

Centre proposes to network 25,000 public libraries

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Puducherry: The Union government has proposed to network 25,000 public libraries under the national mission on libraries, said Developing Library Network (Delnet) director H K Kaul.

Addressing a press conference on Sunday, Kaul said the government as a first step has asked Delnet to develop 600 public libraries across the country as model libraries. There are more than 50,000 public libraries and 45,000 libraries in colleges and universities apart from 10 lakh libraries in the schools in the country. However the library and information networking system in the country was not well-equipped and sharing of knowledge among the library professionals, researchers and students was not up to the mark.

"There are too many barriers. The flow of information is too fast in the digital era. Our library professionals must know how to cull out the best and appropriate information and pass it on to people, who need such information," said Kaul while announcing the 17th national convention on Knowledge, Library and Information Networking by Delnet and French Institute of Pondicherry (IFP) from December 9 to 11.



Kaul said the Union government has also proposed to set up 'knowledge centres' to enable individuals and other organizations not connected to library science to access the information through the network proposed by Delnet.

Delnet has so far networked more than 5,000 libraries in India and abroad. It has networked more than 800 libraries in Tamil Nadu and more than 60 in Puducherry. Kaul said Delnet proposes to network more than one lakh libraries in the country. Former President A P J Abdul Kalam will inaugurate the convention. IFP director Pierre Grard, Delnet network manager Sangeeta Kaul and IFP chief librarian Anurupa Naik would be present. The convention would start at 10am on December 9 at Hotel Anandha Inn.

The theme of the convention is 'From building collections to making connections: Transforming libraries in the knowledge era'. The convention aims

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to bridge the gap that exists between the new technologies that emerge from information technology centres in the world and libraries in India.

"Librarians need to adopt new technologies, digitise the existing collections and have access to quality resources that are scattered in different libraries, archives and knowledge centres in the world. Librarians need to equip themselves to provide better services to the users," said Sangeeta. The convention will include detailed discussion on open source software. Experts from India, United States, France and Australia will address the convention in which more than 350 delegates including library and information technology professionals from central and state government institutions, universities and public libraries will participate. Leading global publishers and online product vendors will exhibit their latest products and services at an exhibition.