

CONSORTIA

**Professional Literature for Indian Universities - A new Initiative by the
University Grants Commission**

By

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ABSTRACT

For some years now, Indian Universities and Colleges have been deprived of access to journals and other professional literature. About two decades ago, University libraries were able to subscribe to a decent number of journals in various subjects. The subscriptions have steadily eroded since funds available to universities have not been able to cover the rising cost of the literature, and today access to journals is all but impossible, except from a handful of major university libraries. It is clear that this trend cannot be reversed in the conventional fashion by providing increased funding.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has recently undertaken a major new initiative called the UGC-INFONET, which seeks to provide high speed internet connections, electronic access to professional literature, and the development of multimedia content to supplement conventional learning and teaching. In the present paper we describe the part of this project which deals with the provision of electronic access to journals and other literature for the University sector.

Major organizations like the CSIR, DAE, AICTE etc have set up consortia involving institutes under the aegis of the respective department to have electronic access. The arrangement here involves incremental payments to be made to publishers to supplement an already large print subscription base. This arrangement is not possible for the Universities, since the present subscription base is very poor, and therefore arrangements which involve electronic subscriptions only are being made with publishers.

In our paper we will discuss details about the initiative, the novel aspects of the programme, the great benefits that it will bring to the University sector, its present and future relationship with other consortia, and the role of INFLIBNET in the planning and long term implementation of the scheme.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF AUTHORS



Prof. Ajit Kembhavi obtained M.Sc. in Physics from Ramnarain Ruia College, Mumbai and joined the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai as a research scholar in 1976, where he worked for his Ph.D on “Gravitation Theory and Cosmological Solutions” under the supervision of Prof. Jayant Narlikar. Thereafter, did his Post-doctoral Fellowship at the Institute of Astronomy, University of Cambridge, UK. While he was working on Ph.D., he was appointed as a Scientist in TIFR and remained there, except for the time spent abroad, until 1987, when he joined the then newly forming Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) as a founder member. He is deeply involved in the development of IUCAA and at present is a Professor and Dean, Visitor Programme. Prof. Kembhavi has developed the IUCAA Computer Centre to International Standards and looks after the ERNET Node there and currently deeply involved in setting up UGC-Infonet. He has started a new project called Virtual Observatory. He has also published number of research papers and written and edited several books. His areas of interest include high energy astrophysics, particularly quasars, active galaxies and pulsars, and optical photometry of galaxies. He is also interested in art and photography and an exhibition of photographs of celestial objects.



Dr. T S Kumbar is working with INFLIBNET since December 1997 as Scientist. He holds Ph D in library science from Gulbarga University. Has worked for different libraries in the country starting from American Centre Library at Chennai. He has briefly worked with Doordarshan Library at Chennai and Gulbarga University, Gulbarga before moving to IIT Mumbai where he has worked for little over a decade. Dr. Kumbar has published over 20 research papers and is associated with a few universities for the academic and research work. He has delivered number of invited talks in various professional fora. He has been actively involved in initiating number of activities at INFLIBNET. Currently he is involved in a new initiative taken by UGC/INFLIBNET in the areas of e-resource subscription for the university system. Dr. Kumbar is the recipient of ‘Young Librarian’ award from SATKAL Trust, Chandigarh. He has visited USA twice since 1995 as a USIA/ ALA Fellow and Fulbright Fellow. He was one of the Editors of CALIBER 2001 Proceedings.