

Now, 'adopt' an ebook to preserve manuscripts

Prasad Kulkarni | TNN

Pune: Book lovers in the city have launched an initiative called 'Adopt an ebook' to preserve manuscripts and ancient literature by digitally converting them into ebooks. People who participate in the project will be called 'parents' as they will 'adopt' these ebooks.

"There are lots of manuscripts, so converting them into the digital format is a huge task. So we have decided to involve the public in this project," said Mandar Joglekar, founder of Bookganga.com. "Our first goal is to convert old Marathi literature texts into ebooks."

Joglekar, who also runs an IT firm in the US, said that a similar initiative has already been started in the US. The Pune project has received response from five persons, and more volunteers are joining.

"Most of these ancient books and manuscripts are in dilapidated condition. Their maintenance is either not possible or is a very costly. So we thought of the idea of converting them into ebooks," Joglekar said. "These books will be available on various platforms," he added.

Adopting an ebook is an easy process, Joglekar said. The person who wants to adopt an ebook can select a book on his own or choose from a list available with us. The person will have to pay the cost of converting the book into ebook, which will be named after the person who has 'adopted' it. Software professionals based in Pune or the US will convert the book and make it available online. Since this is a low cost affair, people can participate in



File photo

People who participate in the project will be called 'parents' as they will 'adopt' the ebooks – the digital version of manuscripts and ancient literature

the project in large numbers.

History scholars said that there is lot of scope for conversion of ancient books into ebooks. Even if we count only Marathi books and manuscripts, the number will go beyond 40,000. If we add old books written in scripts such as Modi, the number will go into a few lakhs. Ancient letters and other official documents can also be preserved in the form of ebook.

"Some government institutions are working on these lines but a lot of work is required to be done. If we don't take efforts to preserve these books, we might lose them altogether," said Mandar Lawate, a history researcher. "If we increase public participation, besides the government participation, we can preserve the ancient literature for our future generations."

Some old Marathi books or historical books related to Maharashtra can also be found in libraries in other parts of the country, Lawate added.