



Indo-Bhutan e-Library portal for students available



Lhakpa Tshering

The Indo-Bhutan e-Library portal has set up the digital infrastructure in 49 central schools and 12 colleges in the country.

The portal was formally handed over by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) in India to the Ministry of Education on 26 June in Thimphu. It was inaugurated on 6 September, 2016 in Thimphu.

The portal is to provide education content easily accessible for students with the implementation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). With this, students can access education curriculum-related content that will serve them well.

The Officiating Secretary with the education ministry, Karma Tshering, said many sources are now available on e-Library including the development of local content. "As we progress, we could provide more content," he said.

This platform is also expected to help beyond schools and colleges.

"Now the e-Library is known to our students including their parents and professionals," he said, adding they will know more about the e-Library and the available contents.

He said the e-Library will benefit in the long term. "All the work we have been doing is ultimately to improve the quality of education to our students who will be future leaders and citizens of this country," he said.

Besides, the establishment of e-Library would help during the education emergency. "It was timely that we have the e-Library platform," Karma Tshering said. "This service has become useful for our students."

Ambassador of India to Bhutan, Ruchira Kamboj said, this bilateral initiative will prove to be a major platform to support Bhutan's e-learning programs and expand the outreach of online education, not least during the current challenging times of COVID-19.

The e-Library portal has more than 3,000 items including audio, video, images, books,

journals, and newsletters. "I am delighted that India could play a significant role in expanding Bhutan's digital footprint through the e-Library project," she said.

The Second Secretary with the Embassy of India in Bhutan, Sameer D. Akolkar, said the bilateral project was a major platform to support e-learning programs in Bhutan and expand online education during these challenging times of COVID-19.

He also said the training of local manpower on the management of e-Library infrastructure and digital content creation at schools and colleges has also been an integral part of this project. "We should continue to keep the corporation and momentum ahead," he said.

For this, the Embassy of India has launched a group-wise training program for I.T. laboratory assistants from government schools in Bhutan at C-DAC NOIDA under the ITEC program of the Indian government.

The curriculum of the I.T. training was drawn up based on the require-

ments shared by the education ministry to ensure need-based capacity building. About 400 Bhutanese schools and college personnel have received training in the day-to-day utilization of the e-Library.

The first batch 20 I.T. laboratory assistants completed their training at C-DAC in February. And the additional batches are expected to undertake their training once the outbreak of COVID-19 recedes, according to the India embassy.

The creation of an e-Library studio and e-libraries in schools and colleges was the next stage in the project implementation wherein C-DAC technical experts visited schools and colleges in all 20 Dzongkhag to train the respective teachers and I.T. staff.

Indian embassy press release stated that the salient stages in the e-Library project implementation by C-DAC involved the development of the e-Library portal, the establishment of a central repository with high-end servers

and robust data storage facilities.

Besides, the e-Library was populated with the provision of e-contents at all grades from KG class 12 initially from the National Council of Education, Research and Training of India, according to the press release.

Subsequently, when e-books were provided by the Ministry of Education for classes pre-primary to senior secondary, these contents were also added to the e-Library as local content for Bhutanese students.

The project was supposed to be handed over after three years but it was delayed because the education ministry was not confident to take over the project. During this period, the portal added more content.

The government of India supported the project with Nu 148-million. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to Bhutan in 2014 announced the government of India's assistance for the establishment of e-Library in Bhutan.

India-Bhutan e-Library Portal Launched

By Tandin Wangchuk
Thimphu

The India-Bhutan e-Library, envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his State Visit to Bhutan in 2014, was formally handed over by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) to the Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan at a ceremony held in the capital on Friday, in the presence of Embassy of India officials.

A press release from the Indian Embassy stated that since, the establishment of the e-Library has witnessed the setting up of digital infrastructure in 49 central schools and 12 colleges in every Dzongkhag across the length and breadth of Bhutan.

Salient stages in the e-Library project implementation by C-DAC an autonomous society of the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology involved development of the e-Library portal, establishment of a Central Repository with high-end servers and robust data storage facilities.

In addition, the e-Library was populated with the provision of e-contents at all grades from KG-Class 12 initially from the National Council of Education,

Research & Training of India.

Subsequently when e-books were provided by the Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB) for classes pre-primary to Senior Secondary, these were also added to the e-Library as local content for Bhutanese students.

"Creation of an e-Library studio & e-libraries in schools and colleges was the next stage in the project implementation wherein C-DAC technical expert visited schools and colleges in all 20 Dzongkhags of Bhutan to train the respective teachers and I.T. staff. Thus, training of local manpower on the management of e-Library infrastructure and digital content creation at schools & colleges has also been an integral part of this project, with 400 Bhutanese school & college personnel having received training in the day-to-day utilization of the e-Library," the press release stated.

Hence, the coordination between C-DAC and Ministry of Education was seamless and continuous throughout the implementation of the project.

In response to a request of the Ministry of Education, RGOB the Embassy of India had also launched a group-wise training programme for



I.T. laboratory assistants from Government schools of Bhutan at C-DAC Noida under the Government of India's ITEC Programme.

The curriculum of the I.T. training was drawn up on the basis of the requirements shared by the Ministry of Education to ensure need-based capacity building. The first batch 20 I.T. laboratory assistants completed their training at C-DAC in February 2020, additional batches are expected to undertake their

training once the outbreak of COVID-19 recedes.

Speaking on this occasion, Ambassador of India Ruchira Kamboj said: "I am delighted that India could play a significant role in expanding Bhutan's digital footprint through the e-library project. This bilateral initiative, envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with more than 3000+ digital e-contents, will prove to be a major platform to support Bhutan's e-learning

programmes and expand the outreach of online education, not least during the current challenging times of COVID-19."

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education (MoE) stated they have used around 145 million for the E-library project. Till date, the Ministry has trained 20 ICT lab assistant and are planning to send more for the training but because of pandemic it's been put to halt.

India-Bhutan e-Library project

EDUCATION

By Karma Choden
in Thimphu

The India-Bhutan e-Library was formally handed over to the Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) at a ceremony held in the Ministry of Education office in Thimphu on 26th June 2020.

The India-Bhutan e-Library was envisioned by Shri. Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India during his State Visit to Bhutan in the year 2014. It was started in 2016 and is completed with the help of the effort put in by C-DAC and the Ministry of Education. The project was due to be formally handed over last year but the hand-taking date was postponed as the Ministry of Education was not confident to take over the project.

The e-Library portal has been established in 49 central schools and 12 colleges in the

country. The Government of India contributed a total fund of Nu. 148 M to support the project.

The India-Bhutan e-Library is designed to make educational content available for students across the country in an unflinching way with the execution of modern IT technologies. The e-Library was populated with the provision of e-contents at all grades from KG to class 12.

There are more than 3000+ digital e-contents which will provide a framework for teachers, students, scholars and others to access online and offline. The e-Library portal was not popular to the students and teachers due to lack of local contents and awareness about it but due to COVID-19 pandemic, it received a better response from parents and students.

Some of the salient stages in the e-Library project implementation by C-DAC involved the development of the e-Library portal, establishment of a Central Repository with high-end servers and robust data storage facilities. As a creation of an e-Library studio and e-Libraries



in schools and colleges was the next stage in the project implementation, C-DAC technical expert visited schools and colleges in Bhutan to train the respective teachers and IT staff. 400 Bhutanese school and college personnel have received training in the day-to-day utilization of the e-Library.

A group-wise training programme for IT laboratory assistant to ensure need-based capacity building from Government schools of Bhutan at C-DAC NOIDA under the

Government of India's ITEC Programme had launched in response to the request of the Ministry of Education, RGoB by the Embassy of India. 20 people had completed the first batch training in February 2020 and additional batches will resume after the COVID-19 pandemic is settled.

Ruchira Kamboj, Ambassador of India to Bhutan shared that she is delighted that India could play a significant role in expanding Bhutan's digital footprint through the e-Li-

brary project. She also added that it will prove to be a major platform to support Bhutan's e-Learning programmes and expand the outreach of online education, not least during the current challenging times of COVID-19.

The ceremony of hand-taking of India-Bhutan e-Library was attended by officials from the Indian Embassy and the Education Ministry.

e-Library handed over to education ministry

Chhimi Dema

The e-Library portal was formally handed over by the Center for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) to the education ministry yesterday.

Ministry's officiating secretary Karma Tshering said that the e-Library project marks a milestone in the Bhutan-India friendship.

The success of the portal was because of the tremendous effort of the C-DAC team and education ministry, he said.

The e-Library provides educational content in forms of e-books, audio, videos and images. The portal is estab-

lished in 49 schools and 12 colleges across the country.

Karma Tshering said that the ministry would hereafter focus on content development. He said that apart from technicians managing the website, there should also be people managing the curriculum aspect of the portal.

"We have a great opportunity to use teachers to develop content aligning with the curriculum that we are delivering now in schools."

To develop the portal's human resource capacity additional staff would be recruited and trained. "The benefits from the portal may not come immediately, but it is certain there would be benefits in the

long run."

The project was supposed to be handed over last

December.

Officials from the ministry said that the project's hand-

ing-taking was delayed since the education ministry was not confident to take it over.

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We could successfully conduct the funeral of Late on 15/06/2020.

We would always remain grateful to all who extended their valuable services.