



13TH MANLIBNET ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION
on
Repositioning Libraries for User Empowerment: Policy, Planning and
Technology
October 13-15, 2011
Jointly Organised by
MANLIBNET and University of Delhi South Campus

Rapporteur General Report

The 13th MANLIBNET Annual National Convention, **Repositioning Libraries for User Empowerment: Policy, Planning and Technology** organised jointly by MANLIBNET and University of Delhi South Campus concluded after 3 day long hectic and fruitful discussions. The Conference was inaugurated on the 13th October by the former Vice-Chancellor of University of Delhi, Prof. Deepak Petal. He began by saying that libraries are the lifeline of an institution. They should be knowledge generators beside being repositories of knowledge. He exhorted the professionals to strive for providing services to satisfy user expectations. Prof. Petal also commented on the gap in teaching and practicing the concepts of LIS and thus the importance of internship in LIS education. Prof J.P. Khurana, Chairman, LC, UDSC sharing the dais remembered of his long association with library and its contribution in his research. Prof. Laxman Rao, the Director of the Conference set the ball rolling by briefly unravelling the various facets of the topic to be discussed in the 3 day long deliberations. The Conference volume was released during the function.



The Conference discussions were spread over 10 sessions, 3 plenary talks, 5 invited talks and invited presentations respectively, 2 panel discussions and 67 contributed paper presentations. There were 14 product presentations also.

Prof. Shalini Urs presented the first plenary talk on the topic **Emergence of I-Schools: A Strategy and an Approach to Reposition Libraries**. She talked of the changing information scenario and the changes required in libraries to meet the requirements. Libraries need to be information generators which are facilitated by using ICT. They need to involve users as co-creators of information.

Friends, the success of the conference lies in the fact that users too participated giving their opinions in invited talks and presentations. Prof. J. K. Mitra, former Dean FMS, University of Delhi, Prof. Mala Sinha also from the University spoke on the need for libraries to change in view of the increasing influx of e-resources, web as a medium of access to information, increasing dis-intermediation in information access. They shared their experience of using some better libraries in the world for libraries in the country to follow. It is time for our libraries to follow and change. A complete change is required; an incremental change would not help the cause.



The professional deliberations were divided into 6 different themes, **ICT Enabled Services; Impact of ICT on Libraries; ICT Enabled Tools for Libraries; Marketing of Library Services; Professional Competencies, Education and Training; ISB, User Expectations, Policy and Planning for Libraries**. The presentations comprised case studies of libraries, one presented by Dr. Venkadesan of ISB, Hyderabad brought to light the fact that they pay \$700,000 as copyright payment charges, an example of ethical use of information. There were many more such studies from NITs, college and public libraries. Papers show-cased best practices in some such libraries.

'Libraries versus the Internet' has always been bothering the society today. The topic was discussed at length in the two hotly debated panel discussions **Demise of Libraries is Overdue: Need for Repositioning and Rediscovery** and **Libraries are for ever: Technology is only a Medium** on day 2 and 3 respectively. Views for and against came up from the panellists. The discussions were wanting for the paucity of time as only a few participants could present their views. The majority view that prevailed was that libraries that have been with us since time immemorial would remain. They would be seen as hybrid libraries as a result of evolution. Internet would exist and be used to provide better services. ICT has to remain as a tool and not an end in itself.



The conference came to an end with the valedictory function presided over by Summing up the 3 day long deliberations, the Director of the Conference observed that library services need to be more user centric, they need to be constantly re-designed keeping in view the changing requirements of the users. LIS professionals have to learn the new trends and techniques and unlearn the outdated techniques and processes to remain in the canvas of information professionals when the LIS professionals are one among others in the field. The fast changing scenario requires libraries to plan in the short term and long term