SAARC Regional Centres established in Member Countries promote regional cooperation in different areas assigned to them. The SAARC Documentation Centre (SDC) was established in 1994. It acts as depository of information including regional and international databases on various disciplines as well as development matters. The Centre conducts training courses in the area of Information Technology for Information Management. It is currently engaged in the establishment of TKDL for SAARC nations. During the year 2005-06, the following activities have been carried out by the Centre:

**Human Resource Development**

A major activity of the Centre has been to impart training to the library and information professionals of the member countries. The emphasis of all training programmes is on effective utilization of information technology in library and information science. Since its inception, SDC has conducted various training programmes and imparted training to more than 250 participants from SAARC Member States. The training programmes conducted during the year 2005-06 are as below:

**(a) Short Term Courses**

Two Short-term training programmes on Information Technology for Information Management were organized. The first programme, conducted during 16 May 2005 - 17 June 2005, was attended by 12 participants from Bangladesh (1), Bhutan (2), India (2), Maldives (2), Nepal (2), Sri Lanka (2), and SAARC Secretariat (1). The second programme, conducted during 19 Sep. 2005 - 21 Oct. 2005, was attended by 11 participants from Bhutan (2), India (2), Maldives (2), Nepal (2), Pakistan (1), and Sri Lanka (2).

**(b) Attachment Training Programmes**

The Attachment Training Programmes on Information Technology for Management are organized for a period of three months. These programmes are specially designed to suit the specific needs and background of the trainees. During this year, two Attachment Training Programmes were conducted. The first programme commenced on 16 May 2005 and continued up to 12 Aug. 2005. It was attended by 6 professionals – one each from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. The second programme commenced on 19 Sep. 2005 and continued up to 16 Dec. 2005. Six professionals – one each from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Pakistan attended.

**(c) Associateship in Information Sciences**

Since 1999, candidates from SAARC countries are being admitted to INSDOC’s Associateship in Information Science (AIS), a Master’s level programme in Library and Information Science. For the 2004-06 batch, one participant from Sri Lanka after completing the first year of formal training in August 2005, is working on her dissertation in her own country. For the 2005-07 batch, one participant from Bangladesh and one from Nepal have been admitted and are undergoing formal training.
Third NFP-SDC Coordinators Meet

The Third Meeting of the Coordinators of SAARC Documentation Centre Cells at National Focal Points (NFP-SDC) was held at NISCAIR during 7-8 Sep. 2005. The meeting was attended by the Coordinators from Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and India. It was proposed to bring out SAARC Abstracts for Developmental Matters, to update the Directory of Training Facilities in Library & Information Science of SAARC Nations, to prepare a database on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants in SAARC region, to provide e-journals access facility at each NFP-SDC Cell for SAARC member states, and to organize a workshop on ‘Intellectual Property Rights Issues’. NFP-SDC Cell Coordinators agreed to provide the relevant data for directories, databases and newsletter on regular basis.

Eleventh Meeting of the Governing Board

The Eleventh Meeting of the Governing Board of SDC was held during 20-21 Sept. 2005 at NISCAIR, SV Marg, New Delhi. All the members of the Governing Board attended the meeting. The agenda included performance report for the year 2004-05, report on 3rd NFP-SDC Coordinators meeting, establishment of TKDL for SAARC Countries, Workshop on Recent Developments in Library & Information Science and Creation of Digital Libraries, recruitment of professionals, programmes & budget for 2006 and audited accounts for 2004.
Establishment of Traditional Knowledge Digital Library for SAARC Countries

In the Programme Committee meeting of SAARC nations held during 8-9 Nov. 2005 at Dhaka, Bangladesh the proposal for Establishment of TKDL for SAARC Countries was approved. A Concept paper for ‘Establishment of TKDL for SAARC Countries’ was prepared which provided related details to SAARC Secretariat and Member States.

SAARC Workshop on Recent Developments in Library and Information Science and Creation of Digital Libraries

The SAARC Workshop on ‘Recent Developments in Library and Information Science and Creation of Digital Libraries’ was held during 21-25 Nov. 2005 in Bhutan. The workshop was organized by the Royal Institute of Management, Thimphu in collaboration with the SAARC Documentation Centre, New Delhi, India.

The Workshop was designed to train participants from SAARC member countries in the area of (i) Current Developments in Library and Information Science, and (ii) Creation of Digital Libraries. The aim of the workshop was to impart knowledge and skills (both conceptual and technical components) on library automation and digital library technologies, to prepare and acquire strategies for the design and maintenance of digital libraries.

About 22 participants with varying level of qualification and experience in library management fields from Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives and India attended the Workshop. Guest observers from different local institutions and agencies also attended some of the workshop sessions.

Glimpses of the Workshop Organized by SDC at Bhutan
Twentieth Anniversary of Signing of SAARC Charter

WINISIS Training Programme on the occasion of commemoration of 20th Anniversary of signing of SAARC Charter was conducted during 5 - 9 Dec. 2005. Six participants from Maldives (2), Sri Lanka (2) and India (2) attended the training programme.

SDC Website

The website of the SAARC Documentation Centre http://www.sdc.gov.in, was created in the year 2005 which is a comprehensive one providing the calendar and schedule of activities for the year, brief on important activities held, information about the forthcoming events, and job opportunities in SDC. It also contains information related to SAARC Secretariat and other establishments of SAARC. It provides links to various other relevant websites.

Directory of Periodicals in SAARC Countries-2005

The Directory of Periodicals, covering 2428 periodicals of SAARC Countries, has been compiled by the SDC during the year 2005. This Directory is a useful resource on periodicals published in the seven SAARC Member States. It will serve as an important tool for information professionals and research community in the region.

Collection Development

SDC has a modest collection of reports and documents produced in the region. The Centre has acquired several new documents in core areas during 2005, which include reports of various international organizations. In response to the appeal from H E Chenkyab Dorji, Secretary General SAARC, SDC received gratis publications from Bhutan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Mr Tarlok Singh, ex-member, Planning Commission, gifted publications on planning poverty alleviation, globalising the economy in SAARC and South Asian region.

Visit of Joint Secretary(SAARC), MEA, India

Mr P K Kapur, Joint Secretary (SAARC) MEA, India, visited SDC and NISCAIR on 25 Aug. 2005. Mr Tarlok Singh, ex-member, Planning Commission, eminent scholar and statesman accompanied him. Mr V K Gupta, Director, SDC and NISCAIR, gave a brief presentation on the activities of SDC, NISCAIR and TKDL.

Visit of Delegation from Mongolia

Mongolian delegation visited SAARC Documentation Centre and got acquainted with the activities of the Centre.
R & D Management Conference

CSIR conducted R&D Management Conference on “Innovation: A Route to Competitiveness in Global Economy” during 3-4 March 2006, at New Delhi. Four participants from Bhutan (1), Nepal (1), India (1) and Sri Lanka (1) participated in the conference on behalf of SAARC Nations and SDC sponsored their participation.