



**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ACCESS TO
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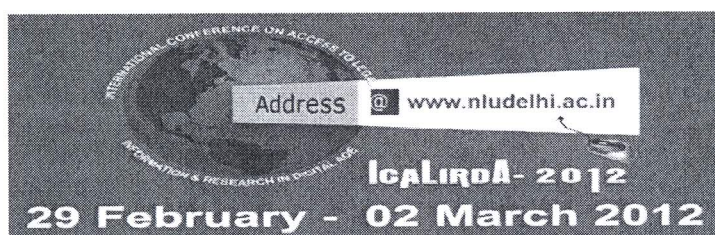
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Published by:

National Law University, Delhi
Sector-14, Dwarka, New Delhi-110078
+91-11-28035-818

ISBN: 978-81-923638-3-7

For further copies please contact:

Registrar, National Law University, Delhi
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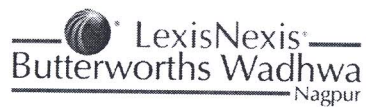
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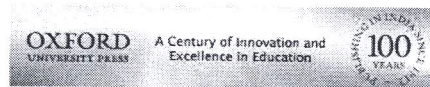
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Open Access Movement Around the World

THEMATIC SESSION 3:

Best Practices in Information & Knowledge Management in Libraries

THEMATIC SESSION 4:

Electronic Legal Databases: Strength & Weakness

THEMATIC SESSION 5:

IPR & Copyrights: Legal Issues Arising Out of Legal Databases

FOREWORD

The National Law University, Delhi is organizing its first International Conference on Access to Legal Information & Research in Digital Age at its state-of-the-art Campus at Dwarka. The main objective of the conference is to discuss various issues concerning applications of Information and Communication Technology in Legal Research, IPR issues in publishing scholarly publications, various open access initiatives, free access to law movement, online legal databases and other co-related topics.

The high proliferation in the use of information technology has given birth to new information age also called as electronic age where information users depend on computer assisted legal research. A number of electronic databases have been designed by various commercial publishers worldwide for supporting legal research and scholarship. Apart from commercial databases, a many open access initiatives have also taken place around the world for the support of law and legal scholarship by government, Ngo's and individual efforts. For advancement of legal research it is critical for students, faculty members and surely the library professionals to equip themselves with efficient knowledge and training to handle digital information available around the world.

Since the mid-1990s the Internet's World-Wide-Web has provided the necessary technical platform to enable free access to computerized legal information. Prior to the web there were many online legal information systems and numerous legal information products distributed on CD-ROM, but there was no significant provision of free access to legal information anywhere in the world. The web has provided a simple and relatively consistent means by which legal information could be both provided and accessed in both commercial and open archieve many free online resources are available to help in the legal research process. Whether it is a judgment downloaded from a court's Web site, a statute located using India Code or PRS India, an article on Wikipedia, or a post on someone's blog, the quantity and variety of free online resources grow on a daily basis.

The Free Access to Law Movement is the umbrella name for the collective of legal projects across several common law countries to provide free online access to legal information such as

case law and legislation. The movement began in 2002 with the creation of the Cornell Law School Legal Information Institute by Tom Bruce and Peter Martin. The name Legal Information Institute (LIIs) has been widely adopted by other projects. It is usually prefixed by a country or region identifier. In October 2002 the meeting of LIIs in Montreal at the 4th Law via Internet Conference, adopted a declaration as a joint statement of their philosophy of access to law. There were some further modifications of the Declaration at the Sydney meeting of LIIs in 2003 and at the Paris meeting in 2004. LII of India is another initiative promoting access of free legal information of Indian text.

This conference is the first of its kind of measure in India to facilitate the creation of a single platform of Law Professors, Judges, Advocates, Law Students and Librarians to share views and expertise in aid of fruitful utilization of digital information and thus to bring forward the problems faced by law librarians in an increasingly electronic environment while dealing with licensing, use of databases, and reference linking, user education and preservation of digital formats in the changing realm of publications pattern.

We invite you to participate in this initiative to understand the new information advances and to optimize the use of electronic databases and also to promote the best possible ways to access public legal information throughout the world, principally via the Internet.

Prof. (Dr.) Ranbir Singh

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