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JU library dept turns 60

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In commemoration of the 60th anniversary of its department of library and information science (DLIS), Jadavpur University (JU) is hosting a two-day seminar — "Libraries on Metamorphosis: From Clay Tablets to Tabs" — starting Wednesday, highlighting the transition of libraries from ancient repositories to digital platforms. Former VC Suranjan Das spoke about the enduring value of physical books despite advancements in digital access.

He advocated for a balanced approach between traditional and digital library systems, urging library science professionals to utilise "library diplomacy" to promote cultural awareness and knowledge sharing. "While technology is essential for discovery, nothing matches the joy of reading a book in hand," he said.

Udayan Bhattacharya, head of library science at JU, congratulated to faculty and students for upholding the department's legacy.

The transformation of libraries from physical books to digital formats has opened unprecedented access to ancient wisdom, once stored on palm-leaf manuscripts and sometimes written in coded languages. Shalini Lithkar, a member of the Benchmarking Committee for Public Libraries under the Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) in the ministry of culture, characterised this shift as a "democratisation of knowledge". Lithkar, a professor of library science, said, "This accessibility, regardless of a person's location, enables significant progress in deciphering ancient texts and shedding new light on their interpretations."