

100 Gurukulas to conduct research on manuscripts, publish findings

Sanjeev K Ahuja

■ sanjeev.ahuja@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Facing flak for slow progress on identifying, collecting, documenting, preserving and digitising manuscripts, the National Mission for Manuscripts has decided to set up 100 gurukulas across the country to pick up the pace.

The gurus heading these gurukuls would essentially be the retired professors or historians, and be assisted by scholars or research officers. Their mandate would be to edit and translate manuscripts and finally publish 4 books each year.

To be set up in 15 institutions initially to conduct research on manuscripts in various languages — Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Tibetan, the number would gradually grow to 100.

“We have identified nine institutions so far for setting up Gurukulas and do the rest very soon. All 15 would start functioning from April 1,” Dr.

THE PEOPLE HEADING THESE GURUKULS WOULD ESSENTIALLY BE THE RETIRED PROFESSORS OR HISTORIANS

Dilip Kumar Kar, coordinator, NMM told HT.

These eight include the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies in Leh, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara in Nalanda, Kundkund Gyan Peeth in Indore, Saraswati Research Institute in Odisha, Dr Hari Singh Gaur University in Madhya Pradesh, Thunchan Memorial Research Center in Kerala, Sri Chandra Shekharendra Saraswati Vishwa Mahavidyalaya in Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu), Government Oriental Manuscripts Library in Chennai and Central Council for Research on Ayurvedic Sciences in New Delhi, Kar added.

Launched in 2003, the

NMM has so far documented about 42 lakh manuscripts, digitised 2.20 lakh manuscripts with 2.5 crore pages and published 50 volumes.

According to an estimate, there are a total of about 10 million manuscripts available in India in the possession of individuals, universities and research organisations.

Dr Kar said that a gurukul evaluation committee would screen the research proposals submitted by these gurukuls. “Before launching research work, the gurukuls would submit list of manuscripts they want to conduct research on and the committee would decide the priority,” Dr. Kar said.

He said that gurukuls would have to collect manuscript from different zones of the country.

“If sourced from Odisha, the manuscripts would have to be compared with the manuscripts found in J&K and other parts of the country on the same subject. ...” he said further.