



Press Release

**PITB & ITU TO OPEN ARCHIVES FOR ACADEMIA WORLDWIDE-Dr. Umar Saif
BHAGAT SINGH DOCUMENTS DISPLAY ON March 23-Umar Rasool ACS**

Lahore, March 12, 2018

Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) and Information Technology University (ITU) the Punjab, are jointly collaborating with the Punjab Archives and Libraries Department and Columbia University's Group for Experimental Methods in the Humanities to start digitizing historical archives to open up a treasure trove of historical records for academia and historians worldwide for research by involving international experts. Dr Umar Saif, Chairman, PITB said in his opening remarks on the first day of the seminar on, "Knowledge Architectures and Archives" here today.

Umar Saif added that we were opening up our centuries old archives to the World, which had limited access earlier and were being saved in traditional manner, while now through use of technology and recommendations of the participating experts and analysts such rare and precious asset would also preserve our shining art, culture and history.

Umar Rasool, Additional Chief Secretary, Punjab said digitization of archives would bring them on the radar of the government for research as things good for people always sustained. The precious historical material from Ranjeet Singh era to date would be made available to everyone to have knowledge about evolution in the region, which would also include undisclosed documents such as manifesto, death sentence order of Bhagat Singh scheduled to display on March 23, 2018 on Pakistan Day at tomb of Anarkali.

Tahir Yusuf Secretary Punjab Archives and Libraries informed that the archival documents being digitized have been shortlisted, which would preserve the historical documents for generations to come and save them from getting mutilated due to weather conditions.

Dr. Yaqoob Khan Bangash, Director Center for Governance and Policy, ITU said that the outcome of the seminar would help in the digitalization of archives, being initiated from April for the first phase to complete over one year. It was our endeavor to bring technology and archives together to engage and interact with the World and to create better understanding of our culture and history, he added.

The seminar being participated by scholars from the world's leading universities for two days of discussion, deliberation and action on the nature and role of knowledge in the modern world, the importance and use of archives, and the application of technology in bringing together different strands of knowledge and information together.

On the first day in the plenary session Dr. Dennis Y. Tenen of Columbia University and Dr. Durba Mitra of Harvard University shared their experience. During roundtable discussion on, "Dark Archives and Digital Access" Dr. Manan Ahmed of Columbia University and Dr. Nosheen Ali of Aga Khan University expressed their views.

Digitization of the Punjab Archives project aims to open this great repository for greater public use. This project will enhance knowledge of our past, enabling scholars to engage with more local sources, and give a fillip to research on Pakistan. The Punjab Archives are one of the largest archives in South Asia, and span a period of over three hundred years with documents ranging from the British India, to Princely India, Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf, Nepal, Central Asia and China.