News

India's Traditional Knowledge Digital Library: a powerful tool for patent examiners

On 2 February 2009 the Indian government granted access to its TKDL (Traditional Knowledge Digital Library), a unique database that houses the country's traditional medical wisdom, to examiners at the EPO (European Patent Office). EPO examiners will use the extensive database to prevent attempts at patenting existing traditional knowledge, a practice described as 'bio-piracy'. The co-operation between India and the EPO comes at a time when many countries are struggling to protect traditional and respected knowledge against exploitation, primarily in the pharmaceutical sector. Experts at the EPO say that access to the 30-million-page database will help to correctly examine patent applications relating to traditional knowledge.

UNESCO launches digital library at http:// www.wdl.org/en/

UNESCO launched the WDL (World Digital Library) on 21 April 2009. This global digital library will provide a one-stop shop for researchers, teachers and schoolchildren seeking to find items on one topic at one place. WDL offers an invaluable platform for the free flow of information, for international solidarity, for the celebration of cultural diversity and for the building of inclusive knowledge societies. The digital library is to provide a free, easy-to-navigate site with a collection of primary documents on all subjects and authoritative explanations from the world's leading libraries. It brings together cultural heritage that's scattered around the world. The WDL supports UNESCO's mission of building capacity in developing countries, and intends working with UNESCO partners and external funders to establish digital conversion centres worldwide. These centres will produce content for the library as well as for other national and international initiatives.

Chemical Abstracts Service launches free online database

The CAS (Chemical Abstracts Service) has launched Common Chemistry, a free online database containing information on 7800 chemicals of widespread and general interest as well as all 118 elements from the periodic table. Common Chemistry is primarily intended for the general public, including students, teachers, and the media. The database can be searched by chemical name or CAS registry number. Entries show a

compound's Registry Number, molecular formula, and chemical structure; chemical names and synonyms; and a Wikipedia link if available, McCue says. The Common Chemistry database will be updated periodically and further Wikipedia links will be added.

Maharashtra gets its first digital library

Maharashtra's first digital library with modern facilities will be unveiled in two weeks. It is the first full-fledged library being set up in the city after the State Central Library was established in 1947 in Town Hall at Fort, Andheri (E). The library will cater to students from schools and colleges, and those preparing for competitive exams for professional courses. The library is expected to cost Rs 7 crore of which Rs 1.5 crore will go towards infrastructure. Among other things, an MoU has been signed with DELNET (developing library network) to enable resource sharing with over 1500 libraries in India and other nations in South Asia. There is a proposal to connect it via Internet to the British library and the University Grants Commission library.

Seventh International CALIBER-2009

25–27 February 2009, Pondicherry University, Puduchery
The 7th International CALIBER-2009 was organized by the INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmedabad and Pondicherry University

during 25–27 February 2009. The main theme were e-content management, e-resources, Web 2.0, Library 2.0, content aggregation and application of ICT in libraries. The author presentations were grouped into four different sub-themes and were presented in four technical sessions spread over three days. The convention received 240 papers and after careful screening, 70 papers besides 3 theme papers and 110 abstracts were selected for publication in the proceedings. A total of 275 delegates have registered for the conference. An exhibition was also hosted during the event. At the end, the experts present in the conference, put forward the need for a national digital preservation policy in India. The committees set up by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology would prepare a white paper on the subject and draw implementation strategies from various stakeholders.