About LII of India

Stage 1 of the LII of India project

In 2005-08 AustLII developed a substantial number of databases of Indian law under its Asian Legal Information Institute (AsianLII) project, funded by AusAID, and its Commonwealth Legal Information Institute project, funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC). In 2009 AustLII successfully obtained from AusAID further funding for its AsianLII project, including for the development of a separate LII of India website as part of the project. NLU Delhi, NALSAR and NLUI in Bangalore offered their support for this application. In 2010 the new LII of India website was given a ‘soft launch’ in Australia by a senior AusAID representative.

In 2010 and 2011 five more National Law Universities joined in supporting the LII of India project, bringing the total to 8 Partner Institutions (Stage 1). In 2010 two of AustLII’s Co-Directors attended meetings in India to plan the development of LII of India, and in 2011 returned for further meetings of all Law Schools involved, and for a major launch of LII of India in Delhi (hosted and funded by NLU Delhi), and satellite launches in Hyderabad, Bangalore and Kolkata (hosted respectively by NALSAR in Hyderabad, NLSIU in Bangalore and NUJS in Kolkata). A subsequent meeting of all Law Schools involved, with attendance by teleconference by AustLII’s Co-Directors, was held in Hyderabad in 2012. Up to this point, AustLII developed the LII of India to include over 150 databases, and to include over 800,000 court decisions, obtained from public web sites in India.

AustLII’s AusAID funding expired in December 2011, and it intended to apply for further AusAID funding but unfortunately the AusAID PSLP Programme was closed down before another funding application was possible. The PSLP Programme has not been replaced, and no other funding source has become available to AustLII. The LII of India project is therefore now unfunded at the Australian end. Nevertheless, AustLII is keeping some of the LII of India databases updated by automated means, and will continue to do so as best it can, including maintenance of the Supreme Court of India database and databases of journal articles from NALSAR, NLU-Delhi and NUJS.

At the Indian end, no funds to sustain LII of India have been made available, nor has any entity been established in India for the purposes of its long-term management. Major efforts to publicise LII of India were made by NLU Delhi, especially Prof. Ranbir Singh, for the excellent and large-scale launch of LII of India at Delhi in 2011. AustLII very much appreciates the efforts made by each Law School. We also understand that the Law Schools have spread the message of the benefits of free access to legal information and the LII of India resources in their own way in meetings and conferences.
Nevertheless, the first stage of the LII of India project was clearly complete by the end of 2013, particularly in light of the absence of financial resources at either the Australian or India ends, with no viable second stage strategy to replace it. It was therefore appropriate to dissolve the previous informal structuring and relationships, so that a fresh start may be possible at a later stage.

AustLII thanks each of the India Law Schools involved in the first stage of the project, especially NALSAR and NLU Delhi, and at a personal level Prof. V.C. Vivekanandan, and Prof. Ranbir Singh respectively for their support and efforts throughout the first stage of the project. We also thank the Vice Chancellors and staff of NALSAR, NLSIU, TNDALU, NUJS, RGNLU- Patiala and GNLU who gave their support and advice to the project. It has been very gratifying for AustLII to receive such support for this project at the highest levels of India’s National Law Schools, even though this has not at this stage resulted in a sustainable basis for LII of India.

The current operation of LII of India
From November 2013 the above first phase of the LII of India project, and its relationships, were completed. AustLII then resumed sole responsibility for LII of India, as is appropriate for it to do as a recipient of AusAID and ARC funding. AustLII is maintaining such databases on LII of India as it can within its existing resources, and from other projects which involved content from India, while it seeks further funding and partnerships to further maintain, expand and develop LII of India. Prof. V.C. Vivekanandan, and Prof. Ranbir Singh continue to support the development of LII of India, and maintain their involvement in the Free Access to Law Movement in that connection.