



**REPORT NO
322**

PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, WOMEN, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SPORTS.**

**THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY SECOND REPORT
ON**

**Action Taken Notes on 313th Report of the Department-related Parliamentary
Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports on Demand
for Grants (2020-21) of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education.**

(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 02nd February, 2021)
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 02nd February, 2021)



Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
February, 2021 /Magha, 1942, (Saka)

Hindi version of this publication is also
available

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE
(Constituted w.e.f. 13th September, 2020)

1. **Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabuddhe** **Chairman**

RAJYA SABHA

2. Smt. Arpita Ghosh
3. Shri. Bhubaneswar Kalita
4. Shri Vishambhar Prasad Nishad
5. Dr. Sasmit Patra
6. Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia
7. Shri Gopal Narayan Singh
8. Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh
9. Dr. M. Thambidurai
10. Shri G.K. Vasana

LOK SABHA

11. Shri Rajendra Agrawal
12. Shri D. M Kathir Anand
13. Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen
14. Shri Santokh Singh Chaudhary
15. Shri Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu
16. * Shri Rajveer Singh (Raju Bhaiya)
17. Shri Sangamlal Kadedin Gupta
18. Shri Sadashiv Kisan Lokhande
19. Dr. Jaisiddeshwar Shivacharya Mahaswamiji
20. Shri Asit Kumar Mal
21. Shri Anubhav Mohanty
22. Shri Balak Nath
23. Shri Chandeshwar Prasad
24. Shri T. N. Prathapan
25. Shri Ratansinh Magansinh Rathod
26. Shri Jagannath Sarkar
27. Shri Vishnu Dutt Sharma
28. Dr. Arvind Kumar Sharma
29. Shri Dharambir Singh
30. Shri S. Venkatesan
31. Shri Ashok Kumar Yadav

* Nominated w.e.f. 30.12.2020.

SECRETARIAT

Dr. Shikha Darbari, Joint Secretary and Financial Advisor

Shri Ashok K. Sahoo, Director

MS. Chitra G. , Deputy Secretary

Shri. Mohit Misra, Committee Officer

Smt. Suman Khurana, Committee Officer

Smt. Meera Nair, Assistant Research Officer

PREFACE

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth And Sports, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on its behalf, do hereby present this Three Hundred and Twenty Second Report of the Committee on the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Three Hundred and Thirteenth Report on the Demands for Grants (2020-21) of the Department of Higher Education. The Action Taken Notes were received from the Department of Department of Higher Education 28th September, 2020.

2. Three Hundred and Thirteenth Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth And Sports was presented to Rajya Sabha on 5th March, 2020 and simultaneously laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 5th March, 2020. Replies of the Government to the observations/recommendations contained in the Report were considered by the Committee at its meeting held on the 21st January, 2021.

3. The Committee considered the Draft Report and adopted the same in its meeting held on 21st January, 2021.

NEW DELHI

21st January, 2021.

Magha/ 1942 (Saka)

Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabudde

Chairman

*Department-related Parliamentary
Standing Committee on Education, Women,
Children, Youth and Sports*

ABBREVIATIONS

1. AICTE: All India Council for Technical Education
2. AISHE : All India Survey on Higher Education
3. UGC: University Grants Commission
4. GER: Gross Enrolment Ratio
5. ICT: Information and Communication Technology
6. GIAN: Global Initiative of Academic networks
7. EQUIP: Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme
8. RUSA: Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan
9. UBA: Unnat Bharat Abhiyan
10. UAY: Uchchar Avishkar Abhiyan
11. HEFA: Higher Education Financing Agency
12. IIIT: Indian Institute of Information Technology
13. IIM : Indian Institute of Management
14. IISER: Indian Institute of Science Education and Research
15. IIT: Indian Institute of Technology
16. MOOCS: Massive Online Open Courses
17. NIT: National Institute of Technology
18. NMEICT: National Mission On Education Through ICT
19. ICT: Information and Communications Technology
20. PMMMNT: Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching
21. SWAYAM: Study Webs Of Active-Learning For Young Aspiring Minds
22. NPE: National Policy on Education

REPORT

The Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth And Sports deals with the action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in its 313th Report on the Demands for Grants 2020-21 of the Department of Higher Education, which was presented to the Rajya Sabha and laid on the table of Lok Sabha on 5th March, 2020.

2. The Action Taken Notes in respect of observations/recommendations contained in above mentioned Report were received from the Department of Higher Education on 28th September, 2020. These have been categorized as follows:-

Chapter I: Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government

Paras- 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 12.7, 12.8

Total- 5

Chapter II: Observations/Recommendations which the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies:-

Paras- 5.5, 6.5, 6.6, 9.6, 11.5, 11.6, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3

Total- 9

Chapter III: Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:-

Paras- 3.5, 4.14, 4.18, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.8, 8.3, 10.4

Total- 9

Chapter-IV: Observation/recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government is still awaited:-

Paras- Nil

Total- Nil

CHAPTER-I

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

Observation/recommendation

1. *The Committee notes that the allocation for Central Universities is inadequate as compared to their infrastructure, faculty and number of students enrolled. The Committee further notes that Central Universities have a larger number of students enrolled in them as compared to the technical and management institutes. Therefore, the Department should make efforts for increase in the funding for the Central Universities at appropriate level.*

(Para-2.9)

The Committee strongly feels this trend is certainly affecting the implementation of various schemes in the Ministry. The Committee therefore, recommends that the Department should reconsider/review its overall mechanism right from making the proposed demand till the final expenditure is incurred and also assess the impact thereof in so far as the implementation of various schemes is concerned.

(Para-2.10)

The Committee, in view of the declining allocations combined with underutilization of budget allocations, expresses its serious concerns and recommends that the Department should reconsider/review its overall mechanism in so far as the implementation of various schemes is concerned and bring in new ideas. This is high time to show high achievements in the growth/development of Higher Education Sector, if India were to compete with advanced countries in this regard. We have to achieve equity, access and excellence in Higher Education to overcome the existing inequality prevailing in the country as well as to bridge the urban/ rural divide. The Committee, however, also recommends to the Government to take seriously the growth and development of this sector and increase budgetary allocations as they are serving the needs of the society.

(Para- 2.11)

Action Taken

Recommendation of the Committee has been noted.

All the Central Universities (CUs) were following the pace of expenditure within the budgetary support allocated by MHRD/UGC. However, after implementation of 7th CPC, the expenditure on salary grant and pensionary benefits were drastically increased but the funds were not allocated to the Ministry as per actual requirement of the CUs. Ministry proposes every year funds requirement of the Central Universities as assessed by UGC for allocation in Budget Estimate (BE) under the Scheme “Grants to Central Universities” to Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance through IFD (MoE). During the year 2019-20, grant allocated under the scheme “Grants to Central Universities” is Rs.6843.40 crore (BE) which was insufficient to meet the committed liabilities towards the salary arrears and pensionary benefits etc. of employees of CUs. However, Ministry released funds Rs.7988.83 crore to Central Universities during the financial year (2019-20) to meet the committed liabilities towards the salary arrears and pensioner benefits etc. The Ministry is committed to constant improvement of the quality of higher education and defining excellence in the processes of teaching, learning and research. Paradigms of quality and excellence in higher education have been shifted due to roll out of a number of regulations and schemes by UGC.

- ❖ The schemes under quality and excellence are:
- ❖ Potential for Excellence – Teaching and Research
- ❖ Establishment of New Centers / Institutes
- ❖ Special Assistance Programme (SAP)
- ❖ Autonomous Colleges
- ❖ Human Resource Development Centers - (HRDC) & Regional Centers of Capacity Building (RCCB)
- ❖ Bilateral Cultural and Educational Exchange
- ❖ Travel Grant
- ❖ Inter University Centers (IUC) National Facilities Centers
- ❖ Development of Sports Infrastructure and Equipment in Universities
- ❖ Institutions of Eminence (IOE) In order to ensure that the quality of higher education is sustained and further streamlined, UGC has notified the following regulations which are mandatory for compliance by every institution of higher education including Central Universities across the country.

- ❖ UGC (Establishment of and Maintenance of Standards in Private Universities) Regulations, 2003.
- ❖ UGC (Minimum Standards of Instruction for the Grant of First Degree through Formal Education) Regulations, 2003.
- ❖ UGC (Minimum Standards of Instruction for the Grant of the Master's Degree through Formal Education) Regulations, 2003.
- ❖ UGC (Grant of Degrees and Other Awards by Universities) Regulations, 2008.
- ❖ UGC (Affiliation of Colleges by Universities) Regulations, 2009.
- ❖ UGC (Curbing the Menace of Ragging in Higher educational Institutions) Regulations, 2009.
- ❖ UGC (Recognition and Monitoring of Assessment & Accreditation Agencies) Regulations, 2014.
- ❖ UGC (Affiliation of Colleges offering Technical Education by Universities) Regulations, 2014.
- ❖ UGC (Promotion and Maintenance of Standards of Academic Collaboration between Indian and Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2016.
- ❖ UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of M.PHIL./PH.D Degrees) Regulations, 2016
- ❖ UGC (Open and Distance Learning) Regulations, 2017.
- ❖ UGC (Institutions of Eminence Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2017.
- ❖ UGC Grievance Redressal Regulations, 2018.
- ❖ UGC (Recognition and Monitoring of Assessment Accreditation Agencies) Regulation, 2018
- ❖ UGC Regulations on Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for The Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education, 2018
- ❖ UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018.
- ❖ UGC [Categorisation of Universities (only) for Grant of Graded Autonomy] Regulations, 2018.
- ❖ UGC (Online Courses or Programmes) Regulations, 2018.
- ❖ University Grants Commission (Conferment of Autonomous Status Upon Colleges and Measures for Maintenance of Standards in Autonomous Colleges) Regulations, 2018.

- ❖ UGC [Institutions Deemed to be Universities] Regulation, 2019 The Quality Mandate of the UGC was adopted in the National Conference of Vice-Chancellors and Directors Conference held during 26-28July, 2018 having five objectives and 10verticals.

In addition, the following academic and administrative reforms are being implemented by the UGC for improving quality and excellence in higher education:

1. National Academic Depository: It is an online storehouse of academic awards (Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Mark-Sheets, etc) lodged by the academic institutions / boards/eligibility assessment bodies in a digital format. It is a 24*7 online mode for making available academic awards and shall help in validating their authenticity, their safe storage, and easy retrieval.
2. Consortium for Academic & Research Ethics – A recent initiative taken up by UGC is the periodical notification of the list of approved journals to be considered for the purpose of computation of API scores of university and college faculty. UGC has started notifying the list of approved, non-predatory and good quality journals from time to time.
3. Student Induction Program: DEEKSHARAMBH - A Guide to student Induction Program designed to make the transition from secondary to college/ university.
4. Learning Outcome Based Curriculum Framework (LOCF): Model curriculum in 19 subjects have been uploaded.
5. Mentoring of institutions for accreditation: UGC has developed the scheme of “Paramarsh”- new initiatives for mentoring the non-accredited institutions to enable them get accredited.
6. Evaluation Reforms: The UGC has introduced Evaluation Reform envisaging scientific methodology for comprehensive assessment of the students including critical thinking and unleash their potential to take the baton of change and growth.
7. Use of ICT: Use of ICT based learning tools for effective teaching-learning process including MOOCs and online degrees has been enabled.
8. Social and Industry connects for every institution: University-Industry linkages to be promoted to improve employability whereby every institution shall adopt at least 5 villages for exchange of knowledge and for the overall social/economic betterment of the village communities.
9. Student Career Progression and Alumni Network: The policy document on Student Career Progression and Alumni Network has been uploaded on UGC website for seeking comments from stakeholders.

10. Jeevan Kaushal (Life Skills): Curriculum of course on Jeevan Kaushal (Life Skills) has been uploaded on UGC website. Handbook for Vice Chancellors: A Handbook of Vice-Chancellors is being finalized by the UGC for expeditious implementation of academic and administrative reform in HEIs.
11. Inculcation of Values & Professional Ethics: Guidelines on Inculcation of Values & Professional Ethics have been framed.
12. Guidelines for Eco friendly and Sustainable Campus: Guidelines are being developed.
13. Capacity Building Program: Annual Refresher Program in Teaching (ARPIT) and Leadership Training for Educational Administrators (LEAP) have been introduced.
14. Faculty Induction Program: Guidelines for Faculty Induction Program “Gurudakshita” have been framed. Scheme for Trans-disciplinary Research for India’s Developing Economy (STRIDE): UGC notified Scheme for Trans-disciplinary Research for India’s Developing Economy (STRIDE) and operational Guidelines of STRIDE were uploaded on UGC website. The portal for submission of online proposal under the STRIDE was operationalized w.e.f.31.07.2019.UGC has also a scheme of National Higher Education Qualification framework (NHEQF) which shall provide a basis for monitoring and regulating the quality and compatibility of higher education across institutions. It may thus become a single system of levels for all qualifications offered by higher educational institutions across all disciplines there by making higher education qualification comparable nationally and internationally.

NEW INITIATIVES

Observation/recommendation

2. *The Committee points out that EQUIP is going to integrate seventeen programmes under it. The Committee emphasizes that each of these programmes were created with particular segment to be targeted. The Committee would like to emphasize that if all the programmes are subsumed under a single programme, the emphasis and attention to each initiative should not get lost. The Committee also points out that one of the flagship programmes like RUSA which is going to be merged into EQUIP targets the development of state universities and colleges to upgrade themselves both in terms of academics and physical infrastructure. The Committee understands that this scheme was launched to help the State universities/colleges to upgrade this infrastructure which would go a long way in improving the standard of Higher Education in the country. The Committee, therefore recommends that even after subsuming of this scheme under EQUIP, the*

Department should make sure that the required allocations are used for achieving the desired results.

(Para-12.7)

The Committee further points out that the other schemes which are going to be subsumed in EQUIP should be given the same importance as when they were stand alone schemes. The Committee also emphasizes that these schemes are necessary for the improvement of Higher Education in the country and the Department should ensure that the allocation for the EQUIP scheme should be in line with the overall target of achieving quality, excellence and access in Higher Education.

(Para-12.8)

Action Taken

The Ministry recognizes the concern of the raised issue and assures that this will be taken care of during the implementation of EQUIP. The initial focus, audience and essence of the different programmes being merged into EQUIP will be maintained while ensuring that the purpose is being fulfilled.

D/o Higher Education had, on 03.09.2019 sent a draft EFC memo on EQUIP to Department of Expenditure for seeking in- principal approval for formal circulation to concerned Ministry/Department for their comments. In response to the Draft EFC Memo on EQUIP the Ministry of Finance has stated that, “as of now, the scheme is completely unaffordable in the MTEF and present fiscal environment and hence in principal approval is not possible. In view of the substantial budgetary support required to fund EQUIP, it would be prudent to wait for the final award of the 15th Finance Commission (2021-22 to 2025-26).”

Presently, the department is re-examining EQUIP in the light of observations made by the Department of Expenditure. The Ministry will ensure that the various schemes supposed to be subsumed under EQUIP are given the same importance as when they were stand-alone schemes. EQUIP was aimed to be an overarching programme delivering further on the principles of access, inclusion, quality, excellence and enhancing employability in higher education. These principles will be abided by while working out the allocations for the programme.

CHAPTER-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALVIYA NATIONAL MISSION ON TEACHERS AND TEACHING (PMMMNMTT)

Observations/Recommendations

2. The Committee appreciates the steps taken by the Department under PMMMNMTT to improve teachers training and teaching. The scheme provides them the opportunity to develop the required leadership and managerial skills, including skills of problem-solving, stress management, team-building, conflict management, better communication, understanding and coping with the complexity and challenges of governance in financial or administrative roles. The Committee, however, recommends that the Department should have clear roadmap for the amount of funds required for the implementation this scheme. The Committee feels that this scheme should not just be having four disciplines but also encompass other disciplines in social sciences, sciences & engineering to enhance the quality of teachers and teaching in them.

(Para-5.5)

Action Taken

PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALVIYA NATIONAL MISSION ON TEACHERS AND TEACHING (PMMMNMTT)

An allocation of Rs. 50 crores has been made as interim provision for six months and further provision of funds to be done at RE stage. The Scheme was valid till 31.03.2020 and has been extended for a period of 1 year till 31.03.2021 *vide* Deptt. of Expenditure's OM dated 10.01.2020. After EFC/SFC of the Scheme is done, there will be a clear approval for timeline and year-wise budget allocation of the Scheme. It is stated that the Scheme is just not focussing on 4 disciplines. A variety of disciplines like Life Sciences, Ayurveda, Sanskrit, Environmental Microbiology, Hindi, Internet of Things (IoT), Social Sciences, Sciences, Chemistry etc. have been covered to name a few. The Scheme may further try to encompass those subjects which remain uncovered till date.

UNNAT BHARAT ABHIYAN & UCHCHATAR AVISHKAR ABHIYAN

Uchcharar Avishkar Abhiyan (UAY)

Observations/Recommendations

3. *The Committee appreciates the objectives behind launching this educational and empowerment policy of Govt. As per the past studies, the students getting higher education in India are only having academic knowledge and lack the market exposure. Thus, they do not have a practical knowledge of the work that is really going on in the manufacturing units or the industrial plants.*

(Para- 6.5)

The Committee feels that the Department should promote this scheme more aggressively as this would not only promote innovations in areas relevant to manufacturing and design but also spur innovative mindset in students and faculty in premier technical educational institutions. The Committee further recommends that the Department should also help the faculty and students in patenting new technologies and process which are developed under this scheme.

(Para-6.6)

Action Taken

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA) aims to reach out to all villages in the country within a span of 10 years. Initiating 1st Phase (UBA 1.0) of activities in the middle of 2014 with 142 Institutes, the scheme has passed through 2nd Phase (UBA 2.0) which stands now with enrolment of more than 2600 Higher Education Institutions PIs (technical and nontechnical). These institutes have adopted nearly 13,500 villages across the country. The objective of the scheme inter-alia include identify and select existing innovative technologies, enable customization of technologies, or devise implementation method for innovative solutions, as per the local needs.

Government has decided to subsume the Uchchar Avishkar Yojana (UAY) scheme with the IMPRINT Scheme under the Ministry. IMPacting Research, INnovation and Technology (IMPRINT), a national initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) designed to address all major engineering challenges relevant to India through an inclusive and sustainable mode of translational research has now reached its next phase. This national initiative is jointly funded and steered by Ministry of Education and Department of Science and Technology (DST). While any faculty member from a MoE funded Higher Education Institute (HEI) including Centrally Funded Technical Institution (CFTI) may lead as the Principal Investigator (PI), single or multiple partners from stake holder ministry, institutions, PSUs, strategic agencies and industry are welcome as Co-PI, partner or collaborator.

To spur the innovative mindset and market exposure to the technologies developed by IITs and other Institutes, the Research Parks are established under the scheme National Initiative for Technology Transfer (Renamed as Start-up India Initiative for Higher Educational Institutions) at IIT Kharagpur and IIT Bombay and further, establishment of five new Research Parks, one each at IIT Delhi, IIT Kanpur, IIT Guwahati, IIT Hyderabad and IISc Bangalore were also approved. These Research Parks are expected to give optimum exposure to students in these institutions. For patenting new technologies, IITs have separate cell to guide students and faculties. Besides, the MoUs being executed by National Coordinator under the scheme (UAY) inter-alia provide for safeguarding the interest of Project Investigators.

GLOBAL INITIATIVE OF ACADEMIC NETWORKS (GIAN)

Observations/Recommendations

4. *The Committee appreciates this new initiative to invite distinguished academicians, entrepreneur's, scientists, experts from premier institutions from across the world to teach in higher educational institutions in India, hence promoting international collaborations and improvements in quality of higher education in India.*

(Para-9.6)

Action Taken

Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) in Higher Education was launched on 30th November, 2015. The Scheme envisages garnering the best international experience into our systems of education, enabling interaction of students and faculty with the best academic and industry experts from all over the world. The Scheme is aimed at tapping the talent pool of scientists and entrepreneurs internationally to encourage their engagement with the institutes of Higher Education in India so as to augment the country's existing academic resources, accelerate the pace of quality reform, and elevate India's scientific and technological capacity to global excellence. GIAN was envisaged to catalyse higher education institutions in the country and it initially included IITs, IIMs, Central Universities, IISc Bangalore, IISERs, NITs and IIITs subsequently covered good State Universities too. MHRD has constituted a GIAN Implementation Committee chaired by Secretary (HE) to finalize and approve the GIAN implementation through courses and also decide on budget allocation.

Till date 2101 courses have been approved by the Apex Committee. Out of these, 1582 courses have already been organized and completed in which 1453 foreign faculties & industry experts have participated. However, due to COVID-19 Pandemic, 262 courses approved during the

year 2020, have been put on hold and will be organized on a later date after the restoration of normalcy.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Observation/recommendation

5. *The Committee observes that all these Schemes are meant for providing an opportunity to students belonging to marginalized sections to get proper coaching so as to enable them to compete for higher studies and become eligible for teaching in higher educational institutions and for getting gainful employment in Central/States/ private sector services. The objective behind all these Schemes is laudable. The Committee can only emphasize that these schemes need to be administered in the real sense, with the benefit reaching the targeted beneficiaries.*

(Para-11.5)

The Committee finds it satisfactory that a number of initiatives have been taken for integrating the differently-abled students towards mainstream higher education. These initiatives are indeed major steps for providing equal opportunities to such students. The Committee, however, feels that initiatives will have more impact if awareness about such facilities is dissipated among the targeted students. Every conceivable effort has to be made to sensitize such students towards the kind of opportunities waiting for them. Details of all schemes for differently-abled students should be mandatorily displayed on the websites of UGC, AICTE and IGNOU and also all categories of universities. In addition, strict and constant monitoring at all levels is also required so as to ensure that all such initiatives for differently-abled students are being implemented in the real sense

(Para-11.6)

Action Taken

The last 3 years data on number of beneficiary and fund spent is being annexed (ANNEXURE-1) to show the administration of the scheme to the targeted beneficiaries.

Schemes for the differently-abled students are being administered by AICTE who have mentioned that details of their schemes are displayed on their respective websites. UGC have also mentioned that they have displayed all their scholarship schemes on their websites and the universities have been directed to display it prominently on their websites too.

AICTE grants total of 1000 scholarships to differently-abled students (500 for degree & 500 for Diploma) with financial aid.: Tuition fee reimbursement of Rs.30,000/- or as actuals whichever is less and Rs.2000/p.m for 10 months as incidental charges each year which has been modified w.e.f. 2020-21 to Rs.50,000 as full fee reimbursement per student.

CONCLUSION

Observation/recommendation

6. *The Committee considers Higher Education as an increasingly global enterprise; hence Indian institutions should embrace internationalization that could provide them with new opportunities. While most of our universities and colleges are required to build human resources to reach desired levels of competence, we also need to go beyond this to ensure that the country has several institutions of higher education that strive to achieve excellence in both teaching and research. Universities and colleges should be encouraged to engage more intensively than before with wider society and contribute to local and regional development and provide intellectual leadership to society.*

(Para- 13.1)

The Committee feels that few universities and institution should be converted or upgraded by creating centres of excellence within the universities/institutions building on their existing strength. Accreditation should be at core of regulatory arrangement and must have clear incentives and consequences. There should be more funding for university based research and policies that create right incentives for quality research and promote collaboration among institutions.

(Para- 13.2)

The Committee further adds that quality assurance in higher education has to become top of policy agenda and education has to prepare graduates with new skills, broad knowledge base and a range of competencies to enter a more complex and interdependent world. Quality is a multi-dimensional concept and several mechanisms for quality assurance and management at individual and institutional level are needed. The Committee further points out that system of accountability and accreditation with a robust regulatory mechanism are essential to the process of sustaining and improving quality and developing performance indicators and benchmarks for assessing outcomes in higher education. The Committee accordingly, urges upon the Department of Higher Education to take all measures so as to ensure the quality in higher education matches will the global standards.

Action Taken

In order to impart international edge to HEIs in India, UGC has notified University Grants Commission (Promotion and Maintenance of Standards of Academic Collaboration between Indian and Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2016 in the Gazette of India on 11th July, 2016. Under these regulations, the Indian institutions would be able to enter into collaboration with foreign institutions through an instrument of twining arrangement after approval of UGC. Expression of interest has already been invited in this regard by the Commission. The UGC communication can be seen at

http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/3825480_Foreign-Collaboration-Regulations.pdf

Further, the government has approved a new program titled Global initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) in Higher Education aimed at tapping the talent pool of scientists and entrepreneurs, internationally to encourage their engagement with the institutes of higher Education in India, so as to augment the country's existing academic resources, accelerate the pace of quality reform, and elevate India's scientific and technological capacity to global excellence. Under the scheme, Guest Lectures are arranged from international renowned experts in the identified universities. The faculty invited under GIAN is not exclusively for propensity syllabus for Indian universities and colleges.

In order to improve quality and standards of higher education in the country, UGC has made accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions mandatory. Further, to ensure that the principle of excellence is promoted in various higher educational institutions (HEIs) in different states of the country, UGC has rolled out the following schemes.

- **Universities with Potential for Excellence:** This scheme has continued since IX Plan wherein financial assistance is provided to eligible institutions to the tune of Rs. 60.00 crores which is increased to Rs. 100 crores after 5 or 10 yrs. The grant under the schemes is to be utilized partly (50%) for research in one / two focused area(s) and partly (50%) on holistic development of the university.
- **Centre with potential for excellence in particular area: (CPEPA)** - UGC introduced the scheme of Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Area (CPEPA) during IX Plan period, which has been continued upto XII Plan period for development of academic/research infrastructure to improve the programs and activities in a chosen discipline at the selected university. The CPEPA Scheme focuses on supporting the development of inter-and/or multi-disciplinary areas and specific research projects in these areas at the selected Centers. Under

the scheme financial assistance is given as under.

- ❖ Rs 10.00 crores for Science/ Technology areas
- ❖ Rs 8.00 crores for Social Sciences/ Humanities areas.

Further, UGC is constantly monitoring the standards of education in institutions deemed to be Universities and private universities by means of review and regulations. As per the UGC (Institutions Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2010, all the Deemed to be Universities are to be reviewed after every five years by an Expert Committee of UGC. Similarly, Private Universities are being regulated by the UGC as per the provisions contained in the UGC (Establishment of and Maintenance of Standards in Private Universities) Regulations, 2003.

Such reviews are undertaken to ensure that quality education is provided by these universities in conformity with the criteria and regulations laid down by UGC and other statutory councils. The review is conducted with the help of Expert Committees constituted which includes representatives from the concerned Statutory Council(s). These Expert Committees visit the Universities to assess the fulfillment of minimum criteria in terms of programmes, faculty, infrastructural facilities, financial viability, etc. The reports of UGC visiting committees are also uploaded on the UGC website for the information of student/parents and general public at large.

➤ **Creation of Inter University Centres (IUC) by UGC to achieve excellence**

To improve the standards of higher education and research, the UGC establishes Inter-University Centres within the university system under Clause 12(ccc) of the UGC Act. The objectives for setting up these centres are:

- ❖ To provide common advanced centralized facilities/services for universities which are notable to invest heavily in infrastructure and other inputs.
- ❖ To play a vital role in offering the best expertise in each field to teachers and researchers across the country.
- ❖ To provide access for research and teaching community to the state-of-the-art equipment and excellent library facilities which are comparable to international standards.

Currently there are eight inter-university centres operating with the overall aim of increasing quality and sharing expertise. UGC has framed 'Quality Mandate' with 5 objectives and 10 verticals. Some of the verticals under Quality Mandate such as Life Skills (Jeevan Kaushal); Evaluation Reforms and Learning Outcomes based Curriculum Framework (LOCF) are aimed to equip country's next generation with vital skills, knowledge and ethics and thereby to improve their employability. Details of such initiatives are as below:

➤ **Life Skills (Jeevan Kaushal):** A curriculum on Life Skills has been formulated to empower

graduates with the vital skills like Self Competency and Confidence, Emotional Competency, Intellectual Competency, Professional Competency and Social Competency for global employment and for leading a successful life.

The curriculum comprises of four modules:

- ❖ Communication skills
- ❖ Professional skills comprise career skills and team skills
- ❖ Leadership and Management including Entrepreneurial skills
- ❖ Universal Human Values including Yoga and Service.
- ❖ The details are available on UGC website.

- **Evaluation Reforms:** UGC has initiated Evaluation reforms to revamp the current evaluation system in a way that assessment driven learning with continuous evaluation may be promoted. The report on “Evaluation reforms in Higher Educational Institution in India” is available in UGC website.

The major highlights of the report are: The Objectives of Examination System is to test learning outcomes, knowledge gained, attitude developed and skills mattered, Separate suitable model for UG, PG, M.Phil/Ph.D to be developed, Internal and continuous evaluation to be emphasized without compromising quality and standards, Technological interventions, Digital depository of degrees and marksheets, Grading and Credit transfer: Ensure a minimum programme wise uniformity in all HEIs, Moderation, On-Demand Examination, Question Bank, Minimum Infrastructure requirement for all HEIs to be achieved in time bound manner and Result Declaration.

- **Learning Outcomes based Curriculum Framework (LOCF):** Sustained initiatives are required for institutionalizing an outcome oriented higher education system and enhancing employability of graduates through curriculum reform based on a learning outcomes-based curriculum framework.

The basic premise of Learning Outcomes based approach is to align the attributes to be attained by a graduate, with Programme Learning Outcomes and Academic Standards. It is a student centric learning approach. LOCF aims to equip students with knowledge, skill, value and attitude. Based on this approach attributes like Disciplinary knowledge, Communication Skills, Critical thinking, Problem solving, Analytical reasoning, Research-related skills, Cooperation/Team work, Scientific reasoning, Reflective thinking, Information/digital literacy, Self-directed learning, Multicultural competence, Moral and ethical awareness/reasoning, Leadership readiness/qualities etc.

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are institutes of National importance

and accordingly they strive to remain as top ranking institutes in the country by way of achieving excellence in teaching and research. They have collaboration with global institutes for exchange of students and research scholars through MoU / Agreements. They intensively engaged in research schemes aimed at uplifting rural India and contributing to local needs.

Details regarding Unnat Bharat Abhiyan are already mentioned in S.No.5 above.

In so far as accreditation with regulatory arrangements, the IITs will be brought in tune with the recommendations of National Educational Policy (NEP-2020) aimed at raising the standards of higher education institutes that matches with the global standards

CHAPTER-III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO (GER)

Observation/recommendation

1. *The Committee appreciates the work done by the Department in increasing the Gross Enrolment ratio. The Committee, however, notes that the Gross enrolment ratio of SC/ST student is 23.0 and 17.2 respectively compared to the national average of 26.3. The Committee observes that in spite of various scholarships and initiatives taken up by the Department the GER of the SC/ST students has not reached to the level of national average. The Committee would like to reiterate that the Department should take steps to bridge the gap between the general category students and the SC/ST students but also take initiatives so that students from these sections do not leave their education in between.*

(Para-3.5)

Action Taken

As per AISHE Report (2018-19) the Gross Enrolment Ratio in Higher Education – AllCategories-26.3, SC--23.0, ST -17.2.

The University Grants Commission is continuously monitoring the progress of implementation of reservation Policy for SCs,STs & OBC and Persons with Disabilities in teaching and non-teaching posts as well as admission to all level courses in universities and colleges. In order to ensure that there is no discrimination against the SC/ST students, the Commission has notified UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulation 2012.

The objective of the regulations is to eliminate discrimination against or harassment / victimization of persons on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender (including the third gender) and also eliminate discrimination against or harassment/victimization of persons living with HIV/AIDS, or any other disease, physical or mental, with a stigma attached to it. These regulations were circulated amongst universities for implementation.

As a part of the effective implementation of the policy of affirmative action, UGC has launched a scheme to establish Equal Opportunity Cell (EOC) in institutions of higher education in the country. The EOCs are mandated to oversee the effective implementation of policies and programmes for the disadvantaged groups and to provide them guidance and counselling in academic, financial, social and other matters. A one-time grant of 2.00 lakhs is provided by UGC for establishing the office of the EOC in universities and 75,000/- & 55,000 is respectively in UG and PG college.

Apart from EOCs, UGC supports research on the issue of social exclusion, which has theoretical as well as policy importance. The centre approved in universities by UGC under the scheme of Centres for study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy undertake following activities.

- ❖ Teaching Courses at M.A and M.Phil levels, leading eventuality to full-fledged M.A and even M.Phil programmes in Social Exclusion Studies.
- ❖ Undertaking M.Phil and Ph. D. supervision.
- ❖ Undertaking empirical studies with theoretical perspective and build time series data bank for comparative studies and policy/programmes evaluation.
- ❖ Carrying out detailed rigorous analyses based on the socio-economic data generated by government agencies. •Organizing conferences, seminars and symposia on the theme of Social Exclusion.
- ❖ Publishing regularly the research findings of the faculty and students.
- ❖ Organizing public lectures on the subject by eminent scholars.
- ❖ Reaching out to scholars, especially young scholars, in other universities and colleges through an active programme of inviting Visiting Faculty.
- ❖ Establishing links with Civil Society Organizations engaged in combating Social Exclusion.
- ❖ Conducting short-term Orientation courses for political leaders, Parliamentarians, government officials, trade unionists and media personalities.
- ❖ Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme (EQUIP): The EQUIP addresses the need to bridge the gap between SC/STs and General categories and has proposed the following initiatives for the same:

- ❖ More financial assistantships Bridge course/ Student Induction programmes/ Career counselling support/ Grievance redressal of the students
- ❖ Support for ensuring physical health and emotional well being of the students.

D/o Higher Education had, on 03.09.2019 sent a draft EFC memo on EQUIP to Department of Expenditure for seeking in-principal approval for formal circulation to concerned Ministry/Department for their comments.

In response to the Draft EFC Memo on EQUIP the Ministry of Finance has stated that, “” as of now, the scheme is completely unaffordable in the MTEF and present fiscal environment and hence in principal approval is not possible. In view of the substantial budgetary support required to fund EQUIP, it would be prudent to wait for the final award of the 15th Finance Commission (2021-22 to2025-26).” Presently, the department is re-examining EQUIP in the light of observations made by the Department of Expenditure.

Further Comments of the Committee

The Committee observes that regardless of the umpteen number of schemes and initiatives explained, the share of enrolled SCs/STs still continue to be under-represented with respect to their share in the total population. As per the AISHE Report (2018-2019), the highest number of students is enrolled at Under Graduate level across India. Out of the 79.8% of the total enrolments, the Scheduled Cast students constitute only 14.9% and Scheduled Tribe students constitute only 5.5% of the total enrolment. Further, the percentage of SC/ST students enrolled in Post graduate programmes and Integrated Ph.Ds./Ph.Ds are not known. Most of the colleges run only Under Graduate level programmes. Only 2.5% of colleges run Ph.D. level programmes and 34.9% of colleges run Post Graduate Level programmes. Further, there is a wider disparity in the GER in higher education in India across men and women and region wise, reflecting a significant imbalance within the higher education system. The Committee, therefore, feels that the measures and schemes explained by UGC remain either underutilised or un-implemented. The Committee therefore proposes an outcome-based approach in higher education sector. The Committee may also be appraised about the status of the Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) Scheme which was introduced in 2018 with an aim to provide low-cost funds to government higher educational institutions to expand and build new infrastructure and also regarding the implementation of the scheme of 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Section.

NMEICT, SWAYAM, MOOCs

Observation/recommendation

1. (i) *The Committee notes that SWAYAM MOOCs offer a wide variety of courses to students for upgrading their knowledge/skills and feels that the Ministry should ensure that adequate funds and made available for it post merger with EQUIP so that the efforts made under it are not diluted.*

(Para- 4.14)

(ii) *The Committee points out that SWAYAM is a platform for new India where quality education is affordable and self-learning is fruitful not only for enrolled but also for professionals and dropouts. With quality content, best online lectures, great discussions, knowledgeable assessment quizzes, SWAYAM provides great opportunity to Indian students to learn without fearing from failure. It is a platform specifically designed to benefit students from remote area, working professionals as well as college dropouts. Students will get 'Verified Certificate' after successful completion of courses. However, it is not clear if these certificates will be accepted for employment purposes. The Committee therefore, recommends that the Department should take steps to make sure that the certificate issued under SWAYAM is accepted by the industries.*

(Para-4.18)

Action Taken

Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds

SWAYAM is one of the flagship projects of Ministry of Education. Sufficient funds are made available for its proper functioning. The SWAYAM courses offered in engineering are very popular among students as well as working professional. Courses are utilised by the Industry for fresher on-boarding, cross-skilling and re-skilling of the existing workforce.

Further, the following steps were taken by SWAYAM-NPTEL, the National Coordinator for Engineering & Technology Courses: - Co-offered Technical & Professional Courses through Academia Industry alliance. Partnered with companies and conducted end-to-end soft skills training for certified candidates which includes employability test, group discussion skills and a half hour 1-1 session with a soft skills trainer where they help with resume writing, how to attend interviews, areas of improvement, etc.

Further Comments of the Committee

The Committee sincerely appreciates the efforts undertaken by the D/o Higher Education in the expansion and propagation of SWAYAM courses through NPTEL.

However, the Committee notes that the courses completed do not feed into a degree or other qualification, but are self-contained. The Committee therefore would like to be updated on the specific concern raised by it previously regarding the validity of the ‘Verified Certificate’ issued after successful completion of courses online. The Committee would also like to know about the feasibility of offering online technical courses that needs physical/practical exposures.

FACULTY POSITION

Observation/recommendation

2. *The Committee would like to point out that it may be justified to some extent large number of vacancies in the Central Universities set up in the past 3-4 years. But the shortage of teachers in old universities, some of them established many decades back clearly indicates that this issue has not engaged the attention of the concerned authorities in the right perspective.*

(Para-7.6)

Action Taken

University Grants Commission (UGC) is aware of the fact that there are several vacant teaching positions in various universities and colleges across the country and teachers on contractual/tenure/ ad-hoc/part-time are appointed against the vacant positions. UGC has taken proactive measure to address the issue and prepared the guidelines for recruitment of faculty in Universities, Colleges and Institutions Deemed to be Universities outlining the selection procedure and the time frame for recruitment. All the universities have been requested to take steps to ensure that the vacancies in the University as well as in the Colleges affiliated to University are filled up at the earliest, vide UGC D.O. letter No.F.1-14/2019 (CPP-II) dated 4th June, 2019.

Further, UGC vide its letter No.F.1-14/2019(CPP-II) dated 31st July, 2019, 7th August,2019, 5th September, 2019 and 22nd October,2019 again requested to ensure that vacant positions in University as well as colleges affiliated to University are filled at the earliest and the status of the recruitment process is uploaded on the University Activity Monitoring Portal of UGC.

To expedite the process of filling up of the vacant teaching positions UGC through its Regional Offices has been following it with the Universities and Colleges. To attract the young talented teachers, UGC Regulations on Minimum Qualification for appointment of Teachers and Other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education 2018 has prescribed norms for improvement in service conditions for the new entrant, in terms of better working and leave conditions, career advancement prospects,

superannuation benefits etc. In addition to it the age of retirement prescribed in these regulations has been extended to 65 years with a provision for re-employment for 05 years upto the age of 70 years.

Further Comments of the Committee

The Committee would like be appraised about the status of faculty recruitment as on date, the responses received from the Colleges and Universities in this regard, the number of vacancies filled till date and the data on contractual appointments. The Committee may also be appraised about the infringing factors in faculty recruitment that make the process difficult. The Committee feels that faculty dearth can only be resolved if the reasons and the consequences are clear. It is important that the shortage of faculties in the HEIs should be rectified as early as possible as it may prevent education services from expanding to meet the rising demands.

Observations/Recommendations

3. *There can be only two possibilities, either our young students are not attracted towards the teaching profession or the recruitment process is a prolonged one and involves too many procedural formalities. In either case, the Department being the nodal authority for the entire country so far as higher education sector is concerned has to take proactive role so as to expedite the filling up a sanctioned posts.*

(Paras-7.5)

The Committee recommends that recruitment process should start well in advance before the post is vacated so that after retirement the newly recruited person takes up position immediately. The Ministry should work in tandem with Institutions to have this exercise done on yearly-basis and recruitment must be complete in advance so that shortage does not develop into crisis. At the same time, the Department should work out a strategy so as to attract the bright students to the teaching profession. The Committee also suggests that in order to make the teaching profession more attractive, the faculty should be encouraged to undertake consultancy and are given start-up financial support.

(Para- 7.7)

The Department along with UGC and the Universities should also provide an opportunity to the teachers to present papers in academic conferences seminars or participate in workshops; exchange knowledge and ideas; and the young faculty member to spend a short period of two weeks to two months at institutions of their choice for a better academic exposure.

Action Taken

Keeping in mind the fact that the field of higher education is currently facing an acute shortage of teachers at all levels and also being aware of the decision of the central government to expand the base of college and university education significantly throughout the country, the UGC Regulations on Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and Other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standard in Higher Education, 2010 has extended the age of superannuation to 65 years for teachers in University and College across the country. It is for the University to make all efforts to fill up the vacant posts. However, the UGC has allowed the University to re-employ superannuated teachers for a maximum period of five years, i.e. up to 70 years against sanctioned vacant post, if such posts are not filled up by regular candidates. Intensive efforts are being made to attract talented, bright and qualified young men and women to college and University jobs. The entry point incentives have been substantially increased. The UGC Regulations, 2010 has prescribed norms for improvement in service conditions for the new entrant, in terms of better working and leave conditions, career advancement prospects, retirement benefits etc.

The academic job portal is a new initiative taken by the University Grants Commission which helps NET/SET/Ph.D qualified candidates to bring their academic profile to the attention of universities/colleges and other employers with the ultimate aim to get them a suitable job. The portal facilitates candidates to register and create their profile online. The academic job portal facilitates the employers to search and browse academic profile of candidates available on this portal. The Portal also facilitates employers to register and post the job vacancies on this portal so that candidates can apply against the vacancies.

- **INTER UNIVERSITY CENTERS (IUCS)** – To improve the standards of higher education and research, UGC has established Inter-University Centres within the university system under Clause 12(ccc) of the UGC Act. The objectives for setting up these Centres are:
 - ❖ To provide common advanced centralized facilities/services for universities which are notable to invest heavily in infrastructure and other inputs.
 - ❖ To play a vital role in offering the best expertise in each field to teachers and researchers across the country.
 - ❖ To provide access for research and teaching community to the state-of-the-art equipment and excellent library facilities which are comparable to international standards. Collection of information from Universities regarding teachers The Commission is empowered under

Section 12(h) and under Section 12(i) of the UGC Act, 1956 to collect information on all such matters relating to university education in India and other countries as it thinks fit, and to require a university to furnish it with such information as may be needed relating to the financial position of the university or the studies in the various branches of learning undertaken in that university, together with all the rules and regulations relating to the standards of teaching and examination in that university with respect to each of such branches of learning. In order to get timely and quality data in the education sector, which is having implications for human development, Ministry of Human Resource Development initiated an All India Survey of Higher Education to build a database and to assess the overall picture of Higher Education in the country. A core team of officers from MHRD and UGC were involved in providing technical support, which includes preparation of Data Capture Format (DCF), providing training in workshops, assisting National Informatics Centre (NIC) in software development etc. Nodal officers have also been appointed in each state to coordinate the survey work. A dedicated portal (<http://aishe.gov.in>) has been developed with the help of National Informatics Centre (NIC) for collection and compilation of the data. All the institutions need to register on the portal for accessing the portal and uploading the data. UGC, Information and Statistics Bureau from 2014-15 has stopped collecting data directly from the Universities, compilation and estimation of Data at All India level is being made through portal <http://aishe.gov.in> and this made us to shift to paperless exercise.

The University Grants Commission, on behalf of the Government of India, has been implementing various collaborative academic programmes between India and foreign countries. UGC has been running Joint Research Programmes with countries like USA, UK, Israel, Norway and New Zealand, and has also facilitated Indian faculty / scholars to realize their research potential through fellowship and research programmes, such as Raman Fellowships for Postdoctoral research in USA, Project based Personnel Exchange Programme and Exchange of Scientists Programme. Fellowships, Scholarships and Exchange of Scholars:

- ❖ Raman Fellowships for Postdoctoral
- ❖ Research in USA
- ❖ Commonwealth Medical Fellowships
- ❖ Exchange of Scientists Program with Germany
- ❖ Project Based Personal Exchange Program (PPP)
- ❖ South Asian Institute, Heidelberg Fellowship

- ❖ Joint Research Programs: UGC-UKIERI Thematic Partnerships UGC-UKIERI Thematic Partnerships are intended to be between Institution – based research teams in UK and India of proven research ability. Under Thematic Partnership, 18 Joint research projects were awarded in the year 2018 for a period of 2 years i.e. from 15th March, 2018 to 14th March, 2020.

➤ **HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR ADMINISTRATORS UK**

India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) is a bilateral partnership between UK and India which aims to promote institutional excellence through academic/research linkages and leadership development programme. University Grants Commission (UGC) and British Council under the auspices of UKIERI is going to deliver a Higher Education Leadership Development programme focusing on training of mid and senior level educational administrators in Universities in India. In addition to leadership training being provided to top level leaders like Vice-chancellors and academic faculty, higher education sector also needs leadership development for mid and senior levels functionaries so as to bring about a professional transformation of our Universities. British Council has identified Advanced HE, a UK based not-for-profit institution, specializing in governance and leadership development of higher education for delivering the programme. The programme will be jointly funded under UKIERI.

❖ **OBJECTIVES:**

- i. Train the academic administrators so as to enable them to bring about systemic changes with renewed approaches, capacity, tools and skills in the higher education institutions
 - ii. Identify and train potential future leadership development program trainers in order to provide a framework for dissemination and cascading of leadership training to other HEIs.
 - iii. Create and Strengthen sustainable relationship between UK and Indian Higher Education Institutions and utilize UK's expertise in the field of Higher Education Administration and leadership
- Indo-US 21st Century Knowledge Initiative UGC announced an open competition under Indo-US 21st Century Knowledge Initiative and invited proposals for Joint Research from the faculty of institutions recognized under Section 2 (f) and 12B of UGC Act and Institutions of National Importance. Under the Initiative, there are provisions for exchange visits, to hold international conferences, seminars etc. Indo-New Zealand Joint

Research Projects Under the auspices of India-New Zealand Education Council, University Grants Commission, India and Education New Zealand invite applications from Indian and New Zealand academics seeking funding for Joint Research Projects. Indo-Israel Joint Research Programme: The Joint Research Programme aims to encourage research cooperation between Israeli and Indian scientists/faculty. The programme is activated through an agreement of cooperation between University Grant Commission (UGC) and Israel Science Foundation (ISF), and is funded by the Indian and Israeli governments, through the two funding agencies, each funding its own scientists according to their respective regulations. The programme is open to all disciplines. UGC, India and Israel Science Foundation (ISF) invited proposals for Joint Research Projects and approved 21 Projects in the year 2014. The selection process for the second cycle has been finalized. Indo-Norwegian Cooperation Programme (INCP) Indo-Norway Cooperation Programme in Higher Education and Research (INCP) is a new initiative that aims at enhancing higher education links between India and Norway. The programme is based on the MoU on Cooperation in Higher Education between India and Norway, signed on February 14, 2014, and on the Agreement on Academic Cooperation between the University Grants Commission (UGC) India and the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU). INCP is jointly financed through matching grants by the Indian Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). UGC, India and SIU, Norway are the implementing agencies for this Programme. Indo – German Cultural Exchange Programme Indo – German Cultural Exchange Programme provides for an Exchange of Scientists Programme. UGC and DAAD have worked out this programme to intensify cooperation between India and Germany through funding of scholars who would participate in co-operative exchange visits primarily in the fields of humanities and social sciences. This offer will be applicable to those faculty employed at higher educational institutions / universities approved under Section 2(f) and 12 B of the UGC ACT. Research Project (DAAD) TRAVEL GRANT SCHEME UGC also has a Travel Grant Scheme that provides financial assistance to permanent teachers and librarians of colleges and vice-chancellors of state universities, deemed to be universities and central universities, recognized under section 2 (f) and 12 (B) of the UGC Act, to present research papers at international conferences abroad. Online process to submit the applications by Teachers / Librarian / Vice-Chancellors / Commission Members has been initiated under the scheme to present research papers at international conferences abroad with effect from 01/09/2015.

➤ **MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECT IN HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCE, LANGUAGES, SCIENCES & ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY UGC**

The Project strives to promote teaching and research in emerging areas in Humanities, Social Sciences, Languages, Literature, Pure sciences, Engineering & Technology, Pharmacy, Medical, and Agricultural Sciences etc. The universities have been the centres of research. Although, the Government has a network of science and technology laboratories for research and development, the major base of researchers in science and technology remains with the universities and colleges. Hence, university and college teachers need to be supported to meet their requirements for individual research in specialized areas. To promote innovative ideas in major thrust areas of research in higher education, the UGC provides support for to permanent / retired teachers in the universities and colleges under Section 2(f) and 12 B only by way of inviting online Major Research Project applications in the prescribed Performa after assenting the proposals through the subject expert committee. The Principal Investigator of the selected proposals are invited for making presentations before the interface meeting constituted by the UGC.

➤ **SPECIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (SAP)**

The SAP scheme was initiated in 1963 by University Grants Commission keeping in view the recommendations of the Education Commission to facilitate the selected number of university departments having some potential in research and teaching. The program is intended to encourage the pursuit of excellence and teamwork in advanced teaching and research to accelerate the realization of international standards in specific fields. The first such program was initially started as the "Centre of Advanced Study (CAS)" in 1963. Some of these Canters also received recognition and financial support from UNDP/UNESCO. The "Department of Special Assistance (DSA)" and "Departmental Research Support (DRS)" programs were started in the Departments during 1972 and 1977 respectively to create feeder departments for CAS. The SAP Scheme is implemented at 3 levels:

1. CENTRE OF ADVANCED STUDY (CAS)
2. DEPARTMENT OF SPECIALASSISTANCE (DSA)
3. DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH SUPPORT (DRS) The major objectives of the Special Assistance Program (SAP) are as follows:-

- ❖ To identify and support university departments that has the potential to undertake quality teaching and research in various educational disciplines including allied disciplines.
- ❖ Program to be relevant to societal needs and have society and industry interaction.
- ❖ To make research a catalyst for good teaching and introduction of new courses relating to identified thrust areas.
- ❖ To have linkages with research organizations and to use their expertise innovatively to support research in the universities.
- ❖ To enhance infrastructure facilities.
- ❖ To utilize the output of research for the development of the nation and society.
- ❖ To train and create quality human resource in identified thrust areas.
- ❖ To search for newer / generic area(s), its promotion and nurturing. Basic Science Research: With a view to providing an opportunity for continuance of research contributions in Basic Science Research by talented Science and technology scholars /teachers, UGC has rolled out various schemes for boosting scientific research.

Further, UGC provides financial assistance to selected candidates for pursuing PG in general/professional/technical courses, M.Phil. /Ph.D. research and post-doctoral research on fulltime/regular basis in universities/Institutions/Colleges in India and abroad under various schemes.

Understandably, all the above efforts and initiatives contribute to development of academic research, the benefits of which percolates to community, society and nation at large. However, out of its keenness to examine the impact of UGC schemes and identify the lacunae and gaps, if any, in various stages of implementation and knowledge production, the Commission has set up a Committee to lay out the roadmap for research schemes in UGC. The Committee is to submit its report very soon. The objective of the programme is to boost scientific research. The scheme provides for:

- ❖ Improvement of Infrastructure in Universities
- ❖ Support to Colleges for Up-gradation of Science Laboratories in Colleges
- ❖ Doctoral fellowship
- ❖ Post-Doctoral Fellowships
- ❖ Developing Networking Centers
- ❖ Faculty Recharge Program Research Award. The objective of the scheme is to provide opportunities to permanent teachers of universities/institutions to pursue research in their area(s) of specialization for a period of three years without undertaking any research

guidance. Eligibility Criteria – Regular appointed permanent teachers who have a doctorate degree. They must have published papers/articles in reputed journals.

- ❖ **Strengthening Social Science and Humanities Teaching and Research Capacity** The establishment of Academic Staff Colleges is to serve as nodal centers in certain identified universities for the purpose to offer orientation and refresher courses for academic and professional development of the faculty of universities and colleges to newer concerns in educational thought and pedagogy besides advanced level programs in university disciplines of teaching and research. The objective of the scheme is that the Tata Institute of Science and Economic Political Weekly would formulate a 10 days Modular Course for the Social Scientists to enable them to learn Research Methodology and also motivate them for Research Publications. Eligibility Criteria- Each Modular Course may have approximately 50 participants and they may be programmed 4 times in a year with 2 programs at each of the Academic Staff College(s). The invitees /participants may be Assistant Professor(s)/ (lecturer(s) from Undergraduate Colleges and Universities.

In addition to above, other institutes like IITs, IIITs etc have a system of rolling advertisement for filling up of faculty position throughout the year. The purpose of rolling advertisement is to attract technically qualified young research scholars in teaching profession. Government has approved a flexi cadre faculty-student ratio of 1:10 in IITs. This enables IITs to adjust the faculty position in accordance with student strength. Thus, they require no specific approval for filling up of the faculty positions within the sanctioned 1:10 ratio.

The Pay Level granted to Faculties of IITs are competitively higher to attract right talent into teaching profession. Besides, the faculties are allowed to have project consultancies; they are eligible for Start-up grant and Cumulative Professional Development Assistance (CPDA). To fulfill a long perceived need of preparing senior faculty, such as Deans, Head of Departments for future governance roles as leaders in academic institutions, Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP) is also being implemented.

Further Comments of the Committee

The Committee is of the opinion that the current system of evaluation is ineffective and failed to bring in aspiring youths to teaching profession. The National Eligibility Test (NET), should be transformed and re-invented in order to cater to new paradigms of teaching and research. Further, there should be a mechanism to monitor Faculty Induction and Development, to meet the faculty dearth in par with the rise in gross enrolment ratio

(GER). As per the All India Survey on Higher Education 2018-19, only 2.5% Colleges run Ph.D. programme and 34.9% Colleges run Post Graduate Level programmes. Out of the 79.8% of the students enrolled in Undergraduate level programme, only 0.5% students are enrolled in Ph.D. which indicates the relatively low number of PhDs and post graduates in the country. The deficiencies in research in the higher education sector therefore need a priority based approach to remove the hurdles and to promote the research dimensions and its importance.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND EDUCATION

Observation/recommendation

5. *The Committee observes that Higher education provided to women would mean independence in decision making and economic independence. It would develop capabilities to discharge duties and responsibilities in the fields of social, economic, political and cultural grounds.*

(Para-8.3)

Action Taken

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, as revised in 1992 and further revised New Education Policy in 2020, a path breaking policy document, articulates the Government of India's unequivocal commitment, that "Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge of women. This will be an act of faith and social engineering.... The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their services, setting time targets and effective monitoring..."

It has always been a constant endeavour of the Department of Higher Education to frame different schemes and projects to ensure larger participation and enrolment of women. Therefore, reducing the gender gap in higher education is a focus area. There has been a phenomenal growth in enrolment of women students in higher education in the country. The share of girl's enrolment which was less than 10% of the total enrolment on the eve of independence has been increased to 46.23% in the academic year 2015-16. The GER for both Male and Female has an increasing trend. The Gender gap in GER has also decreased during the period 2010 to 2015.

Gender Budget cell is constituted with the intention of implementation and committing to various Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) initiatives with the objective of influencing and effecting a change in Ministry's policies, programmes in a way that could tackle gender

imbalances, promote gender equality and development and ensure that public resources through the Ministry budget.

The Gender Budget Cell should comprise a cohesive group of senior/ middle level officers from the Plan, Policy, Coordination, Budget and Accounts Division of the Ministry concerned. This group should be headed by an officer not below the rank of Joint Secretary. The functions and working of the GRB may be reviewed at least once a quarter at the level of Secretary/ Additional Secretary of the Department.

The Gender Budget Cell in the Ministry has been re-constituted on 7th September, 2020 with Joint Secretary (Higher Education) as Chairperson.

Access to Higher Education

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), State Governments are encouraged to address the issues of equity, access and quality of higher education by seeking central support under the scheme. Inter alia, central assistance is provided for creation of Universities either through upgradation of existing autonomous colleges or through clustering of colleges.

Till date, central assistance for creation of Universities through (i) Upgradation of Rama Devi Women's Autonomous College, Odisha & Jamshedpur Women's College, Jharkhand and (ii) creation of Maharani Cluster University, Bengaluru through Clustering of Colleges have been approved under RUSA. For each of these Universities, an amount of Rs. 55 crores has been approved under the scheme including both central and State share.

Furthermore, under the scheme, various other Women's Universities have been supported under other components such as infrastructure Grants to Universities and Grants for Equity Initiatives.

Scholarships / Aids/ Facilities for Women

The scheme of 'Swami Vivekananda Single Girl Child Fellowship for Research in Social Sciences' was started in 2014-15 to encourage women to pursue Ph.D. in Social Sciences including Humanities and Languages. Since the number of slots has not been limited/fixed, all the applicants, who are found eligible, are given fellowship to pursue research leading to award to Ph.D. For the selection year 2018-19, UGC has awarded the fellowship to 269 women. Further, to

cover more women scholars, UGC has decided to extend the ambit of this scheme for all the streams, beginning 2019-20.

The scheme namely 'P.G. Indira Gandhi Scholarship for Single Girl Child' is in inception since 2006-07 and envisaged to provide financial assistance to selected candidates being Single Girl Child for pursuing Post-graduation on full time/regular basis in Higher Educational Institutions in India. Since this is also an incentive scheme, there is no cap on the number of selections. Therefore, all the eligible applicants receive scholarship under this scheme. For the selection year 2018-19, UGC has selected 2445 girls under the scheme.

UGC has already initiated the process of revision of guidelines of various scholarship/fellowship schemes including (i) Post Doctoral Fellowship for Women Candidates (ii) Swami Vivekananda Single Girl Child Fellowship for Research in Social Sciences (iii) P.G. Indira Gandhi Scholarship for Single Girl Child'. It is contemplated to increase the slots to increase the participation of women in higher studies.

"With a view to improving female enrollment in the B.Tech Programmes in IITs, a Committee under the chairmanship of Director, IIT-Mandi was constituted by the Joint Admission Board (JAB) to suggest suitable measures. The recommendations of the Committee were considered by the IIT Council in its 51st meeting held on 28.04.2017 and decided to increase female enrollment from 8% in 2016 to 14% in 2018-19, 17% in 2019-20 and 20% in 2020-21 by creating supernumerary seats. As per recommendation, 800 & 1122 supernumerary seats were created in 2018-19 and 2019-20 respectively.

Further Comments of the Committee

The Committee observes that ideally when the women acquire higher education, they should attract higher labour force participation. However, the women's educational status even today has a linear relationship with labour force participation. The Committee would like to know the specific steps taken by the Department to curb this situation and the frame work developed to adopt policies to ensure that economic and social independence of women. The Committee may also be appraised about the status of reservation schemes for women in doctoral and post doctoral streams.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING AGENCY (HEFA)

Observations/Recommendations

5. *The Committee appreciates the steps taken by the Department for building and improving*

the infrastructure in Higher Educational Institutions. However, the Committee would like to point out that after the disbursal of loan the Department should have a monitoring mechanism for the expenditure of the funds provided to institutions. The Committee further recommends that the funds under HEFA should not just be used for revenue generation projects but also for enhancing the research output in HEI.

(Para-10.4)

Action Taken

With regard to the monitoring mechanism for the expenditure of funds provided to institutions through HEFA, the HEFA Board already has a Project Monitoring Committee (comprising of Directors in the HEFA Board and this Ministry's representatives) that regularly monitors not only the expenditure of HEFA funds but also the execution of HEFA funded projects across educational institutions. The Dept. of Higher Education will be also putting in place a full-fledged Project Monitoring Unit in the Ministry to monitor the financial and physical progress of all HEFA funded projects. Further, under the HEFA framework, funding for research and research related equipment is also provided to educational Institutions, apart from revenue generation projects.

Further Comments of the Committee

The Committee is not satisfied with the reply of the Department. Firstly, it is gathered that a full-fledged Project Monitoring Unit in the Ministry to monitor the financial and physical progress of all HEFA funded projects is yet to be constituted. However, no information or clarification has been given by the Department regarding the time period for constituting the Monitoring Unit. Secondly, the reply does not throw any light on the number of projects sanctioned/ funded under the HEFA. Further, there is no clarity as to whether the sanctioning / funding was given for research purpose or for procuring research related equipments . The Committee desires that the Department may share the above details with the Committee.

CHAPTER-IV

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE
GOVERNMENT IS STILL AWAITED**

NIL

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS — AT A GLANCE

GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO (GER)

The Committee observes that, regardless of the umpteen numbers of schemes and initiatives explained, the share of enrolled SCs/STs still continue to be under-represented with respect to their share in the total population. As per the AISHE Report (2018-2019) the highest numbers of students are enrolled at Under Graduate level across India. Out of the 79.8% of the total enrolments, the Scheduled Casts students constitute only 14.9% and Scheduled Tribes students constitute only 5.5% of the total enrolment. Further, the percentage of SC/ST students enrolled in Post graduate programmes and Integrated Ph.Ds./Ph.Ds are not known. Most of the Colleges run only Under Graduate level programmes. Only 2.5% of Colleges run Ph.D. level programmes and 34.9% of colleges run Post Graduate Level programmes. Further there is a wider disparity in the GER in higher education in India across men and women and region wise, reflecting a significant imbalance within the higher education system. The Committee therefore, feels that the measures and schemes explained by UGC remain either underutilised or un-implemented. The Committee therefore proposes an outcome-based approach in higher education sector. The Committee may also be apprised about the status of the Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) scheme which was introduced in 2018 with an aim to provide low-cost funds to government higher educational institutions to expand and build new infrastructure and also regarding the implementation of the scheme of 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Section.

(Para-3.5)

NMEICT, SWAYAM, MOOCs

The Committee sincerely appreciates the efforts undertaken by the D/o Higher Education in the expansion and propagation of SWAYAM courses through NPTEL. However, the Committee notes that the courses completed do not feed into a degree or other qualification, but are self-contained. The Committee therefore would like to be updated on the specific concern raised by it previously regarding the validity of the 'Verified Certificate' issued after successful completion of courses online. The Committee would also like to know

about the feasibility of offering online technical courses that needs physical/practical exposures.

(Paras- 4.14,4.18)

FACULTY POSITION

The Committee would like be appraised about the status of faculty recruitment as on today, the responses received from the Colleges and Universities in this regard, the number of vacancies filled till date and the data on contractual appointments. The Committee may also be apprised about the infringing factors in faculty recruitment that make the process difficult. The Committee feels that faculty dearth can only be resolved if the reasons and the consequences are clear. It is important that the shortage of faculties in the HEIs should be rectified as early as possible as it may prevent education services from expanding to meet the rising demands.

(Para- 7.6)

The Committee is of the opinion that the current system of evaluation is ineffective and failed to bring in aspiring youths to teaching profession. The National Eligibility Test (NET), should be transformed and re-invented in order to cater to new paradigms of teaching and research. Further, there should be a mechanism to monitor Faculty Induction and Development, to meet the faculty dearth in par with the rise in gross enrolment ratio (GER). As per the All India Survey on Higher Education 2018-19, only 2.5% Colleges run Ph.D. programme and 34.9% Colleges run Post Graduate Level programmes, indicating relatively low number of PhDs and post graduates in the country. The deficiencies in research in the higher education sector therefore need a priority based approach to remove the hurdles and to promote the research dimensions and its importance.

(Paras- 7.5, 7.7&7.8)

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND EDUCATION

The Committee observes that ideally when the women acquire higher education, they should attract higher labour force participation. However, the women's educational status even today has a linear relationship with labour force participation. The Committee would like to know the specific steps taken by the Department to curb this situation and the frame work developed to adopt policies to ensure that economic and social independence of women.

The Committee may also be appraised about the status of reservation schemes for women in doctoral and post doctoral streams.

(Para- 8.3)

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING AGENCY (HEFA)

The Committee is not satisfied with the reply of the Department. Firstly, it is gathered that a full-fledged Project Monitoring Unit in the Ministry to monitor the financial and physical progress of all HEFA funded projects is yet to be constituted. However, no information or clarification has been given by the Department reading the time period for constituting the Monitoring Unit. Secondly, the reply does not throw any light on the number of projects sanctioned/ funded under the HEFA. Further, there is no clarity as to whether the sanctioning / funding was given for research purpose or for procuring research related equipments . The Committee desires that the Department may share the above details with the Committee.

(Para- 10.4)