



## Digitization of Academy's cultural treasure-trove takes-off Priceless manuscripts, paintings being electronically reserved

**Srinagar, May 21, 2013**

In a significant step to electronically preserve the State's cultural treasure-trove, Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture & Languages Tuesday started the digitization of its rich collection of manuscripts, paintings, miniatures, calligraphy specimen, facsimiles and photographs.

To begin with, the digitization work was started at Srinagar where the bulk of manuscripts and calligraphy specimen are stored. Later, collections available at the Jammu and Leh offices of the Academy would be taken up for digitization at the respective places. The digitized material will be subsequently put on website of the Academy for world-wide viewing. The digitization work was begun with the electronic preservation of the copy of 12<sup>th</sup> century A D Holy Quran calligraphed by Fateh Ullah Al-Kashmiri.



Giving details about the project, Secretary Academy, Khalid Bashir Ahmad, who launched the digitization project, said that the need to electronically preserve the precious collection was felt for long and he was happy that the work has now started. He said the project will be completed in six months at all the three places.

Describing the collection as rich and very significant, Khalid said it depicts the region's cultural history spread over the centuries. He said among the manuscripts there are hand written copies of the holy Quran dating back to several centuries. He said the subjects of the manuscripts are as varied as religion, history, logic, astronomy, mathematics, travel, jurisprudence, calligraphy, music, biography, politics and sociology.

Likewise, the Secretary said that the paintings section includes works of greats like MF Hussain, S. N. Bendre, Subramanyam, Laxman Pai, Sanyal, besides prominent artists of the State including GR Santosh, SN Bhat and others. The Academy has a rich collection of samples of world famous Basohli miniatures, outstanding specimen of Arabic, Persian and Urdu calligraphy and old photographs and facsimiles that would also be electronically preserved for posterity.



The Academy has engaged M/s Kinsey Bros, New Delhi to do the digitization work following approval by the Chief Minister who is the President of the Academy.

Pertinently, during the Academy's 2-day Quranic Manuscripts & Calligraphy Exhibition inaugurated by the Chief Minister last year, the Secretary had drawn his and the Finance Minister's attention to the urgent need of preservation of this wealth. Responding positively, they announced and provided funds for the digitization project.

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