

## e-Infrastructure pilot project launched for Nepali schools by North American NRN members

Toronto, March 14 &ndash; A pilot project to assess the feasibility for developing e-Infrastructure in Nepali schools has been recently launched through sponsorship from POA Educational Foundation, Canada of Aditya Jha ([www.poafoundation.org](http://www.poafoundation.org)) and leadership of Dr. Shiva Gautam, Harvard University. The pilot project involves 10 high schools in Katmandu through donation of 50 computers and printers. The pilot project was launched after signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Ministry of Education, Government of Nepal. Contingent upon the results and experience from the pilot, both the Government of Nepal and project team hopes to launch it in all Nepalese schools in phases.

The pilot project was conceptualized by two prominent NRNs: Dr. Shiva Gautam and fully funded by Mr. Aditya Jha of POA Educational Foundation through Nepal Library Foundation of Canada. Dr. Gautam is a faculty at Harvard Medical School USA, and Mr. Jha is a Canada based philanthropist and entrepreneur ([www.karmacandy.ca](http://www.karmacandy.ca) & [www.osellus.com](http://www.osellus.com)).

During this pilot project each of the following 10 schools were provided with five Pentium III computers and one printer to establish 10 e-Libraries in the selected schools. The following schools were chosen by the Ministry of Education.

1. Gyuheshowari
2. Nandi Ratri
3. Kanya Mandir
4. Jana Kalyan
5. Ratna Rajya
6. Baal Bikash
7. Jana Bikash
8. Geeta Mata
9. Nil Barahi
10. Gandhi Aadarsha

Dr Gautam said that the project, though pilot in nature, came to fruition due to encouragement of several people and through a collaborative effort of various non-profit organizations which supported certain aspects of the project. The project was supported by Nepal Library Foundation (NLF), Canada, POA Educational Foundation, Canada, Non-resident Nepalese Association of North America (NRNAA), World Computer Exchange Committee (WCE), USA,

Promotion of Public Awareness and Development Studies (COPPADES), Nepal, and Ministry of Education, Government of Nepal. COPPADES is also expected to provide training in basic computer skills to the teachers and the students.

The project leaders, Dr. Gautam and Mr. Jha believe that upon successful completion of the pilot project there will be much wider support for an eventual nation-wide e-Infrastructure launch in Nepalese schools. They expect support from the Governments, international funding agencies, educational enterprises and successful NRN individuals for launch of the project nationwide. An effort is underway to forge collaboration with similar organizations and include individuals in the team to devise a future strategy. "Through launch and support of the pilot project, we had to show that through the collaborative efforts and generous support it is possible to launch a quick pilot study to show the feasibility and pave path so that Nepal doesn't become victim of Digital Divide" they said

For further information,  
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