



Overview

From 2007 to 2010, the four-year-joint cooperation project between Korea and Mongolia, Establishing a Safeguarding System for the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mongolia, was successfully implemented by the UNESCO Accredited NGO in Mongolia – the Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage (FPNCH) and Korea Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific (ICHCAP).

Within the framework of this project, the rules and regulations were elaborated and approved with aims to establishing the favorable legal environment for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of Mongolia. Consequently, due to the cause of the effective enforcement of these rules and regulations, definite results are being achieved currently. Research expeditions were carried out at the national level for identification, registration and documentation with audiovisual recordings of the intangible cultural heritage elements and bearers. These expeditions have significantly resulted in contributing to the establishment and improvement of the national intangible cultural heritage registration and information database. Under the basis of above activities, the Reference book entitled the “Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Mongols” was published in Mongolian and in English. The distribution of the Reference book to the concerned professional entities such as government organizations, schools, institutes and libraries was certainly contributed in raising the awareness and understanding among general populace. Within the framework of this Project, the Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage has assigned the research teams since 2008, for the survey of superannuated magnetic tapes and recordings kept at the cultural organizations. Making an evaluation and assessment on the current state of these superannuated audio and video tapes, the research teams have reached the consensus that these superannuated materials are in need of urgent restoration and preservation.

Since the beginning of 1950s, the Institute of Language and Literature at the Academy of Sciences has initiated sending the survey teams, 1-3 times a year, for researching and gathering data on oral literature and local dialectics. The initiation of above activities has set the groundwork for official establishment of a new archive with written documents and magnetic audio tapes, utilization for research purposes and the maintenance. Along with sending the survey teams, individuals/bearers were invited to the Institute from the local areas and their repertoire were recorded on magnetic tapes.

As a result, a rich repertoire of the epics, folk tales, folk songs, benedictions, odes, riddles, proverbs and other main elements of Mongolian oral heritage in their local dialectics and characteristics were succeeded to be recorded and collected at once as never before. The language and dialects that have already lost their distinctiveness or

absorbed into the central one, now already the extinct forms of oral literary expressions and heritage are remained and preserved on magnetic tapes. This fact is raising the historic and academic values more for those original forms which were preserved on the magnetic tapes.

Due to the fact that the most of the magnetic tapes being kept at the Institute of Language and Literature are more than 60 years old, the storage period of some of the tapes has already been expired. Also, the un-proper storage conditions have caused some tapes to get dried, clung to one another or fractured. Due to above reasons, the inevitable need has risen for restoration and digitisation of these magnetic tapes as well as improvement of the storage conditions and environment. Accordingly, since 2008, some efforts have been made towards restoration and digitisation of these superannuated magnetic tapes within the internal capability and capacity of the Institute. Although, due to the lack of capable human resources, finance and proper tools and technical equipment, these efforts to restore and digitalize faced several obstacles and have shown un-successive results.

At this crucial state, the authorities of the Institute of Language and Literature have several times submitted un-responded requests and proposals for financial and technical support for restoration and digitisation of the superannuated magnetic tapes to several domestic and foreign entities and organizations. Unfortunately, the Institute has reached year 2010 without any response to cooperate from any organisation.

In 2009, the authorities of the Institute of Language and Literature have introduced to the Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage their request to cooperate. Since, the 2 organizations have started to collaborate on the possibilities to restore and digitalize the superannuated magnetic tapes. Accordingly, the Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage has drafted and submitted the Project Proposal to the Korean Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific.

Accordingly, the Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage proposed to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific to continue the Joint Project and take measures for restoration, digitisation of the superannuated magnetic tapes, and distribution and dissemination among general public. In this regard, the Korea, considering the Project proposal, has sent the research team to Mongolia to make on-site evaluation on current situation and reached the decision to continue the joint activities.

According to the above decision, the Mongolian Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage and the Korea Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific Joint Cooperation Project of "Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage by Utilising Information Technology" was successfully implemented between October, 2011 and April 15, 2012.