

PARLIAMENT OF INDIA

RAJYA SABHA

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
TWO HUNDRED-SECOND REPORT
ON
ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS
CONTAINED IN
THE HUNDRED NINETY-THIRD REPORT ON
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS 2007-2008 (DEMAND NO. 57)
OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**(PRESENTED TO THE RAJYA SABHA ON 5TH DECEMBER, 2007)
(LAID ON THE TABLE OF LOK SABHA ON 5TH DECEMBER, 2007)
RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
DECEMBER, 2007/ AGRAHAYANA, 1929 (SAKA)**

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON HRD
(2007-08)**

MEMBERS**RAJYA SABHA**

1. Shri Janardan Dwivedi ¾ Chairman
2. Shri Dwijendra Nath Sharmah
3. Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik
4. Shri Vijaykumar Rupani
5. Shri Laxminarayan Sharma
6. Shri Uday Pratap Singh
7. Shrimati Brinda Karat
8. Shri T.T.V. Dhinakaran
9. Prof. Ram Deo Bhandary
10. Shrimati Supriya Sule

LOK SABHA

11. Shri Ashok Argal
12. Shri Basudeb Barman
13. Shri Harishchandra Chavan
14. Shri Harisinh Chavda
15. Shri Abu Hasan Khan Chaudhary
16. Shri Rahul Gandhi
17. Shri Francis K. George
18. Shrimati Paramjit Kaur Gulshan
19. Shri Anant Kumar Hegde
20. Shri Ramswaroop Koli
21. Shri G.V. Harsha Kumar
22. Shrimati Nivedita Sambhajirao Mane
23. Shrimati Archana Nayak
24. Shrimati M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran
25. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat
26. Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh
27. Dr. Ramlakhan Singh
28. Shri Chengara Surendran
29. Dr. Meinya Thokchom
30. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
31. Shri K. Virupakshappa

(i)

SECRETARIAT

Shri N.C. Joshi, Secretary
Smt. Vandana Garg, Joint Secretary
Shri N.K. Singh, Director

Shri J. Sundriyal, Joint Director
Shri Amit Kumar, Committee Officer

(ii)

PREFACE

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development, having been authorised by the Committee do hereby present on its behalf, this Two Hundred-second Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the Hundred Ninety-third Report on Demands for Grants (Demand No. 57) of the Department of Higher Education for the year 2007-08. The Action Taken Report contains only those paragraphs which entailed recommendations/observations and it leaves the narration.

2. The Hundred Ninety-third Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development was presented to Rajya Sabha and laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on the 27th April, 2007. Replies of the Government to the recommendations/observations contained in the Report were considered by the Committee at its meeting held on the 29th November, 2007.

3. The Committee considered the Draft Report and adopted the same at its meeting held on the 29th November, 2007.

NEW DELHI;
29th November, 2007
Agrahayana 08, 1929 (Saka)

JANARDAN DWIVEDI
*Chairman,
Department-related Parliamentary
Standing Committee on
Human Resource Development*

(iii)

REPORT

The Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in its One Hundred Ninety-third Report on Demands for Grants (Demand No.57) of the Department of Higher Education (Ministry of Human Resource Development) for the year 2007-2008.

2. Action Taken Notes received from the Government in respect of the recommendations contained in the 193rd Report, have been categorized as follows:

(i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government: 4.3.1

(Chapter I) Total – 1

(ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies: 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1.4, 3.1.5, 3.1.1.1, 3.1.1.2, 3.1.1.3, 3.1.2.7, 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.6.1, 3.6.2, 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.7, 4.1.8, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4, 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.1.4, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3, 5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.5, 5.3.6, 5.3.7, 5.3.9, 5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.4.3, 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.5.3, 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3

(Chapter II) Total – 50

(iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee: 2.1, 2.2, 2.7, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.1.4, 3.1.1.5, 3.1.2.1, 3.1.2.2, 3.1.2.3, 3.1.2.4, 3.1.2.5, 3.1.2.6, 3.1.2.8,

3.1.3.1, 3.1.3.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.5, 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.3, 3.5.4, 4.1.5, 4.1.6, 5.3.3, 5.3.4, 5.3.8, 5.4.4, 5.4.5, , 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.1 and 8.2

(Chapter-III) Total - 41

- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited:

(Chapter – IV) Total - Nil

CHAPTER - I

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

4.3 SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Recommendations/observations

4.3.1 The Committee is informed that the Department had proposed a revised National Merit Scholarship Scheme in the Central sector incorporating various suggestions made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development with regard to enhancement in the number and quantum of scholarships. The salient feature was to cover 2% of the student population from post-secondary levels upto PG / M.Phil levels. However, keeping in view the recommendations of the Oversight Committee, Planning Commission has shifted the on-going National Merit Scholarship Scheme from the Department of Higher Education to the Department of School Education & Literacy. Finding that the transferred scheme would cater to students from Class IX to XII only, and there would be a vacuum with regard to scholarships for students studying in colleges and university, a new Central sector Scholarship Scheme for College and University Students was proposed by the Department by carving out Rs. 14.00 crore in the Annual Plan from the indicated allocation for Distance Learning and Scholarship. This scholarship would be awarded to college / university students on merit. The scheme would try to enhance the amount of scholarship being given under National Merit Scholarship Scheme. Another feature of the Scheme is that the scholarship amount would be disbursed directly to the beneficiaries through e-banking, to avoid delays. The Department has further stated that the exact details of the Scheme are being finalised and it proposes to approach the Planning Commission for higher allocation. The Committee is surprised to note that due to a communication gap between the Planning Commission and the Department, presently there is no scheme for scholarship to the university/college students after the National Merit Scholarship scheme was transferred to the Department School Education & Literacy. Rs. 14 crore arranged by the Department for that is highly inadequate. It hopes that Department will come up with effective strategies to overcome the difficulties like lack of adequate response from the States and underutilization of funds for the Scholarship Scheme.

Action Taken

Keeping in view the sentiments of the Hon'ble Committee, a comprehensive scheme of Scholarship for College and University level students has been prepared and submitted for "in-principle" approval of the Planning Commission for allocation of Rs. 1834 crores in the XI Plan. The proposed scheme seeks to cover 2% of the student population in colleges and universities in a phased manner with enhanced rates of scholarship of Rs. 1000 per month for under-graduate level courses and Rs. 2000 per month for post-graduate level courses.

CHAPTER - II

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

II. BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

Recommendations/observations

2.3 The Secretary, Department of Higher Education in his presentation before the Committee gave an overview of the programmes as well as functioning of the Department during 2006-07 apart from those proposed for the year 2007-08. The Secretary also presented a brief financial review of the Department. As against plan allocation (BE) of Rs.3616 crore for 2006-07, an allocation of Rs.6483 has been made for 2007-08 representing substantial increase of 156.19 per cent. The Committee was informed that major increase in plan allocation has been shared between the University Grants Commission and Technical Education sector. The allocation for University Grants Commission has been substantially stepped up from Rs.1269.80 crore in 2006-07 to Rs.1798 crore in 2007-08 and that of the Technical Education from Rs.841.88 crore in 2006-07 to Rs.2928 crore in 2007-08. The Committee was given to understand that the enhanced allocation in 2007-08 did not, however, reflect the actual

requirement of the Department. As against the projected requirement of Rs.12,990 crore, the Planning Commission approved only Rs.6483 crore (including Rs.2.5 crore for work outlay transferred to Ministry of Urban Development). The Committee was informed that the substantial reduction in the allocation would adversely affect the implementation of Prof. M.M. Sharma Committee recommendations on status of scientific research and training in Indian Universities, grants by University Grants Commission for the upgradation of infrastructure in State Universities, opening of new Polytechnics, construction of women hostels etc, and implementation of increase in intake capacity over next three years by 54 per cent on account of OBC reservation for admission in Central institutions. Contrary to plan allocation, BE allocation under non-plan has been reduced from Rs.3366.28 crore in 2006-07 to Rs.2729 crore in 2007-08. The Committee was informed that the decrease was mainly due to the transfer of schemes relating to school education from the Department of Higher Education to the Department of School Education & Literacy.

2.4 The Committee observed that the trend of expenditure of allocations to the Department of Higher Education during the 10th Five Year Plan has been as under :-

[Figure in crore of Rupees]

| Year | Budget Estimate | | | Revised Estimates | | | Actual Expenditure | | | % with Revised Estimate | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------|---------|-------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|-------------------------|----------|--------|
| | Plan | Non-Plan | Total | Plan | Non-Plan | Total | Plan | Non-Plan | Total | Plan | Non-Plan | Total |
| 2002-2003 | 2124.25 | 2762.61 | 4886.86 | 1942.33 | 2789.61 | 4731.94 | 1909 | 2704.96 | 4613.96 | 98.28 | 96.97 | 97.51 |
| 2003-2004 | 2124.15 | 2832.40 | 4956.55 | 2000.00 | 2832.40 | 4832.40 | 1938.19 | 2802.11 | 4740.30 | 96.91 | 98.93 | 98.09 |
| 2004-2005 | 2224.15 | 2833.24 | 5057.39 | 2224.15 | 3000.00 | 5224.15 | 2187.03 | 2973.59 | 5160.62 | 98.33 | 99.12 | 98.78 |
| 2005-2006 | 2710.50 | 3090.00 | 5800.50 | 2510.00 | 3290.00 | 5800.00 | 2561.38 | 3267.10 | 5828.48 | 102.05 | 99.30 | 100.49 |
| 2006-2007 (upto Dec, 06) | 3616.00 | 3366.28 | 6982.28 | 3616.00 | 3500.00 | 7116.00 | 2336.37 | 2500.30 | 4836.67 | 64.61 | 71.44 | 67.97 |

2.5 A closer scrutiny of the table reveals that during the first four years of the 10th Plan period, plan allocations have invariably been reduced at the RE stage substantially or marginally barring in the year 2004-05 and even this reduced provision could not be utilized fully except during 2005-06. The Committee notes that against the RE Plan allocation of Rs.3616 crore in 2006-07, expenditure reported upto December, 2006 was Rs.2336.37 crore and Rs.3054.46 crore upto February, 2007. The Secretary in his presentation before the Committee on 30th March, 2007 informed the Committee that approximately 99.44 per cent of the Plan allocations made to the Department had been utilized. However, the Department could spend a total of Rs.1279.63 crore in the last quarter of 2006-07 of which Rs.561.54 crore was spent during the last month of the fiscal 2006-07. The Committee is perturbed to note the last minute expenditure against which it has time and again been expressing its objections. The Committee, therefore, wishes once again to emphasize that the Department should avoid last minute spending and all efforts should be made to ensure expenditure during the year as per the norms prescribed in this regard. The Committee hopes that the Department would make concerted efforts for optimum utilization of allocated funds in accordance with the physical and financial targets set for different schemes during 2007-08 as well as the 11th Plan period.

Action Taken

As against the BE (Plan) of Rs.3616.00 crores, the quarterly target and the actual expenditure of the year 2006-2007 is as follows:

(Rs. in crores)

| | Quarterly Target | Actual Expenditure | % of Actual Expenditure W.r.t. BE |
|--|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | |

| | | | |
|--|------------------------|---------|-------|
| 1 st Quarter (April to June, 06) | 614.72 (17% of BE) | 615.94 | 17.03 |
| 2 nd Quarter (July to September, 06) | 904.00 (25% of BE) | 956.23 | 26.44 |
| 3 rd Quarter (October to December, 06) | 904.00 (25% of BE) | 769.56 | 21.28 |
| 4 th Quarter (January, 07 to March, 07) | 1193.28 (33% of BE) | 1093.45 | 30.24 |
| Total | 3616.00 | 3435.18 | 94.99 |

The actual expenditure upto February, 2007 was Rs. 3054.48 crore which is 84.47% of BE 2006-07. Further, a sum of Rs. 368.91 crore was released during March 2007, which included an amount of Rs. 82.43 crore approved by the Parliament in the 3rd Batch of Supplementary Demands. The expenditure made during the last quarter of 2006-07 was 30.24% as against the Finance Ministry's norms of 33% while expenditure during March was only 10.2% as against the restriction of 15% by Ministry of Finance. Efforts will continue to be made to have the expenditure evenly distributed and avoid bunching of expenditure towards the later part of the financial year.

Recommendations/observations

2.6 The Committee has been informed that an additional one per cent Education Cess has been introduced to support the funding of Secondary and Higher Education. The Committee is aware that the cess would pool significant resources for education sector. The Committee, however, would like to caution the Department that such a measure could not be resorted to for a long time.

Action Taken

The views of Committee have been conveyed to the Ministry of Finance which is responsible for resource mobilization/levying of taxes, vide D.O. letter of Secretary (HE) addressed to Secretary (Revenue).

III. UNIVERSITY & HIGHER EDUCATION

Recommendations/observations

3.1.4 Committee's attention has been drawn by the discouraging achievement level in some of the physical targets set for the Tenth Plan as indicated below :-

| <u>Physical Targets</u> | <u>Short fall in Achievements</u> |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Assistance to Colleges (4811) | 3835 Colleges |
| Assistance to Autonomous Colleges (234) | 178 Colleges |
| Assistance to Universities with potential for excellence (21) | 1 University |
| Assistance to Colleges with potential for excellence (97) | 47 Colleges |
| Major/Minor Research Projects in Science and Technology (3004) | 1046 Projects |
| Research Projects in Humanities and Social Science (11,000) | 8556 Projects |
| Assistance to Colleges located in backward districts (404 Colleges) | 114 Colleges |

3.1.5 The Committee strongly feels that such a high level of shortfall, that too in such vital areas needs to be reviewed in detail so that corrective measures can be initiated well in advance. The Committee hopes that the Department must have initiated such an exercise already. If not, it may be expedited as the Eleventh Plan has already begun.

Action Taken

(Paras 3.1.4 & 3.1.5)

On the advice of this Ministry, UGC has constituted a Committee under Prof. G.K. Chadha, Member, Prime Minister's Advisory Council to work out and assess the feasibility of instituting a diversity index and evolving a system of grant based on it.

UGC is making all out efforts to ensure that such a short fall is not repeated during XIth Five Year Plan. While the XIth five-year plan allocation is yet to be finalized, the UGC has identified targets for 2007-08, based on the allocation made available during 2007-08. The strategy of UGC, during XIth Plan and during first year the XIth Plan is to promote quality in learning and research in higher education, while enhancing the access to higher education with equity and without any compromise on quality. Moreover, the imbalances in higher education are sought to be removed. With this in view, UGC has identified quantifiable and deliverable Physical targets during 2007-08. Some of the major targets in this regard are as follows:-

| | Physical Targets | Short fall in Achievements |
|-----|---|----------------------------|
| 1. | Assistance to Central Universities | 18 Universities |
| 2. | Assistance to New Central Universities | 5 Universities |
| 3. | Assistance to deemed to be universities | 23 Universities |
| 4. | Assistance State Universities | 123 Universities |
| 5. | Assistance New State Universities | 50 Universities |
| 6. | Support to Univ. celebrating 150 th Year of Higher Education | Rs. 150 crore |
| 7. | Special support to State Technical Universities | 5 Universities |
| 8. | Development grants to management department | 100 Departments |
| 9. | Unassigned grants to universities | 169 Universities |
| 10. | Women hostel for Universities | 169 Universities |
| 11. | Day care centres for universities | 169 Universities |
| 12. | Development grants to colleges | 6000 Colleges |
| 13. | Development grants to new colleges | 2000 Colleges |
| 14. | Assistance to autonomous colleges | 249 Colleges |
| 15. | Assistance to new autonomous Colleges | 200 Colleges |
| 16. | Women hostels for colleges | 5000 Colleges |
| 17. | Assistance to Backward areas universities | 50 Universities |
| | | |

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 18. | Assistance to Backward areas colleges | 1000 Colleges |
| 19. | Assistance to young universities | 50 Universities |
| 20. | Assistance to young colleges | 5000 Colleges |
| 21. | Women study centre | 34 Centres |
| 22. | Schemes for promn. of higher education for SC/ST/OBC minorities | 6000 Colleges |
| 23. | Career Orientation to education | 300 Colleges & Universities |
| 24. | Assistance to Academic Staff Colleges | 57 ASCs |
| 25. | Fellowship for (i) Doing M.Phil/Ph.D (ii) Post Doctoral Fellowship | 30000 Fellowships 1000 Fellowships |
| 26. | Assistance to Universities with Potential for excellence | 31 Universities |
| 27. | Assistance to colleges with potential for excellence | 117 Colleges |
| 28. | Major/Minor research project in science and technology | 3004 Projects |
| 29. | Major/Minor research project in humanities and social sciences | 11000 Projects |
| 30. | Special Assistance Programme (i) Centre for Advance Scheme (CAS) (ii) Deptt. of Special Assistance (DSA) (iii) Deptl. Research Support (DRS) | 74 Centres in Universities 145 Deptts. in Universities 258 Depts. in Universities |

UGC has been requested to ensure that the said targets are achieved during 2007-08, so that there is no shortfall.

3.1.1 OPENING OF NEW UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES

Recommendations/observations

3.1.1.1 The Committee notes that the Department aims to increase enrolment in higher education from 10 per cent at present, to 15 per cent by the end of the 11th Five Year Plan.

3.1.1.2 To a query as to what the Department proposed to do with regard to the finding of the Knowledge Commission that the country needed 1500 new Universities to be able to achieve the 15 per cent enrolment target, the Committee was informed that the findings of the Knowledge Commission were worthy of discussion and there should be wider national debate and then a sort of wider consensus should be evolved as to what action had to be taken. The Department was in the process of having discussion with its stakeholders and based on their inputs, the matter would be looked into. The Committee was also informed that there were universities like Delhi University which were very big and which had a large number of colleges and there were some other universities, which were very small. The Department opined that the number was not very important because what was needed was that the enrolment ratio had to go up from 10 per cent to 15 per cent. The Department was of the view that whether that happened through 1500 universities or slightly less number needed to be looked into as they were in the process of evolving a wider consensus in the matter. To another concern of the Committee as to how the Department proposed to regulate the entry of foreign

universities in India, the Committee was informed that a Foreign Education Providers Bill was on the anvil. Through this bill, the Department proposed to regulate investment into the country and ensure that quality and standards of education were maintained and profiteering was restricted. The bill would also ensure that there was no exploitation of students by foreign universities and there was no sub-standard degree given by the universities.

3.1.1.3 The Committee is of the opinion that the Department in consultation with the stakeholders must take expeditious action to ensure that appropriate plans are formulated and put to work well in time to be able to achieve the target of 15 per cent enrolment by the end of the 11th Five Year Plan.

Action Taken

The 11th Five Year Plan proposal in regard to University & Higher Education is yet to be finalized by the Planning Commission. Reports of the Working Groups constituted by the Planning Commission have since been submitted. The Planning Commission has also discussed the proposed schemes, both ongoing as well as new schemes and subject to the availability of resources, the capacity of higher education institutions is proposed to be enhanced in order to achieve the target of 15% enrolment by the end of XIth Five Year Plan. The proposed strategy includes setting up of new Central Universities, in sensitizing state governments to establish new colleges in low GER districts, strengthening of State Universities/colleges, Special UGC grant to Universities/colleges with a higher proportion of SC/ST and minority students, establishment of more women's hostels etc.

3.1.2 VACANT FACULTY POSITIONS IN UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES

Recommendations/observations

3.1.2.7 The Committee is, however, unaware of the extent of vacancies in teaching positions in the various State Universities. In the absence of the availability of any data regarding the vacancies in the States, the Committee is unable to assess the overall position in this regard. The Committee, therefore, desires that the Department should expedite collection of information from the State Universities to have a clear picture in this regard. The Committee feels that situation in State universities may be similar, if not worse. It, therefore, recommends that the Department must sit with the UGC, State governments and the State universities to find out viable means to tackle this problem.

Action Taken

Secretary (HE) has written in this regard to State Governments and replies have been received as indicated above in reply to Para 3.1.2.1. This issue was discussed in the State Minister' Conference held on 10-11 April, 2007. The matter is being vigorously pursued.

3.4 AREA INTENSIVE AND MADARSA MODERNIZATION SCHEME

Recommendations/observations

3.4.1 In the 10th Five Year Plan, the two major schemes relating to minorities i.e. the Scheme of Area Intensive programme for Educationally Backward Minorities and the Scheme of Financial Assistance for Modernisation of Madrasa Education were merged into a single Programme. The components of the scheme are: a) infrastructural development; and b) Madrasa Modernisation. The assistance is available to Madrasa institutions all over the country volunteering to seek assistance. The Committee is also informed that there is a proposal to revamp the scheme and rename it as 'Scheme for Promotion of Quality Elementary Education in Madrasas (SPQEEM)'. Under the proposal, Madrasa students would be encouraged to continue their education in the regular stream through the National Institute of Open School (NIOS) and its vocational courses. In addition, it is being proposed that the assistance offered under the present scheme for Science and Mathematics kits would be enhanced in scope to provide for setting up of laboratories as well as procurement of computers. Similarly, the remuneration to teachers as well as the number of teachers is proposed to be enhanced.

3.4.2 The Committee welcomes the initiatives taken by the Department to revamp the Scheme. The Committee, however, notes that during the last three years of the 10th Plan period, participation of the States under the two components of the scheme have not been at all popular:-

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Infrastructure Development</u> | <u>Madarsa Modernisation</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2004-05 | 3 States | 4 States |
| 2005-06 | 2 States | 8 States |
| 2006-07 | Nil | 9 States |

The Committee is of the considered opinion that simply enhancing the assistance under the Scheme may not serve much purpose unless greater participation of the States as well as the community was ensured. Without this, the Committee feels the modernization programme may not succeed. The Committee, therefore, urges the Department to revamp this scheme with a view to making it more popular and effective.

Action Taken

As submitted above in respect of para 3.4.1 Committee of the National Minority Committee on Minorities Education (NMCME) is studying the inadequacies and weakness of the existing scheme. The Committee has interacted with community representatives and Madrasa managements in order to find ways of making the scheme more acceptable to the community. This issue was also discussed with State Education Secretaries on the 9th July, 2007. An Action Plan has been prepared for implementing the scheme with greater involvement of States. The Ministry has written to all States, impressing upon them, the active cooperation required from States for qualitative improvement in implementing the Scheme. The concerns pointed out in para 3.4.2 would be kept in mind while finalizing the revised Scheme.

3.6 STATUS OF DELHI UNIVERSITY

Recommendations/observations

3.6.1 The Committee pointed out that there was some confusion regarding the status of the Delhi University. The character of the Delhi University was different from the other Universities; it has been constituted by the colleges of Delhi that were mostly funded by the UGC directly. The syllabus of University is decided in consultation with the faculty of the constituent colleges and the Committee of Courses. Given its unique character, the Delhi University is a 'Constituent University' rather than an 'Affiliated University' as it is often referred to today.

3.6.2 The Committee is of the considered opinion that the constituent character of the Delhi University needs to be highlighted and maintained. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the UGC should try to clear this confusion and project the constituent character of the university.

Action Taken

Section 2(a) of the University of Delhi Act, 1992 defines 'College under the University of Delhi as below:-

'College means as institution maintained or admitted to its privileges by the University and includes an affiliated College and a Constituent College;

Explanation 1. 'Affiliated College' means an institution recognized by the University in accordance with the provisions of this Act and the Statutes in which instruction is provided in accordance with the provisions of the Statutes and Ordinances up to the Bachelor's degree, but exclusive of Honours and Post-graduate degrees;

Explanation 2. 'Constituent College' means an institution recognized as such by the executive Council in accordance with the provisions of this Act and the Statutes;

Therefore, there are two types of colleges under the University of Delhi. The preamble to the Act may also be reproduced here which says. "An Act to establish and incorporate a teaching and affiliating University at Delhi."

Therefore, in the Department's opinion the view taken by the Hon'ble Committee that the University of Delhi is of a constituent character is not in accordance with current provisions of the University of Delhi Act. As desired by the Hon'ble Committee, the recommendation of the Committee has been forwarded to the UGC.

IV. DISTANCE LEARNING

4.1 INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY (IGNOU)

Recommendations/observations

4.1.1 The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1985 with the dual responsibilities of (i) enhancing access and equity to higher education through distance mode; and (ii) to promote, coordinate and determine standards in such systems through its Distance Education Council (DEC). IGNOU practices a flexible and open system of education in regard to methods and pace of learning, combination of courses and eligibility for enrolment, place and age for entry, methods of evaluation etc. The University has adopted an integrated multiple-media instructional strategy consisting of print materials, audio-video, radio, educational TV teleconferencing, video conferencing and face-to-face counseling at study centres throughout the country. IGNOU serves the educational aspirations of 1.17 million students in India and 32 countries abroad.

4.1.2 The Committee has been informed that out of the Plan allocation of Rs.100.00 crore for the financial year 2006-07 to Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Rs.4.95 crore have been re-appropriated at the stage of first Supplementary Grants for development of a pilot project 'SAKSHAT', which was launched by H.E. the President of India on 30.10.2006 with the objective of

use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for the learners through One Stop Education Portal, thereby leaving Rs.95.05 crore for IGNOU in the financial year 2006-07. As on 26th February, 2007, the entire allocation of Rs. 95.05 crore has been released to IGNOU, which has utilized Rs.54.25 crore as on 31.01.2007

4.1.3 The Committee has further been informed that the overall trends in Plan expenditure *vis-à-vis* Budget Estimate/Revised estimate during the 10th Plan period have been as under:-

(Rs. in crores)

| <u>YEAR</u> | <u>BE</u> | <u>RE</u> | <u>ACTUALS</u> |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| 2002-03 | 60.3 | 35.3 | 31.99 |
| 2003-04 | 67 | 20 | 16.56 |
| 2004-05 | 67 | 60.3 | 66.65 |
| 2005-06 | 54 | 54 | 30.24 |
| 2006-07 (upto December, 2006) | 100 | 95.05 | 68 |

4.1.4 The Committee notices that the figures of utilized funds supplied are different in two documents. While the Outcome Budget states that Rs.68 crore had been utilized upto December, 2006, the written reply of the Department to a specific query puts it to Rs.54.25 crore as on 31st January, 2007. It further notes with concern that the funds allocated to the IGNOU during the 10th Plan period have continued to be under-utilised year after year. The Committee, in fact, had pointed out this position to the Department while examining the Demands for Grants of the Department for the previous year i.e., 2006-07 and had then stressed on the need for monitoring of physical and financial targets set by the University on a quarterly basis.

Action Taken

Rs. 68 crore was released to IGNOU by the ministry by the end of December 2006, as reflected in the Outcome Budget. Rs. 54.25 crore had actually been spent by IGNOU by 31.1.07.

Recommendations/observations

4.1.7 The Committee further notes that IGNOU proposes to utilize the allocation of Rs.108 crore during 2007-08 to fund a multitude of activities which include Support to PAN African E-network; tele-education initiative of the Government of India; establishment of study centers at Village Knowledge and Village Resource Centres of MS Swaminathan Research Foundation; establishment of Rural Regional Centres in the rural areas; establishment of study centers for the differently abled with provision for adequate support relevant to the differently abled persons; establishment of additional study centers in the educationally Backward Blocks identified by the Planning Commission and the Sachar Committee; establishment of new additional schools; launching of new additional programmes and courses; installation of additional Receive Only Terminals (ROTs) and Satellite Interactive Terminals (SITs); upgradation of existing microwave links; financial Assistance to SOUs; Correspondence Courses Institutions (CCIs) for strengthening and modernization of their academic activities and programmes. The Committee also notes that IGNOU is contemplating for development of on-line courses/programmes by making use of information and communication technology. Ministry of Human Resource Development initiative of One Stop Education Portal 'SAKSHAT' has been launched by H.E. The President of India on 30th October 2007. The Portal provides access to digitalized knowledge resources to different clientele groups and provide a platform of Learning Management System (LMS) to learners. The University is also planning to introduce the Optical Mark Reader (OMR) system for admission, re-registration and examination forms, two-way audio-visual communication for delivery of programmes and automation of administrative operations. Keeping in mind the societal need and market requirements to create growing number of employable human resource in the country, the university prioritized the development of academic programmes. The university as a policy measure is working to develop at least 10% of the courses by each school, devoted to the vocational and employment oriented programmes.

4.1.8 The Committee welcomes the exhaustive plans chalked out by IGNOU for the year 2007-08 and looks forward to IGNOU being able to reverse the trend shown during the 10th Plan period. The Committee also hopes that the Distance Education Council in its new avatar would be instrumental in bridging the demand-supply gap prevalent in university education today.

Action Taken

The Department shares the hope expressed by the Committee and assures of its best efforts to come up to the

expectations.

4.2 SCHEME OF SCHOLARSHIPS TO STUDENTS FROM NON-HINDI SPEAKING STATES/UNION TERRITORIES FOR POST-MATRIC STUDIES IN HINDI

Recommendations/observations

4.2.1 The main objective of the Scheme is to promote the study of Hindi in Non-Hindi speaking States/Uts and to make available to the Government of these States/Uts suitable personnel to man teaching and other posts where knowledge of Hindi is essential. Under this scheme, scholarships are awarded to students from non-Hindi speaking States/Uts for pursuing Post-matric studies in Hindi.

4.2.2 The Committee has been informed that 2500 fresh scholarships are proposed to be given under the Scheme during the year 2007-08. To a specific query as to whether there was any monitoring mechanism whereby the funds released under the scheme could be monitored, the Department replied that it was not possible to give the physical and financial targets and achievements for the scheme and the states were reporting only the total expenditure incurred by them each year.

4.2.3 As per the information furnished to the Committee, the physical and financial achievements under the scheme during 2006-07 as on 21st February, 2007 have been rather poor. It was noticed that only 7 States participated in the scheme during 2006-07. Moreover, out of 2500 fresh scholarships proposed to be given during the year, only 750 of them had actually been awarded to students from 7 States. During 2005-06, funds for 221 renewal scholarships were granted to various States/Uts compared to 534 renewals in 2006-07. To a query as to why the Scheme was in such a bad shape, the Department had stated that the adequate proposals were not forthcoming from the States/Uts for reasons best known to them.

4.2.4 The Committee is at a loss to see such a poor performance of the scheme meant for promoting Hindi in non-Hindi speaking States. The Committee is not ready to accept such a vague reply in the matter. The Committee is of the opinion that the Department needed to be more pro-active while implementing this scheme, instead of waiting for the States to come forward. The Committee recommends that effective steps be taken to implement the scheme immediately. The scholarship amount being paid under the scheme needs to be further enhanced.

Action Taken

The Department has taken note of the views expressed by the Committee and is taking all necessary steps to popularize the scheme. Last year the proposals were invited vide letter dated 21.4.2006, followed by six reminders dated 2.6.2006, 17.7.2006, 31.8.2006, 8.11.2006, 6.12.2006 and 19.1.2007 respectively. All States have again been addressed on 19.4.2007.

4.4 REFINANCE CORPORATION/STUDENTS LOAN SCHEME

Recommendations/observations

4.4.1 The Committee is given to understand that the students who intend to avail educational loans from the banks are faced with numerous procedural difficulties. The Department informed the Committee that banks were supposed to grant education loans to students without insisting for any collateral security. Some cases of violation of this norm have however come to the notice. The Department has also informed that the average loan given per student comes to a meager Rs.2 lakh. It has also come to the notice of the Department that during the period when the student is undergoing a programme or a technical course, the banks start demanding the interest liability. The Department is of the view that there should be a moratorium for at least one year after the student completes his course. It is against this backdrop that the Department proposes to set up a Refinance Corporation to provide some avenues to enable the students to mitigate their financial problems. The assistance will be in the form of loans with low rate of interests. The Department has further informed that the matter is being taken up with the Planning Commission.

4.4.2 The Committee expresses its concern over the fact that the banks are violating the norms of disbursement and charging high interest on educational loans to students. The Committee in its 172nd report had suggested to have a loan-disbursing agency specifically for the students. It is happy to note that the Department has proposed to set-up a Refinance Corporation for this purpose. The Committee recommends that the matter may be immediately taken up with the Planning Commission and Department of Banking for working out/deciding necessary modalities for this purpose during this fiscal itself. The formation of the Refinance Corporation to help the needy students who intend to pursue higher education cannot wait any further in the current scenario.

Action Taken

The concern expressed by the Committee regarding the high rates of interest on Student Loans was taken up at a meeting with the Ministry of Finance and the Planning Commission, and a scheme of interest-subsidy is being worked out for which adequate outlays are expected to be available during the 11th Plan period.

V. TECHNICAL EDUCATION

5.1 ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION (AICTE)

Recommendations/observations

5.1.1 AICTE was set up in 1945 as an advisory Body. It was given a statutory status through an Act of Parliament in 1987. The AICTE has Regional offices at Kolkata, Bhopal, Bangalore, Chandigarh, Kanpur, Chennai and Mumbai to support its various activities. The main function of AICTE is to coordinate development of technical education, promotion of qualitative improvement in relation to qualitative growth, and maintenance of norms and standards. Besides, funding of National Institutes of Technology (NITs) is made through AICTE.

5.1.2 The allocation for AICTE during 2007-08 is Rs. 1126.50 crore including NER allocation for NITs (Rs. 892.40 crore under plan and Rs.234.10 crore under Non plan). This plan provision of NITs also includes a provision of Rs.780 crore towards implementation of Oversight Committee recommendations for meeting the requirement for enhanced number of students.

5.1.3 During 2006-07, the Committee notes that the plan BE of Rs.210 crore was enhanced to Rs. 229.05 crore in the RE stage. However, expenditure reported upto February, 2007 is Rs.181 crore. The Committee is not aware of the reasons for the enhancement of allocation at the RE stage. What is, however, disturbing is that though the RE was enhanced, the funds utilized upto February, 2007 did not even match the BE allocations. In the previous years also, BE allocations have invariably been reduced at the RE stage. Moreover, the Committee notes that during the year 2005-06, BE allocation of Rs.91.48 crore was reduced to Rs.76.48 crore at the RE stage. However, actual expenditure incurred during the year matched the BE figures. The Committee is of the view that such a trend indicates poor financial planning and the Council needs to be more vigilant in this regard in the future.

Action Taken

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE): Committee's recommendation has been noted and the AICTE has been asked to make efforts to ensure expenditure during the year as per the norms prescribed in this regard.

National Institutes of Technology (NITs): The budget allocation under plan for the Financial Year 2006-2007 was Rs. 110.00 crores at B.E. stage. As there was demand for additional plan requirement for upgrading their infrastructure facilities, the allocation was enhanced to Rs. 149.23 crores and the entire amount has been utilized by the NITs.

The budget allocation for the current financial year viz 2007-2008 is Rs. 893.00 crores, out of which Rs. 780.00 crores are meant for implementation of Oversight Committee recommendations.

Recommendations/observations

5.1.4 It was brought to the notice of the Committee that the AICTE while exercising its mandate is not involving the State governments. The Committee, therefore, suggests that the process of consultation with States must be strengthened as provided in the Act.

Action Taken

AICTE forwards proposals of Under-graduate and Postgraduate courses to the concerned State Governments/Affiliating Universities for obtaining their views. They are taken into consideration while processing the proposals. Approval to diploma level institutions is accorded directly by a State Level Committee with the help of Regional Offices of AICTE. This issue was also discussed with state secretaries on 7.8.07 and necessary orders have issued.

5.2 INDIAN INSTITUTES OF MANAGEMENT (IIMs)**Recommendations/observations**

5.2.1 Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) located at Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Bangalore, Lucknow, Indore and Kozhikode are institutions of excellence, established with the objectives of imparting high quality management education and training, conducting research and providing consultancy services in the field of management to various sectors of the Indian economy.

5.2.2 These Institutes are recognized as premier management institutions, comparable to the best in the World for teaching, research and interaction with industries. IIMs being Role Models have shared knowledge and skills with other institutions to improve their quality and standards in management education. IIMs have earned an international reputation for the quality of their alumni.

5.2.3 During 2007-08, plan and non-plan allocations for IIMs are to the tune of Rs.113 crore (including the NER component) and Rs.41 crore respectively. This is a substantially enhanced allocation compared to a total BE allocation of Rs.65 crore in 2006-07. The Committee has been given to understand that the enhanced allocation includes a provision of Rs.80 crore for implementation of Oversight Committee recommendations for meeting the requirement for enhanced number of students.

5.2.4 The Committee welcomes the decision of the Department to set up an Indian Institute of Management at Shillong in the State of Meghalaya. It notes that the Government of Meghalaya has agreed to provide land free of cost for the IIM. The State

Government has made an appropriate temporary accommodation available and the first session is likely to commence from the academic year of 2007-08. The Committee appreciates the proactive role played by the Government of Meghalaya in enabling the commencement of the academic session of the IIM from this year itself. It hopes that the Department will be equally active in ensuring that the infrastructure to make the IIM fully operational is put in place at the earliest.

Action Taken

Steps towards setting up of the Rajiv Gandhi Indian Institute of Management (RGIIM) at Shillong in the State of Meghalaya are currently under way. Chairman, Society & BOG of RGIIM, Shillong has been appointed and additional charge of the post of Project Director of the Institute has been given to the Vice-Chancellor, North-Eastern University (NEHU), Shillong. Memorandum of Association & Rules of the RGIIM, Shillong have been formalized and subsequently society of RGIIM has been registered. Completion of related formalities like appointment of the full time Director, recruitment of the faculty & non-faculty staff etc. will take some time. Resultantly, the admission to the Institute will commence from 2008-09.

Recommendations/observations

5.2.5 The Committee however is given to understand that the Department is presently not considering any proposal to set up any IIM in any other State. The Committee is of the view that our aim should be to open more and more IIMs in different parts of the country to impart management education. It is aware of various constraints in setting up of new IIMs. It, however, believes that the Department could go about in a phased manner and set targets for opening at least one IIM per financial year.

Action Taken

The views of the Committee shall be taken into consideration while finalizing the XIth Plan. There is a proposal to open 7 new Indian Institutes of Management.

5.3 INSTITUTIONS OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE

Recommendations/observations

5.3.1 Institutions of Technology and Science primarily comprises of 7 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs); 20 National Institutes of Technology (NITs); 3 Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs); 2 Indian Institutes of Science Education & Research (IISERs); Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore; School of Planning & Research (SPA), Delhi; and 4 National Institutes of Technical Teachers Training and Research (NITTTRs). Besides these, there are several other institutions which are engaged in the process of imparting technical education to the aspiring students in the country.

5.3.2 The Committee is concerned to note that grants released to several institutions under Plan during 2006-07 have remained under-utilised. As per the information made available to the Committee, the position by the end of February, 2007 is as under :-

(Rs in crore)

| Sl.No. | NAME OF SCHEME/PROGRAMME/PROJECT | BUDGET ESTIMATE | REVISED ESTIMATE | ACTUAL UPTO FEBRUARY, 2007 |
|--------|--|-----------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | National Institutes of Technical Teachers Training & Research | 12 | 15.7 | 8.15 |
| 2. | School of Planning & Architecture, Delhi | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| 3. | Grants to Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore | 73 | 85 | 73 |
| 4. | North-Eastern Regional Institute of Science & Technology, Itanagar | 5 | 9.1 | 4.99 |
| 5. | Board of Apprenticeship Training - Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Kanpur | 2.25 | 3.64 | 1.76 |
| 6. | Indian Institute of Information Technology, Jabalpur | 10 | 10 | 8 |
| 7. | Indian Institutes of Science Education & Research | 50 | 20 | 10.25 |

This is obviously not a desirable position. The Committee may be apprised of the reasons for the same.

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee are based on the utilization at the end of February, 2007. However, by the end of March 2007, almost all funds allocated have been released. The factual position on each of these institutions is given as under:-

National institutes of Technical Teachers Training & Research (NITTTRs)

The actual Plan expenditure upto February 2007 in case of National Institutes of Technical Teachers' Training & Research (NITTTRs), Bhopal, Chandigarh, Chennai & Kolkata was Rs. 8.15 crores as against the RE 2006-07 of Rs. 15.70 crores. However, by the end of March, 2007 Rs. 14.67 crore were released to four NITTTRs, which was 93% of the RE. The remaining amount would go to Non-Lapsable Pool of Central Resources (NLCPR) for the North Eastern Region (NER).

School of Planning & Architecture (SPA)

All Utilization Certificates, which are due, are to be furnished by the concerned Institute before grants are released. SPA, New Delhi furnished the UCs only on 26.2.2007. As such, the 3rd installment of Rs. 100 Crore could not be released to the School in time. After receiving the UC from SPA, New Delhi, the 3rd & 4th Installment amounting to Rs. 2.00 crores were released to the School in March, 2007.

Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

An unspent balance of Rs. 6760 lakhs was available with the Institute on 31.3.07. Therefore the additionality could not be released. Institute has been advised to accelerate its pace of utilization of funds.

North Eastern Regional Institute of Science & Technology (NERIST):

The allocated BE of Rs. 5.00 crores was released by February 2007. The additional Supplementary allocation of Rs. 4.10 crores was made in the month of March which was released by March end.

Boards of apprenticeship Training (BOATs)

Although, at R.E. Stage, Rs. 3.64 crore was provided. But at Final grant stage, it was reduced to Rs. 2.48 crore. Entire amount of Rs. 2.48 crore was released to four Regional BOATs/BOPT.

Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Jabalpur

Due to several teething problems like appointment of regular Director and other staff, appointment of Architect, Contractors, finalization and allocation of construction work etc. there was a delay. As on 31.3.07, the Institute had an unspent balance of Rs. 263.47 lakhs and hence full sanctioned amount was not released. In future, the Institute has been advised to maintain the pace of expenditure.

Indian Institute of Science, Education & Research (IISER)

IISERs are new institutes and are at present in the project mode. 2 IISERs at Pune & Kolkata have been set up in the year 2006 only and academic session started in August 2006 in temporary locations. Due to delay on the part of State Governments to transfer land in the name of IISER Societies, construction activities could not be started, as envisaged. As such, the pace of expenditure was not upto expectation.

Recommendations/observations

5.3.5 Another area of concern is inadequate availability of faculty both in terms of quality and in numbers. The Committee is given to understand that out of 2877 sanctioned faculty positions in the Centrally funded Institutions, 2456 positions have been filled. This comes to around 85 per cent of the sanctioned strength. Moreover, in the State Institutions, out of 12,577 faculty positions, 12203 positions (about 97 per cent) have been filled. The Committee has also been informed that 1462 faculties from Central Institutions and 6565 faculties from State Institutions were imparted training under the Technical Education Quality

Improvement Project (TEPIQ) during the year 2006-07. The Committee finds the progress in this regard satisfactory. It urges the Department to continue this pace especially with respect to the training of technical teachers.

Action Taken

As advised by the Committee, the Department will continue to give utmost importance to the training of technical teachers.

Recommendations/observations

5.3.6 Another issue that came before the Committee was that there was some problem with respect to the disbursal of scholarships in the research institutions. The Department in its reply informed the Committee that the problem arose basically due to the non-receipt of information regarding utilisation of funds granted to these institutions in the previous year. The Department also confessed to have not informed the institutions in time of a directive issued by the Finance Department to block release of funds if the utilisation of the earlier funds were not indicated. This led to the delay in disbursal of funds to these institutions. The Committee takes serious note of the situation and cautions the Department that such lapses should not be repeated in the future. The Committee also urges the Department to constantly monitor the utilisation of funds by the research institutions to avoid any such confusion in the future.

Action Taken

The concern of the Committee has been noted. The Department will constantly monitor the utilization of funds and receipt of UCs from the Institutions.

Recommendations/observations

5.3.7 The Committee further expresses its concern over the development of nano-technology in India. It has learnt that there is no proper and structured syllabus as such for nano-technology in India. The Committee, therefore, urges the Department to evolve a comprehensive programme to develop nano-technology as a future discipline of immense possibilities.

Action Taken

The Department has conveyed the concern of the Committee to UGC and Institutions of excellence like IISc and IITs to develop suitable programmes in nano-technology. The three universities of Madras, Mumbai and Calcutta have been separately sanctioned Rs. 100 crore each for the development of a facility in nano-technology as detailed in the answer to Para 3.1.3 above.

Recommendations/observations

5.3.9 The Committee is happy to note that the Department proposes to set up 3 new Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan; 20 new Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs); 2 new Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) in Bhopal and Thiruvananthapuram; and 2 new Schools of Planning & Architecture in Bhopal and Vijayawada. The Committee wishes that the Department completes the procedural formalities in this regard and gives shape to the proposals in a time bound manner.

Action Taken

The Department is taking all necessary action in this regard.

5.4 SCHEME FOR UPGRADING OF EXISTING POLYTECHNICS AND SETTING UP OF NEW POLYTECHNICS IN SPECIAL FOCUS DISTRICTS

Recommendations/observations

5.4.1 The Committee has learnt that there are in all 1250 polytechnics with total intake capacity of about 2.78 lakh. The Committee however noted that the intake in engineering colleges was double that of polytechnics, while it should have been the other way. The Department submitted to the Committee that the basic reason for the existing imbalance was that the private sector was taking more interest in starting engineering colleges as compared to setting up polytechnics. Thus, while more and more engineering colleges were coming up, the setting up of polytechnics was largely left to the government. The government with its financial constraints had thus not been able to match the increase in the intake in engineering colleges.

5.4.2 The Committee was also informed that with a view to address this problem, the Department proposed a Scheme for upgrading existing polytechnics and setting up of new polytechnics in special focus districts. Out of the 244 districts identified under the scheme based on various factors, 65 of them did not have any polytechnic. The Committee was informed that the Department under the Scheme proposed to provide one time financial assistance of Rs.12.3 crore per polytechnic for establishment of one polytechnic in each of these districts. The recurring expenditure and the land along with the developmental charges would be provided by the concerned State Government. The Department also proposed to upgrade the infrastructural facilities in at least one of the polytechnics in the remaining 177 districts. In this regard, one time financial assistance between Rs.20 to Rs.50 lakh would be provided depending on the requirement of the concerned polytechnic.

5.4.3 The Committee welcomes the initiative of the Department in this regard. The Committee, however, is unable to comprehend as to how the Department proposes to implement the scheme with a meager allocation of Rs.50 crore during 2007-08. The Committee recommends that efforts should be made to open polytechnics in the entire country with special emphasis on the backward areas.

Action Taken
(Paras 5.4.2 & 5.4.3)

The concern of the Committee has been noted and would be taken into consideration while finalizing the XIth Plan.

5.5 SCHEME OF COMMUNITY POLYTECHNICS

Recommendations/observations

5.5.1 The Scheme of Community Polytechnics was started during the year 1978-79 as a direct Central Assistances Scheme of the Government of India (Ministry of Human Resource Development) with the aim of harnessing the scientific/technical knowledge available with Polytechnics to secure Community /Rural Development.

5.5.2 The Committee is happy to note that the a Working Group constituted to review the scheme of Community polytechnics has since given its recommendation and the Department is in the process of considering them while restructuring the scheme for implementation in the 11th Plan. As per the information made available to the Committee, some of the major recommendations of the Working Group include upward revision of financial norms of the scheme including remuneration to project staff of the scheme; strengthening the infrastructure at regional monitoring agencies of the scheme ie., NITTTRs; appointment of exclusive officers at the State Directorate of Technical Education for monitoring the scheme; improvement of data flow and documentation on the achievement of the scheme to enable wider adoption of best practices; emphasis on promotion of rural entrepreneurship and development of micro enterprises and development of competency based curricula for effective skill transfer. The Committee however did not find any mention of any recommendation to address the problem of uneven distribution of Community Polytechnics in the country. Of the 669 Community Polytechnics in the country, the Eastern region has the least number i.e., 97 of them compared to the North, West and South which have 187, 145 and 240 respectively. This position was even more disturbing for the fact that the Eastern region was a backward region having the highest concentration of rural population. To a specific query in this regard, the Department accepted the fact that all the Govt./Govt.-aided polytechnics of the North-Eastern region have not been covered under the scheme. Out of a total number of 29 such polytechnics in the region, as many as 10 of them were yet to be covered under the scheme. The Department has informed that these polytechnics could not be covered under the scheme since there was no provision for expansion in the approved scheme during the 10th Plan period. The Committee recalls that the Department on the insistence of the Committee had taken up the matter of augmenting the strength of Community Polytechnics in the North-Eastern region with the concerned State Governments. The Department in its action taken report to the Committee had then stated that the State Governments had expressed their inability to open fresh Polytechnics but could consider opening more extension counters of the existing polytechnics in that region.

5.5.3 The Committee is of the considered opinion that the uneven reach of the Scheme in the Eastern region of the country does not conform to its objective of securing community/rural development. The Committee, therefore, urges the Department to factor in this aspect while reviewing the Scheme for the 11th Plan.

Action Taken

The Recommendation of the Committee has been noted and will be considered while reviewing and revamping the scheme during the XIth Five Year Plan.

DEVELOPMENT OF SANSKRIT LANGUAGE

Recommendations/observations

1.1 The Committee pointed out to the Department that the grants-in-aid to the Sanskrit institutions were not sufficient.

Action Taken

The funds have been allocated to RSKS as per the requirement. There still remains an unspent balance as on 1.4.2007 in both plan and non-plan schemes for the year 2006-07.

Recommendations/observations

6.2 In its reply, the Department stated that there were two major Sanskrit institutions which were supported through the budget of the Department. One was the Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi and the other was the Maharshi Sandipani Rashtriya Ved Vidya Pratisthan, Ujjain. The Department further informed that the Maharshi Sandipani Rashtriya Ved Vidya Pratisthan was under

construction. There were in all 11 Sanskrit universities in the country of which eight were being funded by the UGC. The Department was however unable to provide details of the fundings to these universities. The Department also informed that research in Sanskrit language was another thrust area. Under the Development of Sanskrit Education scheme, research projects, individuals, scholars and NGOs were granted funds. In fact, Indian Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad had submitted a proposal to establish links between the old Sanskrit texts and the requirements of the IT sector. The proposal was being examined in the Department.

6.3 The Committee notes the efforts being made by the Department in the matter. It, however, urges the Department to expedite the completion of the construction work in respect of the Maharshi Sandipani Rashtriya Ved Vidya Pratisthan, Ujjain. The Committee is of the considered opinion that fund constraints come in way of development and research in Sanskrit language. Sanskrit *granths* provide vast knowledge that need to be developed further by researches. The Committee emphasizes the need for providing more funds for this. The Committee also recommends that emphasis should be given to the development of Sanskrit from the basic level.

Action Taken **(Paras 6.2 & 6.3)**

The concern of the Committee with regard to the construction at Ujjain has been noted and following action has been taken:

- It has been decided to entrust the work to CPWD, who have been asked to ensure that the work is completed as per schedule.
- Funds have not been a constraint as no proposals have been held for want of funds.
- Details of funding given by UGC to Sanskrit Universities is at Annexure V.

IIT is revising the proposal and will formulate a project in consultation with RSKS, Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha and Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, Deemed Universities. The Proposal would be submitted by IIT to RSKS for consideration.

CHAPTER - III

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

II. BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

Recommendations/observations

2.1 The public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP for the years 2004-05 and 2005-06 were 3.68 and 3.72 respectively. The Central Government's Budgetary allocation on education as a percentage of GDP were 0.56 per cent and 0.73 per cent for the years 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively. The break-up of Central Plan expenditure as a percentage of GDP for Elementary, Secondary and Higher Education sectors for the years 2004-05 and 2005-06 were as follows:-

| Sectors | 2004-05 | | 2005-06 | |
|----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| | Expenditure | Expenditure as percentage of GDP | Expenditure | Expenditure as percentage of GDP |
| Elementary Education | 7710.18 | 0.27 | 11787.74 | 0.37 |
| Secondary Education | 652.29 | 0.02 | 810.65 | 0.03 |
| Higher Education | 810.65 | 0.03 | 843.58 | 0.03 |
| Total | 9173.12 | 0.32 | 13441.97 | 0.43 |

2.2. As regards Higher Education, out of the total Government of India budget of Rs.6,80,521 crore for the year 2007-08 (plan and non-plan), allocation for the Department of Higher Education is to the tune of Rs.9,209.50 crore. The budget provision for Higher Education constitutes 28.47 per cent of the total budget for education sector and it comes to 1.35 per cent of the total budget of the Government of India. The Committee is of the considered opinion that the

Department should strive to achieve the ideal of allocating six per cent of the GDP for education.

Action Taken (paras 2.1 and 2.2)

Raising public expenditure on Education upto the level of 6% of GDP is an NCMP commitment and the Ministry has repeatedly stressed to the Planning Commission the need to achieve this at least by the end of the XI Plan. "Public Expenditure" includes expenditure by Centre as well as States. Planning Commission is the body which is responsible for making plan allocation to various Central Ministries, as also for approving State Plans. Thus it is that Commission which has to assume nodal responsibility for achieving the above target. The Ministry of HRD will continuously work with the Commission in that direction.

Comments of the Committee (paras 2.1 and 2.2)

The area of Higher education is expanding at a rapid pace. The Committee believes that access, availability and affordability along with quality in higher education need to be ensured. This is the minimum that the Government should strive to ensure during the XIth Plan. This sentiment of the Committee be brought to the notice of the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance as well.

Recommendations/observations

2.7 The Committee also notes that there are some schemes which have become difficult to implement/monitor from the Centre, resulting in their poor implementation, monitoring, etc. The Committee has been given to understand that such schemes are proposed to be revised for more effective implementation during the 11th Plan. The Committee is of the view that the reviews and consultations with the States as well as the Planning Commission may be carried out at the earliest so that these schemes are not held up for long time due to the delay in decision-making process.

Action Taken

Planning Commission is in the process of finalizing the draft XI Plan for being placed before the National Development Council for approval. In the process of giving shape to the XI Plan, the Commission, in consultation with this Ministry and other stakeholders, would carefully review existing schemes. They would be revised to the extent necessary after the finalization of the XI Plan.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee understands that the draft XI Plan has been prepared and is likely to be placed before the National Development Council for approval very soon. The Committee, therefore, desires to know about the status of the schemes under revision.

III. UNIVERSITY & HIGHER EDUCATION

3.1 UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

Recommendations/observations

3.1.1 UGC was established under an Act of Parliament in 1956 for the purpose of coordination, determination and maintenance of standard of university education. The Act empowers the Commission, among other things, to allocate and disburse grants to universities for their maintenance and development and to establish and operate Inter-University Centres. As per information made available to the Committee, presently there are 24 Central Universities, 228 State Universities and 109 Deemed Universities in the country. Besides these, there are 18,064 colleges, of which 1902 are exclusively for women. To improve quality of undergraduate education, 249 colleges have been identified as 'autonomous colleges' till date.

3.1.2 The budget allocation for UGC during 2006-07 RE was Rs.1139.47 crore (excluding the NER component) under plan and Rs.1560.70 crore under non-plan, making a total allocation of Rs.2700.17 crore. The proposed allocation for 2007-08 for UGC (excluding the NER component of Rs. 249.23 crore) is Rs.2124.77 crore under the plan component and Rs.1638.75 crore under the non-plan component, totaling to Rs.3763.52 crore. The Committee has been informed that out of an increase Rs. 1063.35 crore in 2007-08 over the previous year, Rs. 576 crore would be utilized for meeting the requirement of Central Universities mainly for expansion in capacity of intake recommended by the Oversight Committee. The remaining amount would be utilized mainly for development assistance by the UGC to the State Universities for improving quality and upgrading facilities. Rs.100 crore is to be given to each of the three oldest universities of Mumbai, Madras and Calcutta on the completion of their 150 years and Rs. 75 crore to engineering faculties identified in five State Universities to bring them to the level of IITs.

3.1.3 The Committee welcomes the increased allocation for the University Sector. The Committee appreciates the allocation of Rs.100 crore each to the three Universities which are completing 150 years. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should pursue with the Universities to ensure that Rs.100 crore allocation is utilized only for the purposes it is being given. A time bound plan and schedule may be chalked out to utilize the money.

Action Taken
(paras 3.1.1 to 3.1.3)

The detailed proposals have been submitted by each university. They have proposed to set up their research Centres in phases as mentioned below:-

| 1. University of Calcutta (Rs. in lakh) | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| <u>Non-Recurring</u> | | | | | | |
| | 1 st Year | 2 nd Year | 3 rd Year | Total | | |
| Laboratory with equipments, furniture, Clean Room facilities, Digital and Print Library, Networking and Teleconferencing facilities. | 4300.00 | 4200.00 | 0.00 | 8500.00 | | |
| <u>Recurring</u> | | | | | | |
| Core research staff, Raw material/Consumables, Operation & Maintenance, Travel, Conference, Visits by scientists, Projects awarded to teachers, Technology Assessment/ Bussiness Incubation Cell | 305.00 | 585.00 | 610.00 | 1500.00 | | |
| 2. University of Mumbai (Rs. in lakhs) | | | | | | |
| | 1 st Yr. 06-07 | 2 nd Yr. 07-08 | 3 rd Yr. 08-09 | 4 th Yr. 09- 10 | 5 th Yr. 10- 11 | Total |
| Equipment, Infrastructure, Networking (Information Processing Centre), Books | 5000.00 | 3470.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 | 8500.00 |
| <u>Recurring</u> | | | | | | |
| Staff, Visiting Professors, Consumables, Contingency, Projects (to Faculty members along with 100 Ph.D Fellowships etc), Int./National Seminars, Workshops & Operation Maintenance, Travel, Visit of Project Oversight Committee. | -- | 420.00 | 500.00 | 580.00 | -- | 1500.00 |
| 3. University of Madras (Rs. in lakhs) | | | | | | |
| <u>Non-Recurring</u> | | | | | | |

| | 1 st Year | 2 nd Year | 3 rd Year | Total |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------|
| Building, Equipment, Furniture, Establishment of Clean Room facility (10000 classes), Digital Library, Networking and Communication facilities, Virtual class room, Entrepreneur Development Centre and Technology Park, Health Centre establishment (for testing in bio-medical applications of nanomaterials) | 9133.00 | -- | -- | 9133.00 |
| Recurring | | | | |
| Manpower, Working expenses, Books and Journals, Maintenance of Equipment, Travel, Visiting Scientists Programme | 280.43 | 284.41 | 302.51 | 867.35 |

In this Ministry's letter dated 18.4.07 to the University Grants Commission conveying the approval for allocation of Rs. 100 crore each to the above mentioned three Universities, the following terms and conditions have been mentioned.

- (i) The entire grant should be utilised for specific projects relating to Nanosciences/Nanotechnology/Biomedical Nanotechnology.
- (ii) Keeping in view the need for recurring support in the initial years, recurring support may be provided upto 15% of the total grant, spread over a period of three years.
- (iii) The Universities should generate funds from other sources to meet these recurring liabilities after the three-year period.
- (iv) No funds from the above grants shall be utilized for setting up a corpus. The Universities may explore the possibility of setting up of a Corpus through private funding. The Public Private Partnership (PPP) model can appropriately be used for such purposes.
- (v) Expenditure on construction activities should be restricted to the bare minimum, confined primarily to laboratories, libraries and other research related facilities, and in any case, to be limited to 15% of the total project cost.
- (vi) Synergies should be developed within the proposed Departments in the three Universities and with the Department of Science and Technology with their initiatives in the sector of Nanosciences.
- (vii) Foreign exchange component for procurement of equipment by the three universities is more than Rs.100 crore. Transparent processes should be followed for procurement of equipment from within the country and outside.
- (viii) A Project Oversight Committee should be set up in the UGC to ensure smooth setting up and avoid time and cost overruns. A nominee of the Ministry of Human Resource Development may be co-opted on the Project Oversight Committee. This is brought to the notice of Committee.

Comments of the Committee (paras 3.1.1 to 3.1.3)

Regarding grant of Rs.100 crores each to the three Universities of Calcutta, Mumbai and Chennai, the Committee desires to take up the issues like sustainability of the projects in frontier areas that are highly capital-intensive after the three years, generating their own resources thereafter, nature of public private partnership, etc., separately.

3.1.1 OPENING OF NEW UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES

Recommendations/observations

3.1.1.4 The Committee also learnt that while the overall Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education was roughly 10 per cent of the entitled age group, the situation in respect of the backward classes was even more miserable. The Gross Enrolment Ratio in respect of the Scheduled Castes was 6.7 per cent and for the Scheduled Tribes, it was only 4.9 per cent. The Gender Parity Index figures were also not very encouraging with 0.64 and 0.55 in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively. The overall Gender Parity Index also was a dismal 0.71.

3.1.1.5 The Committee is of the considered opinion that equity and access to higher education is of paramount importance

and should be a priority while framing the policies for higher education in the 11 Five Year Plan. Existing gaps in this respect between different social groups are alarming and needs to be corrected on priority basis.

Action Taken

(paras 3.1.1.4 and 3.1.1.5)

Equity and access continue to be accorded the highest priority and the proposals made by the Working Group on Higher Education press this issue. Special schemes are proposed to be introduced through the UGC to address this issue. On the advice of this Ministry, UGC has constituted a Committee under Prof. G.K. Chadha, Member, Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council to work out and assess the feasibility of diversity index and evolving a system of grant based on it.

The Government is considering the following strategic interventions for reducing the regional imbalances in higher education during the XIth Plan:

- (i) The 11th Plan target for the Gross Enrolment Raio has been proposed at 15%.
- (ii) Establishment of 30 new Central Universities including 16 such Universities in the States without any Central Universities.
- (iii) A Central Tribal University to promote educational avenues for tribal population.
- (iv) Colleges affiliated with State Universities and located in backward regions of the Country should be strengthened by the UGC.
- (v) Expanding the overall access to provide higher education to all those eligible.
- (vi) To ensure equitable access to the weaker sections of the society - a Central law for Centrally aided, funded or established institutions has been enacted.
- (vii) To increase the enrolment of girl students by building hostels for women in metropolitan cities, semi urban and rural areas.
- (viii) Special Development grants to colleges located in rural areas, small town and remote areas.
- (ix) Special Development grants to Universities/colleges with relatively higher proportion of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes/Minorities.

In addition, the Minister of Human Resource Development in his communication to the Chief Ministers of 12 large States, where intake capacity in technical education institutions in relation to their population is below the national average, has requested them to initiate urgent action and programmes so that they come up on par with the national average. Among the corrective steps suggested are the establishment of new institutions especially in backward areas, expansion of intake in existing institutions, opening of new branches and courses especially in emerging areas, grant of incentives for the establishment of bona-fide non-government institutions of good quality, strengthening of infrastructure and faculty development in existing institutions and improvement and expansion of secondary education. Preference would be given to the Minority Concentration Districts while setting up new polytechnics and community polytechnics.

Comments of the Committee

The issue raised in the recommendation of the Committee was very specific. However, the reply given to the same is very general, particularly the proposals listed at (i), (v) and (vi). The Committee, nevertheless, would like the Department to concretize these proposals under its consideration for implementation as soon as possible.

3.1.2 VACANT FACULTY POSITIONS IN UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES

Recommendations/observations

3.1.2.1 The issue of a large number of faculty positions lying vacant in various Universities/Colleges has been drawing the attention of the Committee for some time now. To a query on the status of the vacant faculty positions in the Universities/Colleges, the Committee was informed that around 30 per cent such positions would be vacant presently in Central institutions and universities. The UGC and the Department of Higher Education were in continuous dialogue with the universities/State Governments in the matter. However, barring one or two State Governments, no response had been received. There was also no response from the State Governments with regard to a request to furnish details about the quantum of vacant faculty positions. The Committee was assured that the issue would be taken up in the State Education Ministers' Conference scheduled for 10th & 11th April, 2007. It was further informed that roughly 2 per cent of the total sanctioned teaching posts in Central universities were filled up on temporary basis. The Committee would like to be informed about the decisions in this regard.

Action Taken

During the last Education Ministers' Conference, there was a consensus that assiduous efforts would be made by the State

Governments to get the ban lifted on recruitment of teachers/regular teachers, where there was such a ban, to enable filling up of vacant posts on a regular basis. The Chief Secretaries of the State Governments/U.T. administrations were addressed on 26.3.2007 and reminded on 28.5.2007 to indicate the details of vacancies of teachers in various grades in the State Universities/Colleges. The information made available by States is as follows:-

Statement showing the vacancies of teachers in State Universities/Colleges:-

| Sl. No. | Name of the State/UT | Details of Universities/Colleges | Sanctioned Strength | Vacant Post |
|---------|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. | Arunachal Pradesh | (i) Rajiv Gandhi University (ii) Government Colleges | 346 | 65 |
| 2. | Tripura | Government Degree Colleges | 659 | 351 |
| 3. | Haryana | (i) Kurekshetra University (ii) M.D. University (iii) BPS Mahila College, Sonapat (iv) Government Colleges (v) Private Colleges | 6463 | 1386 |
| 4. | Rajasthan | Government Colleges | 4919 | 1131 |
| 5. | Goa | Degree Professional Colleges | 159 | 47 |
| 6. | Andaman & Nicobar | (i) JNRM (ii) MGGCM (iii) TGCE-All Government Colleges | 118 | 51 |
| 7. | Manipur | Government Colleges | 1260 | 224 |
| 8. | D & N Haveli | SSR College started in 2006-2007 | Nil | Nil |
| 9. | Himachal Pradesh | H.P. University, Shimla | 419 | 166 |
| 10. | Gujarat | (i) Hemchandraacharya North Gujarat University, Patan (ii) Saurashtra University, Rajkot (iii) Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidhyanagar (iv) Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat (v) Gujarat University, Ahmedabad (vi) Maharaja Savajirao University, Vadodara (vii) Bhavnagar University, Bhavnagar (viii) 355 Colleges | 2022 6742 | 699 245 |

Other States are yet to respond and have been reminded.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is surprised to note that inspite of persistent efforts made by the Department, details in respect of very few States, that too incomplete on such a vital aspect of higher education have been made available. Status of teachers' vacancies in the State Universities/Colleges in ten States/UTs are an eye-opener. The Committee can well imagine the grim scenario if and when details about the entire country are made available. The Committee would like to take up the issue of vacancies in detail at the time of consideration of Demands for Grants 2008-09. It, therefore, desires that a self-contained status-paper may be prepared and furnished to the Committee after collecting information from all the States/UTs by the 7th January, 2008 positively.

Recommendations/observations

3.1.2.2 The Secretary in his presentation before the Committee also submitted that 200 faculty positions (80 Lecturers, 80 Research faculty and 40 Professors) had been approved for creation, in principle, under a scheme of 'Faculty Recharge' based on the recommendations of the Prof. M.M. Sharma Task Force set up to access the status of scientific research and training in Indian Universities and to suggest strategies to revive and enhance excellence in Indian Universities in the field of basic sciences. The Secretary further informed the Committee that the Task Force is also working as Empowered Committee to oversee the implementation of its recommendations.

3.1.2.3 To another query regarding the status of the direction issued to the Central Universities to fill up the backlog vacancies of teachers by 31st December, 2005, the Committee was informed that besides communicating with the Vice-Chancellors/Registrars of all the Central Universities, the matter was also taken up by the Secretary, Department of Higher Education with the respective Vice-Chancellors of the Central Universities. The Minister of HRD too had taken up the matter in his meeting with the UGC. The vacancy position in Central Universities as on 12th March, 2007 has been stated as under:-

| Name of Central University | SC | | | ST | | | Remarks |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|--------|------------|------------|--------|---|
| | Identified | Advertised | Filled | Identified | Advertised | Filled | |
| University of Delhi | 45 | 43 | 4+2* | 27 | 26 | 1 | *Appointments made but matter subjudice |
| Jawaharlal Nehru Univ. | 14 | 14 | 13+1** | 6 | 6 | 4+2** | ** Offers sent |
| Jamia Millia Islamia | 47 | 47 | 29 | 17 | 17 | 9 | - |
| Banaras Hindu University | 28 | 28 | 22 | 13 | 13 | 8 | - |
| Visva Bharati | 36 | 36 | 20 | 34 | 34 | 22 | - |
| Hyderabad University | 3 | 3 | - | 3 | 3 | - | Recruitment is under process. |
| Pondicherry Univ. | - | - | - | 4 | 4 | 4 | - |
| North – Eastern Hill Univ. | 21 | 6 | 2 | Nil | Nil | Nil | - |
| Assam University | 15 | 15 | 15 | 8 | 7 | 7 | - |
| Tezpur University | 2 | 2 | - | Nil | Nil | Nil | Recruitment in process |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|------------------------|------------|------------|---------------|--|
| Nagaland University | 27 | 27 | - | 13 | 11 | 2 | - |
| Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | No backlog |
| Maulana Azad National Urdu University | 5 | 5 | - | 2 | 2 | Nil | - |
| Mahatma Gandhi A. H. Viswa Vidyalaya | 6 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Mizoram University | 23 | 21 | 18 | 11 | 11 | 11 | - |
| Allahabad University | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | This University was earlier a State University. Now that it has been converted into a Central University, the Central Government reservation policy would be strictly followed for filling future vacancies. |
| Manipur University | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | This University was earlier a State University. Now that it has been converted into a Central University, the Central Government reservation policy would be strictly followed for filling future vacancies. |
| Total | 272 | 253 | 125+2* +1** | 139 | 135 | 66+2** | |

3.1.2.4 The Committee, as it has been doing in the past, expresses its concern about a large number of vacancies in teaching positions both in the Central as well as the State universities/colleges. As regards the Central universities, 30 per cent vacancy is surely on the high side. This problem becomes more severe in the face of the proposed 54 per cent increase of seats in the Central educational institutions. The Committee was informed that one attempt in this regard made by the Department was to increase the retirement age of teachers from existing 62 years to 65 years. The creation of 200 posts suggested by M.M. Sharma Task Force, the Committee notes, was only for basic sciences let alone humanities, technical and other areas.

Action Taken

(paras 3.1.2.2 to 3.1.2.4)

A statement indicating the teaching staff strength as on 31.3.2007 (existing & vacant strength) in Central Universities is at Annexure-I. The Government shares the concern expressed by the Hon'ble Committee regarding the vacancies in Central and State Universities. The lack of interest among talented youth in taking up teaching and research careers in universities is expected to be overcome by improving working and service condition so that the talented youth who are weaned away by the less demanding, yet more lucrative career options are attracted to teaching and research. On the advice of the Central Government the UGC has announced a Pay Review Committee. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has constituted a Task Force to deliberate on measures for strengthening teaching, learning and research in humanities and social sciences.

Comments of the Committee

(paras 3.1.2.2 to 3.1.2.4)

The Committee finds the positions indicated in the statement of teaching staff strength (sanctioned, existing and vacant positions) little confusing. For instance, in the case of the Aligarh Muslim University, the existing strength of Professors and Readers is much more than the sanctioned one. Similar positions have been indicated in respect of the other universities also. The Committee desires to know the reasons for these variations.

Recommendations/observations

3.1.2.5 As regards vacancies in teaching posts belonging to reserved categories, the situation is quite alarming. As per the table above, of the total 272 vacancies in SC category and 139 in ST category, only 125 and 66 seats respectively have been filled so far.

3.1.2.6 The Committee finds the efforts as well as progress made for filling the vacancies in Central universities highly disappointing. It emphasizes the need for dealing with this crucial issue in a more serious and planned way with a view to filling these vacancies in a fixed time schedule. The Committee is of the considered view that more posts have to be created for areas other than the basic sciences.

Action Taken

(paras 3.1.2.5 and 3.1.2.6)

Based on the latest information made available by the various Central Universities, the position as on 31.8.2007 emerges as under:

| | SC | ST |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| No. of posts identified | 224 | 128 |
| No. of posts advertised | 220 | 124 |
| No. of posts filled | 137+5#+2*+3**+30*** | 77+3#+14*** |

Appointment letters issued

* Appointment letters issued but matter sub-judice

** Appointments approved but letters not issued due to the Court's order

*** Interviews held

In case the number of posts for which appointment letters have either been issued or the process in this behalf has been stayed by

the Court and the number of posts for which interviews have since been conducted are taken as good as the posts filled, the number of posts filled for SCs would work out to be 177 (out of 224) and that for STs 94 (out of 128), thereby reducing the number of unfilled posts for SCs and STs to 47 and 34 respectively. Out of 47 unfilled posts of SCs and 34 of STs thus worked out, 32 posts of SCs and 21 posts of STs belong to Delhi University and, therefore, the matter has been taken up again with the Vice-Chancellor, Delhi University.

It would be pertinent to mention that the number of backlog reserved vacancies for SCs and STs earlier identified by the following Central Universities stands reduced as under, for the reasons indicated there against, and hence the slight variation in the total number of identified backlog reserved vacancies earlier communicated to the Committee:

| Central University | No. of posts identified | | | | Reasons |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----|------|----|--|
| | SCs | | STs | | |
| | From | To | From | To | |
| Jamia Millia Islamia | 47 | 17 | 17 | 6 | Due to communication gap over the definition of backlog reserved vacancies |
| Visva Bharati | 36 | 34 | NA | NA | 2 posts stand abolished |
| North Eastern Hill University | 21 | 5 | NA | NA | Due to communication gap over the definition of backlog reserved vacancies |

A fixed time schedule has already been prescribed for filling these vacancies. Activities leading to the filling up of vacancies have been identified, namely, release of advertisements, selection procedure, timely issue of offer letters, filling of vacancies and updating the reports. Universities have also been re-advertising the post(s) wherever suitable candidates are not available. The Ministry has also intervened with Central Universities so as to ensure that posts reserved for the SCs/STs are not such as are normally difficult to be filled even in respect of other categories. These efforts on the part of the Ministry have resulted in the JNU filling up 5 backlog vacancies by advertising them centrally. The expansion programme, in order to implement the policy of reservation, includes creation of posts in all faculties, including in the basic sciences. The Ministry has been following up with the Central Universities on a regular basis. As recently as on 19/7/07, the UGC and the Ministry jointly organized a meeting of Registrars of all Central Universities where the position was reviewed and it was impressed upon the Universities to expedite and make all out efforts to fill the vacancies in reserved positions.

Comments of the Committee (paras 3.1.2.5 and 3.1.2.6)

The Committee is surprised to know that out of 47 unfilled vacancies for SCs and 34 of STs, 32 posts of SCs and 21 of STs are from the Delhi University. This is, in fact, baffling. The Committee desires to know as to how this has happened and what the Delhi University had to say about it.

The Committee is also not very happy to note that vacancies which were earlier identified for SCs/STs have been drastically reduced at a later stage. Reasons forwarded in this regard don't appear to be convincing specially in the case of the two Universities of Jamia Millia Islamia and the North-Eastern Hill University. The variations are huge and the Committee would like to have these aspects included in the status-paper asked for by it in this regard. Latest position of vacancies in the Central Universities also be included in the said paper to be furnished to the Committee by the 7th January, 2008.

Recommendations/observations

3.1.2.8 The Committee expresses its serious concern about increasing the retirement age of the teachers of the Central Educational Institutions from 62 to 65 years mainly because such a move is bound to deprive a large number of our qualified unemployed youth waiting for suitable employment. It would also discourage our bright young people to come to higher education. There appears to be no efforts for collecting data of qualified people in various subjects/disciplines to have a realistic assessment of the situation in this regard. The Committee is in no doubt that it would be alarming. The Committee would like to have subject-wise data regarding qualified available talent in different subjects/disciplines at present all over the country. The Committee does not agree to the decision to raise the age of retirement from 62 to 65 years.

Action Taken

It is submitted that the decision to raise the age of retirement has been taken by the Government after considering all relevant

issues. The Government believes that in an expanding system of higher education, employment opportunities would continue to emerge and therefore, the enhancement in the age of retirement would not be at the cost of the unemployed youth who would continue to get opportunities at the entry level in teaching careers. On the other hand, reappointing teachers who are on the verge of retirement for another three years would help overcome immediate vacancies affecting teaching and research activities in universities. In order to encourage bright young people to adopt teaching in higher education as a career, a longer tenure would serve as an incentive. On the Ministry's advice the UGC has constituted a Pay Review Committee. The Terms of Reference of the proposed Pay Committee are-

(a) To review the implementation of the previous decision of the Government/UGC under the scheme of Revision of Pay Scales approved for University and College Teachers, Librarians, Physical Education Personnel and other academic staff in Universities and Colleges, and in the process, to evaluate the extent to which the earlier recommendations in relation to qualifications, service conditions and pay-scales etc. have been implemented.

(b) To examine the present structure of emoluments and conditions of service of University and College Teachers, Librarians, Physical Education Personnel and other academic staff in Universities and Colleges and to suggest revision in the structure, taking into account the minimum qualifications, career advancement opportunities, and total packet of benefits available to them (such as superannuation benefits, medical, housing facilities, etc).

(c) To make recommendations on the ways and means of attracting and retaining talented persons in the teaching profession, as well as for the furtherance of research in the University System and also for their career advancement in teaching and equivalent positions in order to improve the quality of higher education.

(d) To look into the cases of anomalies, if any, in the matter of pay structure and/or career advancement opportunities for any categories of academic staff, consequent on revision of pay scales based on the recommendations of the preceding Pay Review Committee and to suggest remedial measures.

The Committee's Terms of Reference are intended to attract young bright people to choose a career in teaching. The number of NET (National Eligibility Test) qualified persons in various disciplines during the year 2004, 2005 and 2006 is as given below:

| Subject-wise number of candidates qualified in UGC-NET in the last three years | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Subject | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
| Economics | 216 | 888 | 792 |
| Political Science | 588 | 1332 | 1189 |
| Philosophy | 167 | 198 | 63 |
| Psychology | 87 | 107 | 128 |
| Sociology | 431 | 453 | 690 |
| History | 272 | 1370 | 552 |
| Anthropology | 27 | 189 | 30 |
| Commerce | 190 | 544 | 1111 |
| Education | 234 | 586 | 1758 |
| Social Work | 162 | 118 | 357 |
| Defence & Strategic Studies | 50 | 37 | 62 |
| Home Science | 319 | 433 | 217 |
| Public Admn. | 235 | 383 | 238 |
| Population Studies | 46 | 74 | 42 |
| Music | 100 | 212 | 165 |
| Management | 297 | 440 | 91 |
| Maithili | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Bengali | 31 | 47 | 9 |
| Hindi | 148 | 1658 | 459 |
| Kannada | 83 | 74 | 115 |
| Malayalam | 127 | 74 | 185 |
| Oriya | 21 | 31 | 37 |
| Punjabi | 181 | 196 | 153 |
| Sanskrit | 107 | 211 | 172 |
| Tamil | 55 | 227 | 240 |
| Telugu | 53 | 99 | 45 |
| Urdu | 352 | 100 | 165 |
| Arabic | 71 | 35 | 111 |
| English | 240 | 529 | 73 |

| | | | |
|-------------|----|----|-----|
| Linguistics | 42 | 42 | 37 |
| Chinese | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Dogri | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Nepali | 3 | 1 | 7 |
| Manipuri | 5 | 4 | 11 |
| Assamese | 61 | 73 | 134 |

| Subject | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---|------|------|------|
| Gujarati | 84 | 75 | 114 |
| Marathi | 73 | 286 | 179 |
| French | 11 | 21 | 21 |
| Spanish | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| Russian | 1 | 2 | 14 |
| Persian | 30 | 7 | 15 |
| Rajasthani | 15 | 24 | 14 |
| German | 0 | 3 | 10 |
| Japanese | 4 | 10 | 3 |
| Adult Education | 4 | 13 | 26 |
| Physical Education | 376 | 118 | 47 |
| Arab Culture and Islamic Studies | 25 | 27 | 28 |
| Indian Culture | 1 | 13 | 4 |
| Labour Welfare & Indl. Rel./HRM | 23 | 53 | 22 |
| Law | 70 | 409 | 314 |
| Library & Information Sc. | 38 | 178 | 232 |
| Buddhist, Jaina, Gandhian & Peace St. | 55 | 68 | 62 |
| Comparative Study of Religions | | 19 | 22 |
| Mass Communication and Journalism | 112 | 127 | 171 |
| Performing Art- Dance/Drama/Theatre | 8 | 32 | 31 |
| Museology and Conservation | 42 | 37 | 45 |
| Archaeology | 36 | 66 | 42 |
| Criminology | 19 | 32 | 33 |
| Tribal and Regional Language/Literature | 31 | 53 | 69 |
| Folk Literature | 27 | 18 | 21 |
| Comparative Literature | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| Sanskrit traditional subjects | 105 | 57 | 87 |
| Women Studies | 13 | 33 | 22 |
| Visual Art | 173 | 83 | 259 |

| Subject | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Geography | 436 | 569 | 438 |
| Social Medicine & Community Health | 7 | 23 | 11 |
| Forensic Science | 3 | 69 | 96 |
| Pali | 15 | 20 | 11 |
| Kashmiri | 5 | 1 | 5 |
| Konkani | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Computer Science and Applications | 60 | 101 | 62 |
| Electronic Science | 39 | 24 | 27 |
| Environmental Sciences | 189 | 224 | 56 |
| International and Area Studies | 63 | 90 | 77 |
| Prakrit | 6 | 4 | 6 |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Human Rights and Duties | 17 | 11 | 18 |
| Tourism Administration and Management | 17 | 48 | 17 |
| Total | 7242 | 13833 | 12187 |

The number of Ph.Ds. in various disciplines for the year 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05, who are also eligible for teaching careers in higher education, are as follows:

| Faculty | Number of Doctorate Degrees Awarded | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2002-03** | 2003-04** | 2004-05** |
| Arts | 6144 | 7473 | 7532 |
| Science | 4976 | 5612 | 5549 |
| Commerce/Management | 954 | 1096 | 1010 |
| Education | 527 | 613 | 491 |
| Engineering/Technology | 833 | 882 | 968 |
| Medicine | 246 | 317 | 456 |
| Agriculture | 1012 | 1026 | 888 |
| Veterinary Science | 136 | 116 | 132 |
| Law | 146 | 144 | 179 |
| Others* | 444 | 574 | 693 |
| Total | 15328 | 17853 | 17898 |

*Others include Music/Fine Arts, Library Science, Physical Education, Journalism, Social Work, etc...

**Provisional

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is not convinced with the reply of the Department; it has rendered confusion worse confounded. In its opinion, while the expanding higher education, no doubt, would give rise to more employment opportunities, raising the age of retirement from 62 to 65 years will surely narrow the opportunities for the fresh talents. Besides, saying that a longer tenure would serve as an incentive and encourage bright young people to adopt teaching as a career amounts to say that till now they were not, because retirement age was 62 and not 65 years. The Committee can understand this as a short-term measure till all the vacancies were filled up. Moreover, the data regarding qualified available talent in the country is not available. Simply NET qualified persons do not reflect the extent of available qualified talent ready to go for teaching.

The Committee, therefore, urges the Department to reconsider its decision to raise the retirement age of teachers from 62 to 65 years and formulate an effective mechanism for collection of data regarding qualified talent available in the entire country.

3.1.3 UNSPENT BALANCES & PENDING UTILISATION CERTIFICATES

Recommendations/observations

3.1.3.1 The issue of unspent balances and pending utilization Certificates continues to be a cause of concern to the Committee. The Committee was informed that the Department has been making efforts to resolve these issues. In spite of that, out of a total 10th Plan allocation of Rs.78329.17 lakh as General Development Plan Grant to UGC, only Rs.68205.41 lakh was released to the Central Universities during the Plan period upto 21st February, 2007. Out of this, only Rs. 43992.62 lakh (64.5 per cent) could be spent till 21st February, 2007, leaving a balance of Rs. 24212.79 lakh. Performance of the other Universities/Colleges in the States/Uts was equally dismal, particularly in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Orissa, West Bengal and Chattisgarh. The position in respect of the Deemed Universities was also not very encouraging. Out of a total allocation of Rs.8655.02 lakh for 26 Deemed Universities during the 10th Plan, an amount of Rs.4800.17 lakh was utilized. An amount of Rs.1939.55 lakh was due on account of outstanding Utilization Certificates. The Chairman, UGC informed that UGC was seized of the problem and was initiating improvements in 'grant giving mechanism' to ensure maximum utilization of funds particularly by the State universities/colleges.

3.1.3.2 The Committee expresses its serious concern over the non-utilization of allocations by the recipients and the non-submission of Utilization Certificates by them which has now become a perennial problem of sort in all the centrally sponsored schemes of the Department. The Committee can only hope that the Department comes out with more effective measures for curbing this tendency during the 11th Plan period. The Committee feels that the UGC needs to be more proactive in this regard and

take up this with the State governments/universities with a view to devise a workable methodology for tackling these problems.

Action Taken

(paras 3.1.3.1 and 3.1.3.2)

The Ministry shares the concern regarding the slow pace of furnishing of utilization certification by universities and has been regularly drawing the attention of the UGC to this matter. A special review was jointly conducted on 19.7.2007 by the Joint Secretary (Higher Education) and the Joint Secretary and Financial Advisor along with the Chairman, UGC, with the Registrars and Finance Officers of Central Universities.

Action is being taken for liquidation of pending U.Cs with the State Governments. No fresh grant is being sanctioned without obtaining the UC from the concerned State/Organisation.

Comments of the Committee (paras 3.1.3.1 and 3.1.3.2)

The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress in utilization of funds since the special review conducted on 19.07.2007 in respect of Central Universities. The Committee would also like to be informed about the specific actions taken by the Department to liquidate pending Utilisation Certificates (UCs) of Universities/colleges in the States/UTs. Similarly, the status regarding pending UCs that have been liquidated since 21.02.2007 may also be furnished.

3.2 NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RURAL INSTITUTES (NCRI)

Recommendations/observations

3.2.1 The National Council of Rural Institutes (NCRI) is a registered autonomous society fully funded by the Central Government with the main objective to promote rural higher education on the Mahatma Gandhi's revolutionary ideas on education as envisaged in the National policy of Education, 1986.

3.2.2 The Committee is perplexed to note that the recruitment rules for the Council which was long overdue could be finalized only in September, 2006. As per information made available to the Committee, the recruitment process is in progress. The committee has also been informed that the recommendations of a Search Committee constituted for selection to the post of Chairman, NCRI is being processed.

3.2.3 The Committee notes with concern that the NCRI set up 11 years ago is still in its formative stages. The Committee is not aware of any time-frame that the Department may have set for completion of the recruitment formalities to make the Council functional. In fact, the Department, over the past few years, has always been buying time in the matter by citing one reason or the other. The Committee is unhappy with the present state of affairs. The Committee is of the view that more than enough time has been taken by the Department in this regard and it, therefore, calls upon the Department to ensure that the recruitments in the Council are completed and other requisite infrastructure are provided without further delay so that NCRI starts functioning.

Action Taken

(paras 3.2.1 to 3.2.3)

During the year 2006-07, a Plan grant of Rs. 90.00 lakh was released to the NCRI which has been utilized. During the year 2007-08, the Council has been allocated Rs. 1.45 crore including Rs. 0.15 lakh for NER activities under Plan.

The Ministry of Finance had approved creation of 05 posts, including that of Member Secretary, NCRI. The nomination for Chairman is under consideration of the Government. Except Member Secretary, NCRI, other posts have been filled up. The process for filling up the post of Member Secretary would be completed soon after the Chairman assumes office.

Comments of the Committee (paras 3.2.1 to 3.2.3)

The Committee wants to reiterate its concern about the inordinate delay already made in making the NCRI functional. It urges upon the Department to expedite action in the matter.

3.3 INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY, SHIMLA

Recommendations/observations

3.3.1 Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla is a residential Institute of higher learning in all areas of Humanities, Social Sciences, Indian Culture and Linguistics, providing congenial environment to eminent scholars and Fellows to concentrate on their respective research projects.

3.3.2 The Committee has come across a number of irregularities in the functioning of the Institute. The Department in a Special Audit Report has pointed out a very disturbing fact about the Bye-laws of the Institute. The terms and conditions of grant of

fellowships are determined by the 'Governing Body' according to the directives of the Government issued from time to time and in the light of revision of emoluments of fellows in other research organization of the M/o Human Resource Development. Unlike the Indian Council for Historical Research (ICHR) which contains a stipulation in its Research Funding Rules that a candidate who is selected for fellowship would require to furnish an undertaking in a prescribed proforma to the effect that if he leaves the fellowship prematurely in the midway without completing the research project/manuscripts, he would have to refund the entire amount of fellowship paid to him till that date. This condition binds the fellow to complete the research work/monographs. In the Rules and Regulations and Bye-laws of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, there is no such stipulation or condition. As a result, a good number of fellows did not submit their monographs and the Institute could neither insist upon them to submit the same nor take any action against them and suffered a loss of Rs.13.83 lakh as fellowship grants paid to such fellows.

3.3.3 Another disturbing fact brought out in the Special Audit Report is that as many as 37 fellows had not submitted their monographs or their monographs were not worth publication or the fellows got the monographs published on their own. Thus the monographs could not be published which ultimately defeated the very purpose of the Institute and thereby incurred a wasteful expenditure to the tune of Rs.93.36 lakh on fellowship grants paid to fellows.

3.3.4 The other equally disturbing findings of the Report are related to the unauthorized expenditure of Rs.7.86 lakh on billing charges of the mobile phones issued to non-entitled officers, irregular purchase of telephones, outstanding contingency advances and blockage of funds to the extent of Rs.200 lakh due to slow progress of special repair and maintenance of R.P. Niwas.

3.3.5 The Committee views the findings of the Special Audit Report with serious concern. It is a pointer to the gross mismanagement prevalent in the Institute. The Committee recommends that the Rules similar to that of Research Funding Rules of ICHR may be made applicable to the fellowships granted by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla. It also recommends that the persons found responsible for financial irregularities and other malpractices be brought to book and action be initiated against them. The Committee, therefore, desires that the Department take up the matter with the Institute and submit a report to the Committee within one month from the presentation of this Report.

Action Taken

(paras 3.3.1 to 3.3.5)

As desired by the Hon'ble Committee, the matter was taken up with the IIAS, Shimla which has reported that action has already been taken regarding the financial irregularities on account of irregular provision of mobile phones and the same have been withdrawn from non-entitled officials. As far as fellowship programme is concerned the institute has stated that it has a system of concurrent monitoring of the research being conducted by its Fellows. There is now a six monthly review process in place to monitor the progress made in their research by the fellows as evaluated by experts from the relevant field. It may be submitted that the scheme of Fellowships at the ICHR does not require residential presence of its Fellows nor is there any method of constant peer group review and interaction. According to the institution, the level of scholarship expected by the IIAS is far higher than that expected in a Council pertaining to research in a specific field.

While not denying that the Fellows should reasonably be expected to submit their monograph before the end of their tenure, the Institute had differed with the view adopted in the Special Audit Report regarding non-submission of monographs as the sole pointer to mismanagement of the Fellowship programme. The Institute has assured that it would initiate a revision of the system of monitoring of the Fellowship programme to instill accountability both at the level of the Fellows as well as the Institute Administration so that such a situation does not arise again. According to the IIAS it would be able to report the action taken after the revised Fellowship programme is considered by the Institute's Governing Body in its 2nd quarterly meeting of the 2006-07 scheduled for October 2007. In view of this the Hon'ble Committee is requested to extend the time for submission of the Report directed to be submitted by the Ministry.

Comments of the Committee

(paras 3.3.1 to 3.3.5)

The Committee is happy to note that the Institute has decided to revise the monitoring system for its Fellowship programme. It also hopes that the revised programme must have by now been considered by the Institute's Governing Body which was scheduled to meet in October, 2007. The Committee expects the Department to submit its Report in the matter at the earliest.

3.5 FAKE UNIVERSITIES

Recommendations/observations

3.5.1 According to the UGC Act, 1956, the right of conferring or granting degrees shall be exercised only by a University established or incorporated by or under a Central Act, or a State Act, or an Institution deemed to be University or an institution specially empowered by an Act of Parliament to confer or grant degrees. Similarly, no institution other than a University established or incorporated by or under a Central Act, or a State Act shall be entitled to have the word 'University' associated with its name in any matter whatsoever.

3.5.2 To a specific query regarding the fake Universities identified and the action taken against them, the Department in its reply stated that the UGC has detected 19 fake Universities/Institutions which are operating in violation of Section 22 of the UGC Act,

1956. The Department has further informed that out of these 19 fake Universities/Institutions, the UGC is yet to initiate legal proceedings in respect of 6 of them, namely Gandhi Hindi Vidyapith, Allahabad (U.P.); DDB Sanskrit University, Puttur(T.N.); St. John's University, Kishanattam (Kerala); Raja Arabic University, Nagpur; Keserwani Vidyapith, Jabalpur and ADR-Centric Judicial University, New Delhi, for want of full relevant details about these institutions.

3.5.3 A perusal of the status of the legal proceedings initiated against the 13 fake Universities/Institutions reveals that in most of the cases, proceedings are likely to continue for long. In some cases, UGC is awaiting replies from the State Governments whereas in some other cases, response is awaited from the police authorities. In the other cases, sessions of stays-counter stays, affidavits-counter affidavits are on between the UGC and the fake Universities/Institutions.

3.5.4 The Committee is of the considered opinion that the delay in the settlement of the cases gives rise to a situation of utter confusion wherein both the parties claim to be on the right side of the law. As a result, fake Universities/Institutions are taking advantage of this confusion and continue to cheat the public. The Committee, therefore, urges the Department to take expeditious action against fake universities/institutions under the existing regulations and rules. Necessary legal sanctions be put in place including by approaching Parliament for this purpose. The Committee also strongly feels that there is an urgent need for giving wide publicity about the existence of such fake universities. Merely putting the list of approved universities on the website of UGC will not serve the purpose. Both Department and UGC need to be more pro-active in this regard simply because future of our young students is involved.

Action Taken (paras 3.5.1 to 3.5.4)

In view of the observations of the Hon'ble Committee, the matter since been taken up with the University Grants Commission (UGC) again requesting them to be more proactive in getting the fake universities/institutions closed down as early as possible. Since such institutions operate in violation of the UGC Act, 1956, it is incumbent on the part of the UGC to tackle such illegal activities and, if necessary, to lodge FIR with the police as soon as the existence of such institutions comes to its notice. This Ministry has again directed UGC on 9th August, 2007 to take a more proactive role in getting the fake universities/institutions closed down as early as possible as there was inordinate delay in initiating legal action in as many as 6 cases and the proceedings in 13 other cases were also found to be conducted in a lackadaisical manner. The UGC has also been advised to strengthen its Malpractices Cell and to make it more accountable. The need for starting more vigorous campaign in the print media against fake universities/institutions has also been emphasized.

The UGC has informed that it has issued Public Notice/Press Release in June, 2007 through some leading Newspapers, cautioning the aspiring students about the fake Universities identified by it.

The Ministry of Human Resources Development is separately formulating a proposal for strengthening the existing legal framework with a view to ensuring deterrent punishment to fake institutions that function in contravention of the UGC Act, 1956.

Comments of the Committee (paras 3.5.1 to 3.5.4)

The Committee notes that the Department has put the blame squarely upon the UGC for not being able to deal with the problem in an efficient and effective manner. It, however, feels that the UGC is perhaps unable to take appropriate action in this regard due to lack of adequate and stringent legal measures which the Department has indicated to be working on. The Committee, therefore, calls upon the Department to expedite the process for strengthening of the existing legal framework to pin down such fake universities. The Committee would also appreciate if a status note on the progress made in the legal proceedings initiated/to be initiated against the 19 fake universities identified by UGC, is submitted to it at the earliest. The Committee would like to point out that there is an urgent need for making student/parents aware about existence of such fake universities. A mechanism can easily be evolved by seeking the co-operation of State Education Departments.

IV. DISTANCE LEARNING

4.1 INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY (IGNOU)

Recommendations/observations

4.1.5 The slow pace of utilization of allocation and the demand of the IGNOU for more funds appear to the Committee as contradictory. Low utilization of funds means low achievement of targets, etc. The Committee is not at all happy with this state of affairs. The Committee, therefore, impresses upon the Department and the IGNOU to ensure that the projects as well as the targets are achieved in time and there is no room left for the funds remaining unutilized. The Committee also urges the Department to put in place urgently a monitoring mechanism to access the achievements of the targets – both physical and financial on a quarterly basis.

Action Taken

IGNOU has informed that the slow pace of utilization of the funds is attributable to the fact that the Plan proposals for the 10th Plan were approved in October 2004 i.e. when half of the Plan period was over. During this period, the release of grant to IGNOU was ad-hoc in nature. In the years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 the expenditure was better. However, the concern of the Hon'ble

Committee has been noted and a mechanism to assess the achievement of the targets, both physical and financial on quarterly basis is being set-up.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is dismayed to note that the 10th Plan proposals of IGNOU were approved as late as October, 2004 when half of the Plan period was over. The Committee finds such a delay ridiculous. It would like the Department to give details of the quarterly monitoring mechanism it intends to set up so as to assess the physical and financial targets of IGNOU.

Recommendations/observations

4.1.6 The Committee notes that at present, 10 Central Universities, 20 Deemed Universities, 87 State Universities (including State Open Universities) and 2 Institutes of National Importance are offering education through distance mode. On a specific query about the existence of any monitoring mechanism for evaluation of various courses of distance education, the Committee was informed that all such institutions have been notified from time to time to get their programmes approved by the Distance Education Council. The Committee is surprised to note that inspite of there being a three tier process for recognition of institutions and approval of their programmes, course materials from 90 institutions have been received so far and only about 300 programmes have been approved so far. The Committee would like to impress upon the Distance Education Council to take immediate steps for approval of all the remaining courses yet to be approved. The Committee would also like to be apprised about the number of institutions offering courses yet to be approved by DEC and action, if any, taken so far. The Committee is also of the opinion that there is a need for making student community aware about the existence of unapproved institutions of distance education. This is all the more required in the emerging scenario when increasing number of students would be opting for Distance Education courses.

Action Taken

Distance Education Council (DEC) is in the process of revising its guidelines for recognition of distance education institutes and the distance education programmes. The Council, in light of the revised guidelines, shall take necessary action. DEC has also initiated discussion involving experts for accreditation of the distance learning institutions in order to ensure quality. It has been informed by DEC that 101 institutions/universities have applied for recognition. Out of these institutions, 34 were recognised, 23 were rejected and the cases of remaining 44 institutions are pending.

Department fully agrees with the concern of the Committee that there is need to make student community aware about the existence of the unapproved distance education institutions. DEC, in this regard has referred to an interim injunction of Hon'ble Himachal Pradesh High Court, *inter-alia* stating that IGNOU, which it-self a university can not monitor the other universities offering distance education programmes. To rectify this, it is proposed to grant independent statutory status to DEC.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee views with serious concern the unduly long process of granting of recognition to Institutions/Universities offering education through distance mode. Out of 101 applications for recognition, only 34 institutions have been recognised, 23 have been rejected and the cases of remaining 44 institutions are pending. The Committee would like to impress upon the Council to expedite this recognition process. The Committee would also appreciate if a status note on the follow-up action taken against the de-recognised Institutions/Universities is furnished to it at the earliest. The Committee would also like the Department to provide detailed information regarding the total number of distance education institutions that are functioning in the Central, State and private domains.

Department's fully agreeing with the concern of the Committee about the need for making student community aware about the existence of unapproved distance education institutions would not serve the purpose. Need of the hour is pro-active approach on the part of all concerned.

The Committee would like to remind the Department that it had, in its 172nd Report on 'University and Higher Education', stressed on the need for giving the DEC an independent statutory status like the UGC. Till date, the Department has been assuring the Committee regarding action in this regard but nothing appears to have happened. The Committee, therefore, urges the Department to take expeditious action in the matter.

1.1 INSTITUTIONS OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE

Recommendations/observations

5.3.3 A major problem area noticed in technical education was that the seats in a number of institutions remained unfilled every year due to non-availability of eligible students. To a query as to what mechanism was being contemplated by the Department to solve the problem of seats remaining unfilled in technical institutions, the Department informed that the Central Government did not interfere in the admission process of the centrally funded technical institutions. Admissions to AICTE approved institutes were within the purview of State Governments. State Governments evolve their own policy for filling up of the vacant seats. Admission to IITs is done through Joint Entrance Exams and all decisions regarding admission are taken by the Joint Admission Boards.

Similarly, in case of NITs and IITs, the admission is done through the All India Engineering Entrance Exam (AIEEE). The Central Counseling Board frames the policy for admission in these Institutes.

5.3.4 The Committee finds the reply of the Department not convincing. Holding the States responsible for the seats which remain unfilled, tells only one side of the story. The Department must appreciate the fact that the tendency of allowing seats to go unfilled is sheer wastage of scarce national resources. The need to curb this tendency becomes even more necessary given the sectoral imbalances in terms of availability of opportunities and the uneven density of professional educational institutions in some of the States. The Committee, therefore, recommends that suitable mechanism may be worked out in consultation with the States. The institution which generally default in filling the entire quota of the seats may be warned and their intake capacity may be reduced to the extent of unfilled seats. The concerned bodies must be asked to evolve suitable mechanism to ensure that seats do not remain vacant in our technical institutions.

Action Taken (paras 5.3.3 and 5.3.4)

The concern of the Committee has been noted. AICTE has been asked to work out a suitable mechanism in consultation with the states.

Comments of the Committee (paras 5.3.3 and 5.3.4)

This issue has been taken up by the Committee on several occasions in the past. It is aware of the constraints faced by the Department in the matter. The Committee, however, at the least expects the Department to ensure that the AICTE works out an effective strategy in a time bound manner.

Recommendations/observations

5.3.8 The Committee would also like to point out that in its 178th Report on 'The National Institutes of Technology Bill, 2006', it had emphasized the need for extending pensionary and other benefits to the staff of the National Institutes of Technology located at Jalandhar, Kurukshetra and Silchar similar to those being paid to the staff of National Institutes of Technology in the rest of the country. The Secretary, Department of Higher Education informed during evidence that they were seized of the matter. The Committee recommends that in view of maintaining parity at the national level in this regard, the staff of these National Institutes of Technology should also get the same benefits. The Committee further recommends that the decision in this regard needs to be taken at the earliest.

Action Taken

The Ministry of HRD had taken up the issue of extending pensionary and other benefits to the staff of the National Institutes of Technology (NITs) located at Jalandhar, Kurukshetra and Silchar, with the Finance Ministry at the highest level. However, the Ministry of Finance has not agreed to this recommendation of the Standing Committee.

Comments of the Committee

The reply is not acceptable to the Committee. The Committee would like to understand the justification given by the Ministry of Finance in not accepting the genuine demand of staff of NIT, Jalandhar, Kurukshetra and Silchar. The Committee strongly feels that Regional Engineering Colleges after getting the status of National Institutes of Technology have the same mandate, enjoy the same status and perform the same functions. This uniformity should be extended to the service conditions and other benefits of employees also. It, therefore, reiterates that the Pension Scheme should be made applicable to all the National Institutes of Technology only exception being those employees who joined service on or after 01.01.2004 and one time exception should be made so that rightful demands of employees of National Institutes of Technology of Kurukshetra, Jalandhar and Silchar are accepted.

Recommendations/observations

5.4.4 The Committee also learnt that scope of vocational education in the country was restricted to 200-300 courses whereas in the European countries, as many as 2000 courses were on offer in the vocational stream. The Department in its reply had stated that there was some problem with regard to the coordination of the vocational education since it was also being looked after by the Ministry of Labour. The Secretary informed the Committee that a very small portion was under the purview of the Department. The matter was, however, being looked into by a Task Force on Skill Development constituted by the Planning Commission.

5.4.5 The Committee notes that the Task Force on Skill Development was due to submit its Report by the end of February, 2007. The Committee, therefore, desires that the Committee may be apprised of the recommendations as well as the action taken by the Department in this regard in its Action Taken Report. In the meantime, the Department may forward a copy of the Report for perusal of the Committee.

Action Taken
(paras 5.4.4 and 5.4.5)

A Task Force was constituted by the Planning Commission on 6.12.2006 to make recommendations on how to meet the requirements of skilled Manpower for India's growing economy during the 11th Plan. The Task Force has submitted its report to the Planning Commission (copy of summary recommendations is at ANNEXURE-II). The comments of Ministry of Human Resource Development on the recommendations of the Task Force have already been sent to the Planning Commission (copy at ANNEXURE-III). A copy of the Report is also enclosed at ANNEXURE-IV.

Education/Career Oriented programme of the University Grant Commission offers about 353 courses in various disciplines. The Central Board of Secondary Education offers 39 job oriented Vocational Courses. Under the Indira Gandhi National Open University, 132 Career Oriented Vocational courses are being conducted at various levels. Jan Shikshan Sansthan are offering about 225 Vocational courses/skills. Around 675 Community Poloytechnics are also providing training in employable skills.

The subject of Vocational Education at the School level is handled by the Department of School Education & Literacy.

Comments of the Committee
(paras 5.4.4 and 5.4.5)

The Committee is of the opinion that impact of vocational education as enumerated in the reply is not reflected in actual practice. The Department itself has accepted that there is lack of coordination amongst the different institutions/departments that are working in this field. The Committee, therefore, feels that a lot more needs to be done in this regard.

VII. WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Recommendations/observations

7.1 The Committee notes with concern that no allocation what so ever have been made for the National Programme for Women during the year 2007-08. The Department in response to this query has informed the Committee that the Scheme was formulated during the 10th Plan. There were various components of the Scheme like the provision for Hostel, right from schooling stage to University stage; scholarships; and Study Centres besides others. When the Scheme was reviewed by the Department, it was felt that these Schemes were already in existence under various programmes. For instance, in school education, there was a scheme for assistance to NGOs for girls hostels. The UGC also had a scheme for hostels. Therefore, the decision was taken that each of these components be strengthened under the existing schemes. The UGC runs a part-time associateship to women Ph.D holders who do not get employment or cannot have full time job.

7.2 The Committee does not accept the reply of the Department. While the Department has been prudent enough to realize duplication of its efforts in improving access of women to higher education, it has failed to redesign the programme to improve women education and allocate funds in the Demands for Grants. The Committee is of the view that a more cautious approach should have been taken in this regard especially when the matter pertains to making provisions for women. The Committee, therefore, recommends that a proper strategy and programme may be chalked out to benefit the women in higher education.

7.3 The Committee further notes that a Standing Committee has been constituted to undertake a review of the prevailing status of the Women's studies centres in the country and to assess the role the Centre have played in consistence with the objectives of National Policy on Education (NPE) and to further define their new role in the emerging situation. The Committee is informed that the Standing Committee has considered proposals/requests for Women's Studies Centre from various Universities and has evolved a procedure for considering such requests which, inter alia, includes a visit to the concerned University for on the spot selection of the Centre. During 2006-07 an amount of Rs.1.98 crore has been provided so far to 42 Centres. Proposals from 104 universities/colleges have been received for the establishment of WSCs, and shall be considered for assistance during the 11th Plan period. The Committee welcomes these developments. The Committee is, however, a bit disappointed to note that only 42 out of the 100 proposals have been approved by the Department during 2006-07. The Committee urges the Department to speed up the approval procedure so that all the 104 proposals pending with it could be decided at the earliest. The Committee also recommends that the Department should strive to ensure that every University in India must have a Women Study Centre or Department. The

Committee further recommends that more allocations be provided for development of Women Study Centres.

Action Taken

(Paras 7.1 to 7.3)

The Standing Committee on the review of the UGC programme of Women's Study Centres is yet to finalize its report. Increasing hostel facilities available to women in metropolitan cities/semi-urban/rural areas, strengthening institutions especially women's colleges in rural and backward areas, greater coverage for the scholarship programmes for eligible women students, special assistance to institutions which have a higher enrolment of women and those institutions which attract women to those faculties where their percentage of enrolment is low-these are some of the strategies that are proposed to be pursued, subject to availability of resources, under the XI Plan. The Executive Council of AICTE has agreed to provide 20% benefit for Technical Institutions for Women and has also put in place other arrangements for admission of women candidates to technical courses.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee does not accept the reply given by the Department as it sounds routine in its response on the subject.

VIII. NEW SCHEMES

Recommendations/observations

8.1 Following New Schemes are proposed to be launched during the Eleventh Plan -

- (i) National Mission in Education through ICT;
- (ii) Setting up of a Refinance Corporation for Education;
- (iii) National Institute of Study in Guru Granth Sahib;
- (iv) Scheme of Scholarships for College and University students;
- (v) Scheme of National Terminology ;
- (vi) Linguistic Data Consortium for Indian Languages;
- (vii) National Translation Mission;
- (viii) Linguistic Survey of India;
- (ix) National Testing Service;
- (x) Centre for Pali and Buddhist Studies; and
- (xi) Scheme for Development of Minor and Endangered Indian Languages.

8.2 The Committee understands that all the above-mentioned schemes are under preparation/ drafting. The Committee would like to impress upon the Department to expedite the finalization of all these proposed schemes so that they can be launched at the earliest. The Committee may be apprised about the basic details of the Scheme of National Terminology and the National Testing Service.

Action Taken (paras 8.1 and 8.2)

Current status of the 11 schemes is as follows:-

| S.No. | Proposed Scheme | Latest Status |
|-------|---|--|
| (i) | National Mission in Education through ICT | Concept paper for this Scheme is awaiting "in-principle" approval of the Planning Commission. |
| (ii) | Setting up of a Refinance Corporation for Education | Comments in respect of para 4.4.2 may kindly be perused. |
| (iii) | National Institute of Study in Guru Granth Sabhi | Earlier it was proposed to establish the National Institute of Guru Granth Sahib (NISSGGS) as an autonomous body under Ministry of Human Resource Development and to register it as a Society under the Societies Registration Act. On reconsideration, it has been decided with the |

| | | |
|--------|---|--|
| | | approval of the Minister of Human Resource Development for providing assistance to the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, for strengthening facilities for study in Guru Granth Sahib. Funds will be released through the University Grants Commission (UGC). |
| (iv) | Scheme of Scholarships for College and University students | Comments in respect of para 4.3.1 may kindly be perused. |
| (v) | Scheme of National Terminology | These proposals are being processed for final approval of the competent authority in a time bound manner. The Scheme of National Terminology has been sent to Planning Commission for "in-principle" approval. Brief notes on Schemes of (i) National Terminology and (ii) National Testing Service are at ANNEXURES VI & VII. |
| (vi) | Linguistic Data Consortium for Indian Languages | |
| (vii) | National Translation Mission | |
| (viii) | Linguistic Survey of India | |
| (ix) | National Testing Service | |
| (x) | Centre for Pali and Buddhist Studies | |
| (xi) | Scheme for Development of Minor and Endangered Indian Languages | |

Comments of the Committee (paras 8.1 and 8.2)

The Committee notes that the process of approval of these schemes is on but the pace appears to be slow. It would like the Department to complete the formalities at the earliest.

CHAPTER – IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

-Nil-

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS AT A GLANCE

II. BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

Recommendations/observations

Comments of the Committee

The area of Higher education is expanding at a rapid pace. The Committee believes that access, availability and affordability along with quality in higher education need to be ensured. This is the minimum that the Government should strive to ensure during the XIth Plan. This sentiment of the Committee be brought to the notice of the Planning Commission and the

Ministry of Finance as well.

(Paras 2.1 and 2.2)

Comments of the Committee

The Committee understands that the draft XI Plan has been prepared and is likely to be placed before the National Development Council for approval very soon. The Committee, therefore, desires to know about the status of the schemes under revision.

(Para 2.7)

III. UNIVERSITY & HIGHER EDUCATION

3.1 UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

Comments of the Committee

Regarding grant of Rs.100 crores each to the three Universities of Calcutta, Mumbai and Chennai, the Committee desires to take up the issues like sustainability of the projects in frontier areas that are highly capital-intensive after the three years, generating their own resources thereafter, nature of public private partnership, etc., separately.

(Paras 3.1.1 to 3.1.3)

3.1.3

3.1.1 OPENING OF NEW UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES

Comments of the Committee

The issue raised in the recommendation of the Committee was very specific. However, the reply given to the same is very general, particularly the proposals listed at (i), (v) and (vi). The Committee, nevertheless, would like the Department to concretize these proposals under its consideration for implementation as soon as possible.

(Paras 3.1.1.4 and 3.1.1.5)

3.1.1.4 and 3.1.1.5

3.1.2 VACANT FACULTY POSITIONS IN UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is surprised to note that inspite of persistent efforts made by the Department, details in respect of very few States, that too incomplete on such a vital aspect of higher education have been made available. Status of teachers' vacancies in the State Universities/Colleges in ten States/UTs are an eye-opener. The Committee can well imagine the grim scenario if and when details about the entire country are made available. The Committee would like to take up the issue of vacancies in detail at the time of consideration of Demands for Grants 2008-09. It, therefore, desires that a self-contained status-paper may be prepared and furnished to the Committee after collecting information from all the States/UTs by the 7th January, 2008 positively.

(Para 3.1.2.1)

Comments of the Committee

The Committee finds the positions indicated in the statement of teaching staff strength (sanctioned, existing and vacant positions) little confusing. For instance, in the case of the Aligarh Muslim University, the existing strength of Professors and Readers is much more than the sanctioned one. Similar positions have been indicated in respect of the other universities also. The Committee desires to know the reasons for these variations.

(Paras 3.1.2.2 to 3.1.2.4)

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is surprised to know that out of 47 unfilled vacancies for SCs and 34 of STs, 32 posts of SCs and 21 of STs are from the Delhi University. This is, in fact, baffling. The Committee desires to know as to how this has happened and what the Delhi University had to say about it.

The Committee is also not very happy to note that vacancies which were earlier identified for SCs/STs have been drastically reduced at a later stage. Reasons forwarded in this regard don't appear to be convincing specially in the case of the two Universities of Jamia Millia Islamia and the North-Eastern Hill University. The variations are huge and the Committee would like to have these aspects included in the status-paper asked for by it in this regard. Latest position of vacancies in the Central Universities also be included in the said paper to be furnished to the Committee by the 7th January, 2008.

(Paras 3.1.2.5 and 3.1.2.6)

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is not convinced with the reply of the Department; it has rendered confusion worse confounded. In its opinion, while the expanding higher education, no doubt, would give rise to more employment opportunities, raising the age of retirement from 62 to 65 years will surely narrow the opportunities for the fresh talents. Besides, saying that a longer tenure would serve as an incentive and encourage bright young people to adopt teaching as a career amounts to say that till now they were not, because retirement age was 62 and not 65 years. The Committee can understand this as a short-term measure till all the vacancies

were filled up. Moreover, the data regarding qualified available talent in the country is not available. Simply NET qualified persons do not reflect the extent of available qualified talent ready to go for teaching.

The Committee, therefore, urges the Department to reconsider its decision to raise the retirement age of teachers from 62 to 65 years and formulate an effective mechanism for collection of data regarding qualified talent available in the entire country.

(Para 3.1.2.8)

3.1.3 UNSPENT BALANCES & PENDING UTILISATION CERTIFICATES

Comments of the Committee

The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress in utilization of funds since the special review conducted on 19.07.2007 in respect of Central Universities. The Committee would also like to be informed about the specific actions taken by the Department to liquidate pending Utilisation Certificates (UCs) of Universities/colleges in the States/UTs. Similarly, the status regarding pending UCs that have been liquidated since 21.02.2007 may also be furnished.

(Paras 3.1.3.1 and 3.1.3.2)

3.2 NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RURAL INSTITUTES (NCRI)

Comments of the Committee

The Committee wants to reiterate its concern about the inordinate delay already made in making the NCRI functional. It urges upon the Department to expedite action in the matter.

(Paras 3.2.1 to 3.2.3)

3.3 INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY, SHIMLA

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is happy to note that the Institute has decided to revise the monitoring system for its Fellowship programme. It also hopes that the revised programme must have by now been considered by the Institute's Governing Body which was scheduled to meet in October, 2007. The Committee expects the Department to submit its Report in the matter at the earliest.

(Paras 3.3.1 to 3.3.5)

3.5 FAKE UNIVERSITIES

Comments of the Committee

The Committee notes that the Department has put the blame squarely upon the UGC for not being able to deal with the problem in an efficient and effective manner. It, however, feels that the UGC is perhaps unable to take appropriate action in this regard due to lack of adequate and stringent legal measures which the Department has indicated to be working on. The Committee, therefore, calls upon the Department to expedite the process for strengthening of the existing legal framework to pin down such fake universities. The Committee would also appreciate if a status note on the progress made in the legal proceedings initiated/to be initiated against the 19 fake universities identified by UGC, is submitted to it at the earliest. The Committee would like to point out that there is an urgent need for making student/parents aware about existence of such fake universities. A mechanism can easily be evolved by seeking the co-operation of State Education Departments.

(Paras 3.5.1 to 3.5.4)

IV. DISTANCE LEARNING

4.1 INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY (IGNOU)

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is dismayed to note that the 10th Plan proposals of IGNOU were approved as late as October, 2004 when half of the Plan period was over. The Committee finds such a delay ridiculous. It would like the Department to give details of the quarterly monitoring mechanism it intends to set up so as to assess the physical and financial targets of IGNOU.

(Para 4.1.5)

Comments of the Committee

The Committee views with serious concern the unduly long process of granting of recognition to Institutions/Universities offering education through distance mode. Out of 101 applications for recognition, only 34 institutions have been recognised, 23

have been rejected and the cases of remaining 44 institutions are pending. The Committee would like to impress upon the Council to expedite this recognition process. The Committee would also appreciate if a status note on the follow-up action taken against the de-recognised Institutions/Universities is furnished to it at the earliest. The Committee would also like the Department to provide detailed information regarding the total number of distance education institutions that are functioning in the Central, State and private domains.

Department's fully agreeing with the concern of the Committee about the need for making student community aware about the existence of unapproved distance education institutions would not serve the purpose. Need of the hour is pro-active approach on the part of all concerned.

The Committee would like to remind the Department that it had, in its 172nd Report on 'University and Higher Education', stressed on the need for giving the DEC an independent statutory status like the UGC. Till date, the Department has been assuring the Committee regarding action in this regard but nothing appears to have happened. The Committee, therefore, urges the Department to take expeditious action in the matter. **(Para 4.1.6)**

1.2 INSTITUTIONS OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE

Comments of the Committee

This issue has been taken up by the Committee on several occasions in the past. It is aware of the constraints faced by the Department in the matter. The Committee, however, at the least expects the Department to ensure that the AICTE works out an effective strategy in a time bound manner. **(Paras 5.3.3 and 5.3.4)**

Comments of the Committee

The reply is not acceptable to the Committee. The Committee would like to understand the justification given by the Ministry of Finance in not accepting the genuine demand of staff of NIT, Jalandhar, Kurukshetra and Silchar. The Committee strongly feels that Regional Engineering Colleges after getting the status of National Institutes of Technology have the same mandate, enjoy the same status and perform the same functions. This uniformity should be extended to the service conditions and other benefits of employees also. It, therefore, reiterates that the Pension Scheme should be made applicable to all the National Institutes of Technology only exception being those employees who joined service on or after 01.01.2004 and one time exception should be made so that rightful demands of employees of National Institutes of Technology of Kurukshetra, Jalandhar and Silchar are accepted. **(Para 5.3.8)**

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is of the opinion that impact of vocational education as enumerated in the reply is not reflected in actual practice. The Department itself has accepted that there is lack of coordination amongst the different institutions/departments that are working in this field. The Committee, therefore, feels that a lot more needs to be done in this regard. **(Paras 5.4.4 and 5.4.5)**

VII. WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Comments of the Committee

The Committee does not accept the reply given by the Department as it sounds routine in its response on the subject. **(Paras 7.1 to 7.3)**

VIII. NEW SCHEMES

Comments of the Committee

The Committee notes that the process of approval of these schemes is on but the pace appears to be slow. It would like the Department to complete the formalities at the earliest. **(Paras 8.1 and 8.2)**

***Relates to other matter.

III THIRD MEETING

The Committee on Human Resource Development met at 4.00 p.m. on Thursday, the 29th November, 2007 in Committee Room `A', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. Shri Janardan Dwivedi ¾ *Chairman*

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik
3. Shri Laxminarayan Sharma
4. Shrimati Brinda Karat
5. Shrimati Supriya Sule

LOK SABHA

6. Shri Harisinh Chavda
7. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat
8. Dr. Meinya Thokchom
9. Shri Francis K. George
10. Dr. Ram Lakhan Singh

SECRETARIAT

Smt Vandana Garg, Joint Secretary
Shri N.K. Singh, Director
Shri J. Sundriyal, Joint Director
Shri Amit Kumar, Committee Officer

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the members of the Committee. The Committee, thereafter, took up for consideration the draft Reports on the Action Taken by the Government on the Committee's Reports on Demands for Grants 2007-08 of the (i) *** (ii) Department of Higher Education; (iii) *** (iv) *** The Committee discussed and adopted these Reports with certain modifications. The Committee also authorized the Chairman to fix a suitable date to present/lay the Reports during the current session of Parliament and also nominate members from both the Houses to present/lay the reports.

3. *** *** ***

4. As regards its earlier decision regarding study visit to the Universities of Mumbai, Calcutta & Madras, the Committee directed the Secretariat to first obtain a detailed note from the Department of Higher Education on how these Universities have proposed to utilize Rs.100 crore each granted to them.

5. The Committee then adjourned at 5.00 p.m.

NEW DELHI
29th November, 2007

N.K.SINGH
DIRECTOR

***Relates to other matter.