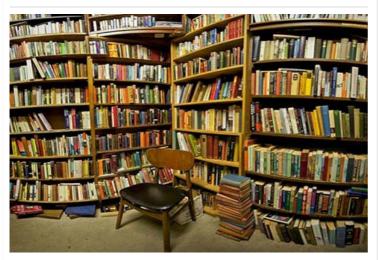


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MUKEET AKMALI

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At a time when government of India laying stress on the digitalization of libraries, Jammu and Kashmir is lagging behind as so far only 4 out of 140 libraries have been digitalized by the department of libraries and research in the Himalayan state.

Sources told Greater Kashmir that the failure of the state government to allocate funds for the purpose has rendered a severe blow to the automation and digitalization of the libraries in Jammu and Kashmir. "We have failed to keep pace with the growing internet technology due to which public libraries are failing to attract students and general public," said a senior official of department of libraries and research. The JK government in 2011 had publicized their move of digitalization of all the libraries in JK, but so far only four central libraries namely SRS Central Library Jammu, SPS Central Library Srinagar, Oriental Research Library Hazratbal and City Central Library were taken up for automation and networking under the pilot phase.

"Unfortunate part of the public libraries is that neither the people are serious about libraries nor the JK government has shown any interest to bring modernise these treasure troves in order to make them available to the current and future generations," he said.

The official, further added that the digitalization of the libraries has become a casualty of paucity of funds as so far only 1.36 crore were allocated for digitalization of main four libraries while other libraries are not in a good shape and some are even functioning from the rented accommodations.

Officials further said that the department has proposed to the state government seeking allocation of funds for digitalizing of all the libraries

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but they have with a met cold response.

Talking to Greater Kashmir, Director, Libraries and Research, Mukhtar ul Aziz said that the department is working towards the full digitalization and networking of all the libraries in JK.

"I have sent a proposal to government for digitalization all 22 district libraries in first phase and then our second target would be to digitalize all the libraries in the state within next 5 years," he added.

Director further stated that the department would soon introduce ebooks in the libraries which would be easily downloaded by the students and scholars. "This move is being taken in order to revive the culture of library reading among readers in Kashmir."

He said that the libraries currently are failing to attract public but with introduction of technology "our plan is to encourage the public library culture".

Pertinently, the project of digitalization was implemented by National Informatics Centre, (NIC), Government of India.

For the purpose, state of the art hardware and communication infrastructure was also installed and made operational at the central libraries with the technical support from National Informatics Centre (J&K) under pilot phase.

The NIC earlier had designated e-Granthalaya library management software and digital library software for automation and networking of the libraries.

Through automation the Public Library Portal will enable access to information on public library collections in the state.

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