

TOUR REPORT OF DR. RAMESH C. GAUR, DIRECTOR (LIB. & INF.) & HEAD OF DIVISION, KALA NIDHI TO ATTEND THE WORKSHOP ON “PRESERVATION OF DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION” HELD AT THIMPHU, BHUTAN, ORGANISED BY UNESCO NEW DELHI CLUSTER OFFICE AND ROYAL GOV. OF BHUTAN FROM 29-30 NOVEMBER, 2018.

With the kind approval of the Member Secretary, IGNCA, I visited Thimphu, Bhutan from 29th to 30th November, 2018 to attend the Workshop on “Preservation of Documentary Heritage for Disaster Risk Reduction” held at Thimphu, Bhutan, which was organised by UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office and Royal Government of Bhutan. All the expenses related to the tour were duly borne by the UNESCO and that there was no financial implication on part of the IGNCA in this regard.

I reached Thimphu, Bhutan on 28th November, 2018 and returned to Headquarters on 1st December, 2018.

Ministers of Home and Culture Affairs, and Education of Bhutan Government, and Director, UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office inaugurated the Workshop. The Workshop started with the traditional opening ceremony. Mr. Eric Falt, Director UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office highlighted the importance and need of preservation of documentary heritage and role of UNESCO Memory of the World Programme in safeguarding documentary heritage in the region. In the Workshop, I delivered talks, chaired and moderated.

In the 1st session of the Workshop, I spoke on ‘Overall status of Documentary Heritage under situations of disasters. In 2nd session, I delivered a talk on ‘Safeguarding Documentary Heritage: Assessment of Challenges and

Opportunities at National and Regional Levels'. The talk was focused on the work being undertaken by the IGNCA and also other cultural intuitions in India in safeguarding documentary heritage and status of UNESCO Memory of the world Programme in INDIA.

I also chaired Session 4 : "Towards Comprehensive Preservation, Accessibility and DRR measures for Documentary Heritage" at National and Regional Level.

The workshop was attended by representatives from all SAARC countries. It was a great opportunity to explore and establish collaborative opportunities for preservation of, and access to vast documentary heritage in South Asia.

Bhutan is a lovely country and people over there is having a great bonding with India's rich art & culture and traditions. During interaction with the Hon'ble Ministers of Home, Culture Affairs & Education of Bhutan Government, it was heartening to know about their connections with India as a student or in some other activities. They also acknowledged IGNCA for organizing Bhutan Week Festival at IGNCA in 2018.

The Workshop ended with an action plan and road map for further collaboration and cooperation on the subject.

I felt that this (workshop) is the beginning only and there is still a long way to go in safeguarding and recognition to the documentary heritage in the region. An Agenda is being finalized by UNESCO New Delhi as a follow-up to the Workshop.

(Ramesh C. Gaur)
HOD(KN)