IASLIC NEWSLETTER

Indian Association for Special Libraries and Information Centres

December 2019

A Monthly Newsletter Published by IASLIC

Quote of the Month

"Digital library is where the past meets the present and creates the future"

— Late Dr A P J Abdu Kalam
Former President of India

Appeal to Readers

News from different regions / states are solicited from IASLIC members for inclusion in the newsletter. Send such news to the Editor.

Email: *chatterjeeamitabha@yahoo.co.in*

IASLIC ACTIVITIES

Librarians' Day Celebrated

IASLIC, jointly with Bengal Library Association and West Bengal Public Library Employees Association, and in collaboration with Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation, and Kalyani University, Kalyani, celebrated Librarians' Day 2019 on August 11, 2019, at A P J Abdul Kalam Auditorium of Kalyani University, Kalyani. On this occasion a seminar was organized on two themes - 'Use of Library Space for Social Development' and 'Public Libraries in India in Present Context'.

The inaugural session started with felicitation of the dignitaries on the dais. One-minute silence was observed to pay homage to the leaders of the profession who had passed away during the last one year. This was followed by welcome address delivered by Dr. Asitabha Das, Librarian, Kalyani University. The programme was then formally inaugurated by Prof. Sankar Kumar Ghosh, Vice-chancellor, Kalyani University, by lighting the ceremonial lamp along with other dignitaries. Prof. Ghosh in his inaugural address described librarianship as a noble profession He mentioned about the responsibilities, accountability and values of the library profession and the role of librarians in building the society. Dr. J N Satpathi President, IASLIC, stressed on the need of teaching professionalism in LIS schools and revival of the JOCLAI. Shri Shibaprasad Chakraborti, Secretary, WBPLEA pleaded for filling up the vacant posts in public libraries of the state. Dr. Bimal Chattopadhyay, President, Bengal Library Association, who chaired the session, recalled how public library movement started during the freedom struggle. He pointed out that during second plan period the Government of India gave importance on development of libraries. But in the present day context, the scenario was much gloomy, specially in West Bengal, he lamented. The inaugural session ended with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Dipa Roy, Assistant Librarian, Kalyani University.

In the first discussion session, chaired by Dr. J N Satpathi, President, IASLIC, Shri Arup Roychaudhury, former Deputy Librarian, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata; and Shri Abhijit Bhowmik, Librarian, State Central Library, Kolkata; elaborately explained how the space in different types of libraries - public libraries, academic libraries and special libraries - could be used for social development and how this could benefit the common people. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Satpathi illustrated, basing on his own experiences, how library spaces were being used for social activities by the people in some countries abroad.

In the second discussion session, chaired by Prof. Amitabha Chatterjee, former Professor & Head, Department of Library & Information Science, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, the first speaker, Dr. Swapna Roy, former Deputy Director of Library Services, Government of West Bengal, explained the primary characteristics of a public library as mentioned in UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, and opined that connotation of the term 'Public Library' changed according to the social structure or pattern of the place where it was situated. Prof. P K

Panigrahi, Dean, Faculty Council of Post-graduate Studies in Library Science, Journalism and Mass Communication, and Education, University of Calcutta, recounted how a public library of Purba Medinipur district provided required information to the local farmers and fishermen which helped in their social upliftment, and explained how library services could be made useful to the people. Dr. Parthasarathi Mukhopadhyay, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Library & Information Science, Kalyani University, opined that public libraries were now mainly serving recreational literature to the middle class people and stressed on provision of community information service by the public libraries. Shri Shamik Barman Roy, Librarian, District Library, North 24 Parganas, explained the role of public libraries in the new era and said that public library in this era needed a new definition. In his concluding remarks, Prof. Chatterjee mentioned about sharp decrease in footfall in public libraries and other challenges faced by them, such as competition from Internet, fund crunch, apathy of authorities, shortage of manpower, illiteracy and lack of information literacy among the users, etc. and explained the measures needed to meet these challenges.

The p ended with a vote of thanks proposed by Prof. Krishnapada Majumder, Vice-President of IASLIC, and General Secretary of BLA. The seminar was attended by about 430 library and information professionals, LIS teachers and students from different parts of West Bengal.

CONFERENCES / SEMINARS / WORKSHOPS

National

Convention on Digital Democracy

The Annual Convention 2020 of the Computer Society of India will be held at KIIT, Bhubaneswar, during January 16 - 18, 2020. The theme of the convention is 'Digital Democracy - IT For Change'. For details visit: *http://csi-india.org/CSI-2020-AnnualConvention-BBSR.pdf*

Workshop on Library Discovery System

A Hands-on Workshop on 'Library Discovery System' is being organized by Satyajit Roy Film and Television Institute, Kolkata, during December 19 - 22, 2019. For details visit: *http://srfti.ac.in/?p=9542*

Conference on Redesigning of Library

A National Conference on 'Redesigning of Library and Information Centre for the Next Generation' will be held on February 22, 2020 at Mithibai College, Mumbai. For details email to: *Archana.Garate@mithibai.ac.in*

Conference on Academic Integrity

The 30th National Conference of Haryana Library Association (NCHAL 2020) is being organized by Jaswant Rai Memorial Library, Gandhi Memorial National College, Ambala Cantt. during February 26 - 27, 2020. The theme of the conference is 'Plagiarism and Academic Integrity in Higher Education'. For details visit: *https://www.nchla2020.com/*

International

Conference on Data Mining

The 5th International Conference on Data Mining and Applications (DMAP 2019) will be held at Kanchipuram during December 14 - 15, 2019. For details visit: *https://csita2019.org/dmap/index.html*

Conference on Information Management

The 3rd International Conference on Information Management and Processing (ICIMP 2020) will be held during January 9 - 11, 2020 at Portsmouth, United Kingdom. For details visit: *http://www.icimp.org/*

Forum on Open Access

The 2020 JULAC (Joint University Librarians Advisory Committee) Libraries Forum will be held at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong, on January 15, 2020. For details visit: *https://www.julac.org/?page_id=6818*

Conference on Health Informatics

The 13th Australasian Conference on 'Health Informatics and Knowledge Management', Australasia's Digital Health Scientific Conference, will take place Melbourne, Australia, during February 4 - 6, 2020. For details visit: *http://www.hikm.net.au/*

Professional Summit on Academic Libraries

The 9th International Library Information Professional Summit (I-LIPS) on 'Academic Libraries: Latest Trends, Challenges and Opportunities' is being organized by School of Studies in Library & Information Science, Jiwaji University Gwalior, during February 14 - 16, 2020. For details visit: *http://i-lips.website2.me/*

Conference on Information Management

A Global Conference on 'Technology and Information Management' will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on February 15, 2020. For details visit: *https://gctim.org/conference-2020/*

Conference on Research in Information Sc.

An International Conference on 'Emerging Research Directions in Information Sciences, Management Education, and Social Science Issues' (IMSI-20) will be held in Athens, Greece, during February 22 - 23, 2020. For details visit:

https://glonar.org/upcoming-conferences/imsi-20/

Conference on Health Informatics

The 13th International Health Informatics Conference (HEALTHINF 2020) will be held at Valletta, Malta, during February 24 - 26, 2020. For details visit: *http://www.healthinf.biostec.org/*

Conference on Big Data Analytics

The 5th IEEE International Conference on Big Data Analytics (ICBDA 2020) will be held at Xiamen, China. For details visit: *http://www.icbda.org*

Conference on Information, Networks

The 3rd International Conference on 'Information, Networks and Communications' (ICINC 2020 will be held in Amsterdam, Netherlands, during March 15 - 17, 2020. For details visit: *http://www.icinc.org/*

Conference on Information Science

The 3rd International Conference on 'Information Science and System' will be held during March 19 - 22, 2020 in Cambridge, United Kingdom. For details visit: *http://www.iciss.org*

LIBER Conference

LIBER's 2020 Annual Conference will be held in Belgrade during June 24 - 26, 2020. The theme of the conference is 'Building Trust with Research Libraries'. For details visit: *https://liberconference.eu/liber-2020-call-for-papers/*

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Stolen Library Books Sold Online

A bookworm who stole titles from the University of Edinburgh and other institutions raked in £40,000 from flogging them online - but was jailed recently. Darren Barr, 28, who also used the name Alexander Van De Kamp, was sentenced to more than two years after the 'brazen' thefts, says a report in *The Daily Telegraph* (UK). Barr stole thousands of books from the University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University and Heriot Watt University. In less than a year, between October 2017 and August 2018, he took around 7,000 books and resold them online. The lucrative thefts netted about £40,000 and 1,300 books have so far been recovered from across Britain. Some 260 of the recovered books belonged to the University of Edinburgh and Heriot Watt, while the majority had been nicked from Edinburgh Napier University - which called in police after discovering the scale of missing books. Barr was arrested and charged in connection with the theft and illegal resale of the books in September last year. He was sentenced to 25 months when he appeared at Edinburgh Sheriff Court recently after pleading guilty to four counts of theft. Detective Sergeant Dougal

Begg from Corstorphine CID said: "This is one of the most brazen and high-value thefts from our universities that I can ever recall and the amount of money Darren Barr was able to make by reselling stolen books is staggering. Had it not been for the staff at Edinburgh Napier University raising their concerns about missing stock, we may never have uncovered what Barr was up to and even larger quantities of books may have ended up being taken from the institutions". For original report visit: *https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/09/18/bookworm-stole-7000-books-university-libraries-earned-40000/*

Move to Preserve Rare Documents

The Gazette of India of 1912 at the Hardayal Municipal Public Library at Chandni Chowk in Delhi is showing signs of damage. Fortunately, it will not be lost. Along with it, 7,000 other rare books published before 1916 will be digitized and preserved, says a *The Times of India report*. The North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) has assigned the conservation task to Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. The initiative is part of a project conceived by the civic body three years ago for the restoration of Delhi's oldest library and preservation of its rare collection. In 2016, Delhi Development Authority granted NDMC Rs. 2 crore for restoration of the building and Rs. 1 crore for digitization of the collection. Though the library is an autonomous body, its financial requirements are managed by NDMC. "IGNCA was assigned the digitization task in 2016, but we had to wait for the go ahead from the Union Ministry of Heritage and Culture," said Rekha Sinha, councillor and member-secretary of the heritage library. The work in the first phase of the project is expected to be completed in a year. In the second phase, books published from 1917-1950 will be digitalized along with the records of the remaining one lakh titles in the library. The books desperately need preservation. As Sinha pointed out, "The Gazette of India (from 1912 to1992) kept on the mezzanine floor is being gradually damaged because the window next to its rack is broken. The old volumes have also started developing wear and tear. Since we do not have a digitized record of books, we have had to manually check the books whenever someone asks for them, adding to the wear and tear." The plaster is peeling and the walls of the century-old building have developed cracks, leading seepages and leakages. A staff member added, "There are no air conditioners in the reading and book-storage areas." An NDMC official said that the restoration of the building in Phase 2 would involve repairs of windows, electricity wiring, book racks and illumination. There were no plans to change the structure of the building because of its heritage status. A staff member added, "The municipal corporation's financial crisis has affected the working of the library. After decades, we bought new titles worth Rs. 8.5 lakh last year and received books worth Rs. 9 lakh from Raja Rammohun

Roy Library Foundation." For original report visit: *https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/tech-to-grant-7000-rare-books-a-new-lease-of-life/article showprint/70929874.cms*

Bookmarks used to Reunite Families

It's a predicament most of us have been in - you're reading a book and need something to keep your place. One Oklahoma teacher has made a hobby of finding these old bookmarks, even reuniting a more than 100-year-old place-keeping poem with the author's family, according to a post by Lauren Daniels on *https://kfor.com/* website. "I found a nail, like a hammer and nail, a nail file," said Emma Smreker. "I found a corn husk once, which I thought 'OK sure, why not?'" Smreker is a French teacher at Harding Charter Prep and in her free time she loves to collect used books. But, she says*,* sometimes it's not just the tale they are intended to tell that make them interesting. "People just use everyday objects as bookmarks, it's kind of fascinating," she said. "It sort of made me think of the story of a book, other than the one that's in the pages." Smreker decided to share with others and started an Instagram page called 'inusedbooks'. She's tried reuniting people with old pictures, cards and love letters, but didn't have much luck until she found a poem one day that really stood out. "It's this beautiful cursive, people just don't write like that anymore," she said. Smreker noticed it was addressed to the Lancaster Gazette in Ohio from a man named Ed Ruffner all the way back in 1893. She quickly got to work - starting on Google. "I tried not to get my hopes up, but I was a bored teacher on Christmas break so I figured why not, and I've got a day to kill," said Smreker. She found a census match, went through ancestries and eventually tracked down a great-granddaughter on Instagram. "Of course I had this kind of makeshift family tree that I had written down," she said. As it turns out, it was a match and the letter was eventually published as it was intended to more than a century ago: Reuniting a family with a precious poem - and one another. "Their whole family is kind of spread out throughout the United States and they've been able to kind of reconnect over this letter," Smreker said. "Honestly, it made me tear up a little bit when I heard about that. Proving that sometimes there's always a little more to every story, Smreker's next task is reuniting a family with a poem about a grandfather who watched his grandson grow up. The kid's name is Kevin and it was found at a local estate sale. For original post visit: *https://kfor.com/2019/ 02/08/ oklahoma-teacher-book-collector-makes-hobby-of-reuniting-families-with-meaningful-bookmarks/?fbclid=IwAR2dET9BEAdjPy-rLSGtB8JFgcJgyKed2uGM3m BZka VE1mifWJi57ZEYUk*

Harry Potter Books Removed from Library

A Catholic school in Tennessee has removed the Harry Potter books from its library after the school's priest decided they could cause a reader to conjure evil spirits, says an Associated Press report published in *The Hindustan Times*. In an email obtained by *The Tennessean*, the Rev. Dan Reehil of Nashville's St. Edward Catholic School said he consulted exorcists in the US and Rome who recommended removing the books. Reehil wrote, "The curses and spells used in the books are actual curses and spells; which when read by a human being risk conjuring evil spirits into the presence of the person reading the text." Catholic Diocese of Nashville superintendent Rebecca Hammel said Reehil has the final say at his school. Hammel said she thinks the books by J K Rowling are still on the shelves of other libraries in the diocese. For original report visit: *https://www. hindustantimes.com/world-news/harry-potter-books-removed-from-catholic-school-in-us-over-curses-and-spells/story-2hlGdOp3GRHnHtymSsD0LM.html*

Syria's Secret Library

In a region that sways "on the palm of a genie," as the Arabic saying goes, where bullets and explosions are more familiar than bread, you would not expect people to read, let alone to risk their lives for the sake of books. Yet in 2013 a group of enthusiastic readers in Daraya, five miles southwest of Damascus, salvaged thousands of books from ruined homes, wrapping them in blankets just as they would victims of the war raging around them. They brought the books into the basement of a building whose upper floors had been wrecked by bombs and set up a library - this story has been narrated by Dunya Mikhail quoting Mike Thomson, while reviewing the latter's book entitled 'Syria's Secret Library: Reading and Redemption in a Town Under Siege' in *The New York Times.* As Mike Thomson recounts this unlikely story in "Syria's Secret Library*,*" this underground book collection surrounded by sandbags functioned, as one user put it, as an "oasis of normality in this sea of destruction". There, the self-appointed chief librarian, a 14-year-old named Amjad, would write down in a large file the names of the people who borrowed the books, and then return to his seat to continue reading. He had all the books he could ever want, apart from ones on high shelves that he couldn't reach. He told his friends: "You don't have TV now anyway, so why not come here and educate yourself? It's fun." The library hosted a weekly book club, as well as classes on English, maths and world history, and debates over literature and religion. Advertising the library's activities without compromising its security was a dilemma; patrons relied on word of mouth for fear that it would be targeted by the Syrian Army. By the time the library was founded, Daraya, a site of anti-government uprising and calls for reforms, had been under siege by the army for more than a year. Its 8,000 remaining residents from a pre-war population of about 80,000   faced near-constant bombardment and shortages of food, water and power. The situation worsened in 2014 when the Islamic State made Raqqa its de facto capital and went on to invade vast areas of Syria and Iraq. The jihadists were paying people to join them, and many parents had no idea what jobs their sons

were taking until it was too late. "Ignorance is always the enemy of humanity," Homam, a volunteer at the library, tells Thomson. The siege was lifted in 2016 after numerous protests on social media, including an open letter signed by 47 women in Daraya underscoring their desperation, along with the fact that the town was full of civilians, not terrorists, as the government was claiming. For full story visit: *https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/28/books/review/syrias-secret-library-mike-thomson.html*

Social Workers for US Libraries

When Jackie Narkiewicz switched careers and became a librarian, she thought she'd spend her workdays "drinking hot beverages and discussing literature with people." But during her 16 years as a librarian on New York's Long Island, Narkiewicz has also faced a man threatening to kill her and a patron screaming while cutting her own hair in the bathroom. For her job, Narkiewicz has been trained in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and mental health crisis response and carries the opioid overdose antidote naloxone with her, says an Associated Press story published in *The Hindustan Times*. As libraries nationwide contend with a surge in patrons seeking refuge in the stacks because of poverty, drug addiction or mental illness, a growing number of institutions have social workers on staff. It's the latest step in an evolution that libraries have been dealing with for years as homelessness and the opioid crisis reach emergency levels and patrons have come to rely on libraries as free, safe spaces open to all. Though homelessness has seen some declines in the US since the recession, it has surged in cities like Seattle, where a homelessness state of emergency and a spike in questions from library patrons about things like housing, transportation and food led the public library system to hire its first full-time social worker in 2018. Other libraries, unable to afford such a step, have trained librarians to handle certain emergencies themselves. That's caused some debate among library workers about whether they're being asked to adapt to an evolving job or to do work that goes too far beyond their expertise. "I can get you a phone number, I can get you a book you want ... but when you're dealing with mental health issues, I don't feel appropriately trained for it," Narkiewicz said. A few master's degree programs for aspiring librarians have classes on mental health, but most don't. To help fill in the gaps, an estimated 40-plus library systems has full-time social workers on staff, according to Whole Person Librarianship, an organization that tracks such partnerships. At the Queens Public Library in New York City, resident social worker Shantel Johnson oversees a team of library case managers, but she's also available to help librarians communicate with struggling patrons, connect visitors to services or just listen to people. "They'll open up to staff, and staff is doing 14 different things," Johnson said. She says she regularly helps patrons who are homeless, experiencing abuse or having trouble applying for jobs. The Queens Public Library also started stationing New York University social work interns in some branches last year, as does the New York Public Library, which got its first interns two years ago. For full report visit: *https://www.hindustantimes.com/art-and-culture/librarians-facing-new-tasks-say-crisis-isn-t-in-the-catalog/story-ohoen 6IIYOCWCMlEtHUkYK.html*

Awards for School Libraries

In a unique celebration of libraries and librarians from across the country, heads of over 100 schools and their library teams came together at the India International Centre, New Delhi, recently for the first 'Bandana Sen Library Awards'. The award ceremony, organized by 'OneUp Library, Bookstudio and Learning Lab', was envisioned in memory of late Bandana Sen, a pioneer in the field of children's libraries, says a *The Hindustan Times* report. "For us this award ceremony is the beginning of a conversation on the need for futuristic libraries, celebrating the unsung champions - the 'Librarians' - and redefining libraries as 'exploratorium of learning'" said Dalbir Kaur Madan, Founder, OneUp Library, and initiator of the award ceremony. "It was Bandana's dream that the tribe of libraries and librarians should grow and be brought to the centre stage," she added. While Shri Ram School, New Delhi, won the award in the excellence award in the junior school category, The Cathedral and John Connon School, Mumbai, received the award in the senior school category. "The library at Shri Ram has its tentacles in every nook and corner of its school. We do a lot of programmes through the library like encouraging students to write book reports and try and make it enjoyable for the children," said Pooja Thakur, principal of Shri Ram School. The Community Library Project in Sikandarpur, Delhi, was awarded a community library grant "for bringing access to books and reading to all irrespective of their social and economic background." The Jury Appreciation Awards, for programmes specifically centred on reading, literacy and library were presented to three schools - Shiv Nadar School, Noida (Senior Library), Abacus Montessori School, Chennai (Junior Library) and Shikshantar School, Gurugram (Junior Library). Speaking about the criteria through which the libraries were selected, jury member and director of Pathways School, Noida, Shalini Advani said, "We had several rounds of judging and the criteria included looking at the library as a physical space, the events and activities, and whether the library is integral to the whole education process." For original report visit: *https://www.hindustantimes.com/education/schools-awarded-for-their-work-on-libraries/story-yWnNXa8kGISpVCkMEh1d0I.html*

MP's Biggest Library

The Madhya Pradesh capital is set to get the state's biggest library. The library would be open round-the-clock for

students preparing for competitive exams. For others, it will be opened from 10 am to 5 pm. At least a thousand people can study in the library at any given time, which means its seating capacity would be bigger than that of a normal school. The library would be developed at a cost of Rs 75 crore. The School Education Department has prepared a draft for it and sent it to the cabinet. Officials said the proposal was likely to be tabled before the cabinet. The state-of-the-art library will be developed on a two-acre land. The process is on to finalize the land, but it is expected to be near the Subhash Government Higher Secondary School near seven-number bus stop. The library will be developed on the lines of a green building. It will have limited walls so that students can get a feel of reading in the lap of nature. Officials said the library would have an auditorium and cafeteria. The charges for those who want to access the library are yet to be finalized, but it will be nominal keeping in mind that it remains within the reach of the common man. There will also be a space in the library for book launch functions and open discussions. School Education Minister, Dr. Prabhuram Choudhary, said it would be the state's biggest library. A sum of Rs. 10 crore has already been sanctioned for starting the work, while the remaining sum will be allotted as the work proceeds. It is expected to get ready in a year-and-a-half. The library would not just be helpful for the residents of Bhopal, but for the entire state, the minister said. For original report visit: *https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bhopal/bhopal-to-get-mps-biggest-library/articleshowprint/71447932.cms*

TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Algorithm for Creating MNS Database

Researchers at IIIT-H (International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad) have created the first-ever large-scale database of ancient palm-leaf manuscript images that can identify and label different regions of the document, says a *The Times of India* report. They have built an algorithm that can read and convert complex, handwritten manuscripts into printed and editable text and trained deep neural networks to automatically identify and isolate different regions of the manuscript images. "Ayurveda and Yoga may have been among the most popular and visible Indian exports to the west, but there exists many more documented shastras or texts in various fields of knowledge, from science and technology to wellness and ecology," said Ravi Kiran Sarvadevabhatla from the Centre for Visual Information Technology (CVIT), adding that it was the thought of making such a treasure trove more publicly accessible that drove him to embark on a project of cultural and historical importance. Not only is it difficult to decipher the language on palm-leaf manuscripts, but the lines themselves are so densely packed and tricky to follow, he said. "In order to have a machine read and convert complex, handwritten manuscripts into printed,

editable text, the first step is to let an algorithm identify the layout of the historic images," said Sarvadevabhatla. For this purpose, he said, they have obtained digitized manuscript images from two sources -- University of Pennsylvania's Rare Book and Manuscript Library and BHOOMI, an assorted collection of images sourced from multiple oriental research institutes and libraries across India with the help of manual annotations, trained deep neural networks to automatically identify and isolate different regions of the manuscript images. For original report visit: *https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/city-gets-first-of-its-kind-database-to-decode-palm-leaf-manuscripts/articleshowprint/71621784.cms*

Chrome Update Affects Many Browsers

A silent experimental change made by Google in Chrome browser recently left thousands of businesses with unresponsive browsers and struggling to find any solution, says a story by Gaurav Shukla available on *https://gadgets.ndtv.com* website. Businesses using Chrome within shared virtual machine environments were greeted by a white screen on open Chrome tabs and the browser unusable. With businesses managing deployment of Chrome updates, a sudden change in the browser's behaviour left them baffled, leading them to flood Google's support forums and Chromium bug tracker. "ALL users on that Citrix server running Chrome, Chrome will stop updating the screen until ANY user unlocks their session on this same Citrix server," the person who filed the bug report on Chromium bug tracker noted while trying to explain how to reproduce it. The replies in the bug tracker revealed that the problem was not just limited to Citrix, other virtual machine environments were also impacted. Following the angry and frustrated complaints on Chromium bug tracker and Google support forums, the company's executives revealed that they had been testing the experimental change in beta for five months and it was finally released and made live for stable version users recently. According to a report by *The Verge*, Google had made the change to "reduce resource usage when the browser isn't in use." It seems Google forgot to take into account the virtual machine usage while making the experiment live. Google subsequently rolled back the change, however until then the IT admins around the world were forced to struggle with an unknown issue without a solution. Some had managed to find a workaround but for others it was simply a time and resource waste. For full story visit: *https://gadgets.ndtv.com/apps/news/chrome-silent-update-crashes-business-citrix-virtual-machine-google-response-2133193*

Photo Section in Facebook App

A photos-only mode for Facebook's mobile application is under testing and it would let users see algorithmically suggested photos in a feed similar to its photo sharing

platform Instagram, says a story by Gadgets 360 staff with inputs from IANS available on *gadgets.ndtv.com* website. The feature, named "Popular Photos", affixes an endless scroll of algorithmically selected images from friends beneath the full-screen view of a photo opened from the News Feed. The result is an experience that is similar to Instagram feed, TechCrunch has recently <u>reported</u>. A mode was first spotted in October and the trial has since concluded, Facebook confirmed to TechCrunch. The new feature is being worked on with future tests in mind. The company refused to disclose more details or its motives for Popular Photos. "Given Facebook already has Stories, messaging, profiles, and its IGTV-esque Watch video hub, it's only the Explore tab and a dedicated media feed that are missing from it being a full clone of Instagram... Here's how Popular Photos works. When users discover a photo in the News Feed or a profile, they can tap on it to see it full-screen on a black theatre-view background. Typically, if users swipe or scroll on that photo, they're just booted back out to where they came from. But with the Popular Photos feature, Facebook plays out more images for users to scroll through after the original," the report says. For full story visit: *https://gadgets.ndtv.com/apps/news/facebook-quietly-built-an-instagram-like-popular-photos-section-in-its-app-2134520*

SPECIAL FEATURE

Theka of a Different Kind

If you are travelling on highways, specially in Punjab and may be in some other areas of the country, you will surely come across *thekas* dotting the sidewalks vending *desi* or English liquor where addicts throng in the evening to enjoy the pleasure of drinking. But if you are near Ludhiana passing through Khanna - Malerkotla highway, you will find a *theka* of a different kind. Named *Theka Kitab Desi te Angrezi*, this *theka* serves *kitab* (books), mainly on literature - written both in Punjabi (desi) and English (Angrezi). It has turned many a people - young or old - addicted to reading.

You must be anxious to know who is the *thekdar* of such a *theka* and why did he open it at all. The *thekedar* i.e. the visionary behind this unique venture is Darshandeep Gill, an English teacher in a government senior secondary school and belonging to a well-to-do family of Jargari village located nearby, who himself is addicted to reading and writing. The inspiration to open such a library came to Gill from her wife Ravinder Kaur, who is also a teacher in the local primary school. In fact all members of the Gill family are good readers and it had become a problem to maintain the books that the family members had collected. This prompted his wife to suggest him to open a library so that villagers, particularly the youngsters, could benefit.

About a year ago, Gill and his wife decided to convert the small building located near the tubewell in their field into the proposed library. The couple refurbished the room and painted Punjabi alphabets on its wall, following which the youngsters began to visit the library. Gill said that the thought of naming the library as *theka* came around six years ago. "In any village, town or city in Punjab one can easily spot a *theka*, *sharab angrezi te desi*. It has become synonymous of evil in the society. As we also had a collection of both English and Punjabi books, we decided to name the library as *Theka Kitab Desi te Angerzi*," said Gill. "The aim was to give a positive connotation to the word *theka* and keep youngsters away from the menace of drugs and fall in love with books," Gill added.

Gill did not want to have a typical library ambience in his *theka* and hence has provided an attractive look to the interiors. He has put chairs and divan beds for the readers, instead of usual library furniture, for sitting and lying down. There is also a kitchen inside. He has painted messages and also installed attractive hangings on the walls. The porch of the building has been covered with a thatched roof and the surrounding has been made greener by planting saplings of flower plants around the library. A sidewall is also made of trusses. "We have laid special emphasis on green cover so that the youngsters visiting the place should feel close to the nature", Gill said. He has also painted some Punjabi couplets and around 100 Punjabi words which are now disappearing. Gill and his wife often invite school children and hold competitions where they ask meanings of those words. On the first floor a message on use of wastage has been planted amidst flower vases on the table. An artificial well also has been dug near the building. A beach has also been created on the terrace with beach chairs. In addition to this, there are vines with lanterns all around.

Gill's *theka* has around 2000 books, including masterpieces of Punjabi, English and other literature. Gill said that anybody could borrow a book free for 15 days and could also donate books. More and more people from the village and nearby places are taking books from his *theka* to read. Books are issued my making a note of details in a register. The members return the books after reading and no breaching of rules has been reported.

Nevertheless, Gill's is not the first or only *theka* of books. Book *thekas* have appeared at two other places in Punjab. In 2017 the students of Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, opened a *Theka Kitab* in front the university gate to protest opening of a *Theka Sharab* opposite to university gate. The protesters had put up a table *Theka Kitab - Desi, Agrezi* and read there for two hours in the evening to convey the message that the university vicinity is meant for studies and students and not for liquor vendors. In Patiala University also there is a *Theka Kitab*, which has recently been promoted

by Punjabi character actor Rana Ranbir in a post on Instagram.

Fortunately, Gill and his wife's efforts have since been recognized and they have been honoured, along with some other teachers at a function in Chandigarh, organized by Manav Mangal Smart School, G C Mishra Foundation and Lions Club of Chandigarh to honour teachers, on the eve of last Teachers' Day, who apart from their duties, are also doing something for the betterment of the society. The unique concept of their library, opened in the field, in the lap of nature and naming the library as *Theka Kitab Dersi te Angrezi* with a motive of getting the new generation addicted to books rather than alcoholic drinks and drugs were very much appreciated.

Gills' endeavour is indeed emulative. It will be highly beneficial for the society to start a movement to set up such *thekas* in different parts of the country, specially where alcoholism is rampant and is ruining the families. Meanwhile, if you happen to be in Punjab do not forget to visit this unique type of *theka* created for the benefit of the society. Kudos to the Gills!

[Sources: *https://www.bhaskar.com/punjab/ludhiana/ news/teacher-couple-opened-book-theka-kitaab-desee-te- angrejee-01605273.html*, *https://www.hindustantimes. com/punjab/hooked-on-books-head-to-theka-of-desi- angrezi-literature-in-punjab-s-khanna/story-eVyIU43F tMVDYxOyV7QKKI.htm*, *https://punjabi.abplive.com/ punjab/khanna-book-theka-pictures-490632#image17*, *https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/ludhiana/theka-kitab- to-protest-liquor-vend-near-pau/483270.html*, *https://www.ghaintpunjab.com/ghaintpunjab/Article/3127 4/theka-kitaab-rana-ranbir-introduces-a-book-tavern*, *http://www.babushahi.com/full-news.php?id=* *90957&headline=Teachers-Day:-%E2%80%9CTheka- Kitaab-Desi-te-Angrezi%E2%80%9D-motivates-kids-to- get-addicted-to-books!*]

NEW LIS LITERATURE

[Note: Publishers of books enlisted here and/or any new books in LIS may send copies of such books to the Editor, *IASLIC Bulletin*, for review]

Foreign

1. HICKOK (John). Serving library users from Asia: A Comprehensive Handbook of Country-Specific Information and Outreach Resources. 2019. Rowmen & Littlefield, Lanham, MD. $ 100. ISBN: 9780810887312.

    (A comprehensive reference book for librarians in USA serving Asian students and communities

2. HUTCHINSON (Alvin). Science Libraries in the Self Service Age: Developing New Services, Targeting New Users. 2018. Chandos Publishing, Oxford. $ 78.95. ISBN: 9780081020333

    (Describes the myriad of new services and user communities which science librarians have recently incorporated into their routines)

3. JACKSON (Amy S) et al, *Eds.* Scholarship in the Sandbox: Academic Libraries as Laboratories, Forums, and Archives for Student Work. 2019. Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of ALA. 2019. $ 63 ISBN: 9780838989531

    (The book has four sections - Library as Laboratory, Library as Forum, Library as Archive, and Articulating the Value of Student Work - containing case studies and discussions from diverse perspectives)

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