

PARLIAMENT OF INDIA

RAJYA SABHA

DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

TWO HUNDRED-ELEVENTH REPORT

ON

THE FUNCTIONING OF ALL INDIA COUNCIL OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION (MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT)

**(PRESENTED TO THE RAJYA SABHA ON 12TH DECEMBER, 2008)
(LAID ON THE TABLE OF LOK SABHA ON 12TH DECEMBER, 2008)**

**RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
DECEMBER, 2008/ AGRAHAYANA, 1930 (SAKA)**

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE (2008-09)

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*Nominated *w.e.f.* 1.9.2008.@Seat vacant due to demise of Sh. Laxminarayan Sharma on 17th October, 2008.#Ceased to be a member of the committee *w.e.f.* 25.11.2008.

SECRETARIAT

Shri N.C. Joshi, Secretary
 Smt. Vandana Garg, Joint Secretary
 Shri M.K. Khan, Director
 Shri J. Sundriyal, Joint Director
 Shri Sanjay Singh, Committee Officer

PREFACE

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development, having been authorized by the Committee, do hereby present this Two hundred Eleventh Report of the Committee on Functioning of AICTE.

2. The Committee took up the subject of 'Functioning of AICTE' for examination in view of its important role in the coordinated development and regulation of technical education in the country. Accordingly, the Committee heard the Secretary, Department of Higher Education on 11th January, 2008 and the Chairman, AICTE on 16th September, 2008 on the functioning of AICTE, problems areas, need for amendment in the AICTE Act, 1987 and the suggestions for improvement. The Committee also issued a Press Release and invited the views of the general public on the functioning of AICTE in the month of January, 2008. In response to the Press Release, numerous memoranda were received on the subject which were compiled in the form of a statement. Also, a detailed questionnaire was forwarded to the AICTE on the said subject, the replies to which were furnished by AICTE.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at its meeting held on 28th November, 2008.

NEW DELHI;
 November 28, 2008
 Agrahayana 7, 1930 (Saka)

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

REPORT**I. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) is a body established with a view to regulate, co-ordinate, promote and maintain qualitative as well as quantitative development of

technical education system in the country. It is the most important body to ensure the proper planning, co-ordinated development and regulation and proper maintenance of norms and standards in the technical education system.

1.2 AICTE was constituted in 1945 as an advisory body in all matters relating to technical education. Even though it had no statutory powers, it played a very important role in the development of technical education in the country. It had four regional Committees with offices at Chennai, Mumbai, Kanpur and Calcutta. All the new schemes and proposals for starting new institutions/programmes were approved by the corresponding Regional Committee and subsequently vetted by the Council. Gradually, with increasing expansion of technical education in many States, AICTE was made a statutory body through an Act of Parliament in 1987. The AICTE Act, 1987 laid down the powers, functions and structure of the AICTE.

II. Mandate of AICTE

2.1 The mandate of AICTE is all encompassing and important for the development of technical education system in the country. The diversified role of AICTE is enumerated below:-

(i) Regulatory role

- Lay down norms and standards for courses, curricula, physical and instructional facilities, staff pattern, staff qualification, quality instructions, assessment and examinations.
- Advise UGC for declaring any institution imparting technical education as a deemed university.
- Grant approval for starting new technical institutions and for introduction of new courses.
- Inspect or cause to inspect any technical institution
- Accreditation of programmes of technical institutions.

(ii) Promotional Role

- Schemes for promoting technical education for women, handicapped and weaker sections of the society.
- Promoting effective linkages with research and development organizations, industry and community.

- Promote innovations, faculty, research and development.

- Giving grants to technical institutions.

(iii) Role of Planning & Coordinated Development

- Conduct survey of technical education.

- Coordinate the development of technical education in the country at all levels.

2.2 During the annual exercise of examination of Demands for Grants of the Department of Higher Education, the Committee had had an opportunity of having a view of the state of affairs of technical education in the country. Seeing the crucial role being played by it not only from the view point of career progression of our youth but also advancement of the country as a whole, specially against the

backdrop of ever-changing global scenario, the Committee decided to make an in-depth study of the functioning of All India Council for Technical Education. In order to have a better understanding of working of this all-important regulatory body for technical education in the country, the Committee first had a general discussion with the Secretary, Department of Higher Education along with the Chairman, AICTE and team of their officials on the 11th January, 2008. Besides having a general idea about the gradual expansion of technical education over the years in the country, the Committee was also given to understand that much remained to be accomplished. One very disturbing fact pointed out by the Committee members and also admitted by AICTE was that substantial part of their mandate remained unattended or unaccomplished. Various administrative, financial, and infrastructural constraints being encountered by the Council were primarily responsible for such a situation.

2.3 Purpose of this study was to have as wide-ranging exchange of ideas as possible. The Committee, accordingly, issued a Press Release in the print media inviting views from all stakeholders on the functioning of AICTE, with special focus on its positive impact, problem areas, need for review of AICTE Act, existing procedure for recognition and suggestions for improvement. Very encouraging response was received from all concerned. The Committee was of the view that feedback on the problem areas being faced by the main implementing authority, i.e. AICTE was also very much required so as to make a proper assessment covering all conceivable aspects of its functioning. A high power Committee was set up by AICTE for this purpose on the 30th June, 2008. This Committee submitted its Report in August, 2008 entailing the problem areas and suggestions for improvement.

2.4 Subsequently, the Committee held extensive interaction with the representatives of AICTE. The Chairman of the Council dwelt upon all the factors coming in the way of the Council in fulfilling its mandate in the true spirit. It was pointed out that with the passage of time, a number of modifications were required in the Act of 1987. Chairman of the Council also admitted that due to one reason or the other, a few very crucial powers and functions entrusted to it had remained unimplemented so far. The Committee was also given an idea about the various progressive steps initiated by AICTE.

2.5 The Committee, while making an analysis of the feedback received in response to the Press Release issued by it, found that similar drawbacks and shortcomings as revealed in the Report of the AICTE Committee were highlighted by different stakeholders. The Committee also took note of the valuable suggestions given in the memoranda for bringing about all round improvement in the domain of technical education. Finally, a detailed Questionnaire, touching upon issues requiring further clarifications was sent to AICTE which furnished the replies thereto. Present Report of the Committee is thus, based on its deliberations with the Secretary, Department of Higher Education, representatives of AICTE and the feedback received from it as well as in response to the Press Release.

III NEED FOR AMENDMENTS/ENFORCEMENT OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE

AICTE ACT, 1987

3.1 The Committee was given to understand that some of the provisions of AICTE Act, 1987 needed to be reviewed so as to keep pace with the emerging new technologies, significant advancements being made in the methodology of teaching and also fast changing global industrial scenario.

Section 2 - Definitions

3.2 Committee's attention was drawn to the definition of "technical education" given in Section 2(g) of the Act. It includes programmes of education, research and training in engineering, technology, architecture, town planning, management, pharmacy and applied arts and crafts and such other programmes or areas as the Central Government may, in consultation with the Council, declare. It was pointed out that over a period of time several new areas/disciplines like fashion technology, hospitality related fields, media technology, nano-technology, nuclear sciences and space technology, bio-technology etc. have emerged which needed to be brought under the ambit of technical education. The Council emphasized that it was confident of taking up these added responsibilities through its ten All India Boards of Studies headed by subject experts of eminence and consisting of members representing various associated relevant bodies. The Committee was given to understand that with the provision of additional financial, administrative and infrastructural facilities, the Council would be in a position to take care of these new programmes.

3.3 The Committee appreciates the need for inclusion of emerging technical programmes under the AICTE Act. However, it is skeptical about the capability of the Council in handling this additional mandate mainly due to the general perception about the Council not satisfactorily managing the programmes presently under its purview. New programmes, the Committee feels, would mean garnering additional financial, administrative and infrastructural facilities. AICTE itself has expressed several constraints including inadequacy of resources for handling the programmes under its purview. The Committee is constrained to note that AICTE with its existing limitations would not be able to manage the newly emerging areas along with the existing ones. Committee's apprehensions have been aggravated by the fact that AICTE has, at present, no mechanism for forecasting growth in new technologies for developing educational programmes in the emerging areas due to inadequate information system. As a result, vital task of updation for both introducing new courses and funding is yet to be taken up by the Council. The Committee, therefore, opines that taking up added responsibilities would pose a challenge to the Council and it is upto the Council to devise ways to do a good job in managing all the courses of study including new areas. The Committee would like to emphasise that the Council needs revamping to update itself about newly emerging areas for developing technical educational programmes. A mechanism needs to be evolved having a group of experts so as to facilitate the Council in doing research and forecasting growth in new technologies. The need of the hour for the Council is to move, change, grow and re-orient its strategies with the changing times. The Committee is also of the view that the AICTE should consolidate its core competence, revamp its infrastructure and

restructure the organization keeping in view the altered realities prior to enlarging its mandate to cover new disciplines.

3.4 Objections were raised by some quarters on the inclusion of disciplines like management, pharmacy and architecture within the definition of “technical education”. Main contention was that strictly speaking, these disciplines cannot be considered technical education. It was emphasized that mere use of IT in management education did not mean it was a technical education. Management is as much of Art and Science as of technology and therefore it should be kept outside the purview of AICTE. Instead, it should be considered as a professional education. Similarly, architecture and town planning relate to a discipline in which technology/engineering is used only as a catalyst to get the final product. It was also pointed out that regulation of pharmacy education should be solely entrusted to the Pharmacy Council.

3.5 On a specific query in this regard, the AICTE apprised the Committee that management education curriculum for PG programmes includes technical components like operation research, statistics, quality management and control and Industrial Engineering, Information Technology and E-governance modules. Therefore, there is high degree of co-relation between engineering and management education. Attention was also drawn to the U R Rao Committee observation that engineering and management education needed to be kept under the same umbrella due to close and intrinsic inter-relationship between management and engineering. It was also mentioned that AICTE has a statutory All India Board of Studies dealing exclusively with management studies.

3.6 The Committee agrees with the expert views advocating retention of management education under the definition of “technical education”. However, in view of the mushrooming of institutions providing management education across the country, the monitoring apparatus in this regard is required to be strengthened. Even while recognizing the commonalities keeping in view the differentiating characteristics, management education needs a varied calibrated approach. The AICTE should consider creating a specialized wing with independent domain specialized for considering all aspects of Management education.

3.7 On its attention being drawn to the fact that pharmacy education is being governed by two separate bodies under two Ministries, the Council denied any over-lapping or dual control. It was clarified that while Pharmacy Council of India was entrusted with the regulation of pharmacy education for registration as a pharmacist (Diploma in pharmacy course), AICTE was entrusted with pharmacy education at B. Pharmacy, M Pharmacy level. **The Committee is of the view that the existing regulatory system for pharmacy education sector should continue.**

3.8 With regard to the discipline of architecture, it was admitted by the AICTE that the Council of Architecture also grants approval for establishment of architectural institutions and courses alongwith prescribing the criteria for admission of students. These functions are also being exercised by AICTE since architecture is a part of technical education under the AICTE Act. Due to this overlapping of functions, several cases have been filed in various High Courts and the Supreme

Court. The Committee is surprised to note that such a situation has been allowed to persist for long without any pro-active step being initiated. The Committee would appreciate if this crucial issue is examined without any further delay and a rightful decision keeping the interests of student community as a whole is taken. The present overlapping of functions and conflict of interest needs to be stopped forthwith by having only one regulatory body for the discipline of architecture.

3.9 The Committee opines that taking into consideration the newly emerging areas and the demand for excluding few disciplines from the definition of technical education, Section 2 (g) needs to be redefined with specificity rather than in generic terms. Hence, amendment of the said Section is definitely called for.

Section 10 : Powers and Functions of the Council

3.10 Section 10 of the Act deals with the powers and functions of the Council. The Council is mandated to carry out twenty one specific functions for ensuring coordinated and integrated development of technical and management education and maintenance of standards. Implementation status of this crucial provision as furnished by the Council depicts a discouraging scenario. Three very important functions viz (i) evolving suitable performance appraisal systems for technical institutions/ universities, incorporating norms and mechanism for enforcing accountability, (ii) advising the Central Government in respect of grant of charter to any professional body/ institution in the field of technical education conferring powers, rights and privileges on it for promotion of such profession; and (iii) laying down norms for granting autonomy to technical institutions have remained on paper only, all these years for reasons best known to the Council. Feedback submitted to the Committee clearly indicates the disinclination of the Council in this regard. The Committee can understand the reasons for there being no quality control on the standard of technical institutions whose numbers keep on increasing every year. The Committee presumes that before bringing this legislation, the policy formulators and law-makers must have examined all the pros and cons while prescribing very specific functions for the regulatory body for technical education in the country. The Committee can only emphasize that serious rethinking is required in this regard by all concerned. Status of the remaining 18 functions entrusted to the Council as indicated to the Committee leaves much scope for improvement. Considering the need to attract and retain high quality faculty the Committee strongly urges that norms for granting autonomy to technical institutions should be finalized and implemented on a priority basis.

Following are the provisions which in the Committee's opinion require introspection followed by pro-active action on the part of the Council: -

3.11 Clause (a) of Section 10 requires the Council to undertake survey in the various fields of technical education, collect data on all related matters and make forecast of the growth and development needed in technical education. On a specific query about the last survey undertaken, the outcome thereof and the corrective measures initiated, the Council drew a blank. The Committee

was constrained to note that the AICTE till date has failed to undertake any survey whatsoever in any field of technical education leaving thereby the crucial mandate of making forecast about the needed growth and development in technical education unattended so far. The Committee was informed that the National Technical Manpower Information System (NTMIS) Scheme was presently being implemented for collecting information and generating a database. NTMIS has one lead centre and 20 nodal centers operating for the last twenty years. The Committee was given to understand that despite certain limitations, NTMIS has generated considerable amount of information which is published by the Institute of Applied Manpower Research (IAMR), the nodal centre of NTMIS Scheme. On a specific query, the Committee was informed that the data generated through NTMIS was usually not up-to-date and not being used for educational planning for establishment of new technical institutions and starting additional courses etc.

3.12 The Committee expresses its deep anguish that the Council has not undertaken any survey till date to anticipate and forecast the growth and development in technical education. The Committee wonders as to how the Council has been coordinating the maintenance of standards in the absence of any such survey. The Council seemingly appears clueless about the existing ground realities with respect to the various disciplines of technical education. Undoubtedly policies, regulations or norms cannot be formulated without relying on some authentic data. In a situation where data provided by the National Technical Manpower Information System (NTMIS) is not being used for educational planning, the Committee deprecates the lack of initiative on the part of Council to fill the gaps. The Committee finds that it was only after this issue was raised by it, the Council initiated some action by setting up a Committee represented by the Chairmen of all the Boards of Studies to suggest a reliable survey mechanism. This is indeed a very discouraging state of affairs that the Council has taken such a long time to realize the lack of efficacy of a scheme envisaged for planning the advancement of technical education in the country. The Committee has been given to understand that a pilot study has been commissioned to be conducted in three States *i.e.* one state with the highest enrolment rate (Tamil Nadu), another State with the average enrolment rate (Madhya Pradesh) and the third State with the lowest enrolment rate (Bihar). Report of the pilot study is to be given within two months and on the basis of this Report, an all India survey would be conducted. The Committee is happy to note the initiation of the pilot study though it got delayed beyond comprehension. The Committee would like to emphasize that the Report of the said pilot study should be submitted by the Committee of the Council at the earliest so that required action is not further delayed. Further, based on the findings of the Pilot Study, an Action Plan for covering the entire country within 12 months should be evolved if necessary through outsourcing.

3.13 Co-ordinated development of technical education in the country at all levels is another very important function assigned to the Council. The Committee was informed that due to the pro-active measures taken by the Council, there has been manifold increase in the number of technical education facilities in the country. From 44 degree level institutions in 1947, the number has

increased to 4894 with an annual intake of 10 lakhs in 2008. Similarly, diploma level institutions have increased from 53 to 2102 with an annual intake of 4 lakhs. The Council, however, has admitted that this phenomenal growth has been mainly concentrated in the south, south-west and western regions only. The Committee was informed that in order to ameliorate the imbalance, the Council has initiated several steps by incorporating appropriate measures in its approval process. The Council has also constituted a Committee of the Boards of Chairmen to suggest measures for overcoming the regional, gender, social and subject wise imbalances.

3.14 The Committee observes that concentration of institutions in specific regions is the testimony of extent of regional imbalance. The very objective of proper planning and co-ordinated development of the technical education system throughout the country in the backdrop of evolving AICTE from an advisory body to a statutory body seems to have been defeated. The Committee would like to draw the attention to the following extract from the National Policy on Education 1986 making a specific mention of the need for making AICTE a statutory body.

“The All India Council for Technical Education will be vested with statutory authority forensuring the co-ordinated and integrated development of technical and management education.”

The recent efforts made by the Council for setting up a Committee for overcoming regional imbalance are too late and apparently not very effective. More than twenty years have passed since the Council became a statutory body. Despite the self claimed reforms in approval process of the Council, the regional imbalances have continued. The Committee is hardly convinced with the restrictive approach of the Council. The Committee would like the Council to share the recommendations of its Committee and the follow up action taken in the matter within one month.

3.15 Section 10 (e) of the Act empowers the Council to formulate schemes for promoting technical education for women, handicapped and weaker sections of the society. The Committee noted that in order to promote technical education for women, handicapped and weaker sections, the Council has formulated a scheme on tuition fee waiver for the benefit of meritorious women, economically backward and physically handicapped students in AICTE approved institutions. Further, relaxations have been made for granting approval of technical institutions for women. These relaxations include reduction in land requirement (50% in small, 20% in state capital and 10% in mega cities), 20% relaxation for FDR amount and processing fee, 5 courses with annual intake of 300 with each course intake not exceeding 90 and single window system for expeditious processing. The Committee appreciates the initiatives undertaken by the Council for promoting technical education amongst women, the handicapped and the weaker sections. It has also taken cognizance of advertisements recently issued by AICTE for women specific technical institutions which is a welcome step.

3.16 Committee’s attention has also been drawn to the perceptible lack of co-ordination between AICTE, State Governments and other agencies having a key role in the

implementation of welfare schemes for the aforesaid categories in their respective States. Not only this, there are no guidelines/regulatory support for the weaker sections of the society for getting technical education. Also, AICTE has no role in the admission of students of weaker sections of the society in technical institutions. The Committee fails to understand the reasons for lack of any pro-active action on the part of AICTE as the statutory regulatory body for all conceivable aspects of technical education in this vital area. It is high time that serious efforts are initiated for elimination of aforesaid constraints.

3.17 Section 10(k) of the Act empowers the Council to grant approval for starting new technical institutions and for introduction of new courses or programmes in consultation with the agencies concerned. Elaborate procedures and norms and standards have been laid down for the purpose. These time-bound procedures are aimed at ensuring uniformity, fairness and transparency. Effective coordination between the Council and the State Governments, affiliating Universities is required to achieve those objectives.

3.18 The Committee has taken note of three major drawbacks in this provision as pointed out by the Council. The first major drawback is the word 'agencies' remaining undefined and thus leading to ambiguity with regard to specific agencies required to be consulted for grant of approval of new technical institutions. The Committee is in agreement with the contention of the Council and recommends that definition of 'agencies' may be incorporated under the relevant section of the Act.

3.19 The other major flaw pointed out by the Council was that universities including Deemed to be Universities remained outside the purview of Section 10 (k) for the purpose of granting approval for establishment of new technical institutions and starting of courses. As a result, there were two streams of technical education in the country - one in technical institutions under the purview of the Council and other Universities and Deemed to be universities outside its purview. The Universities and their departments imparting technical education being set up without the knowledge and approval of AICTE cannot be considered an ideal proposition for ensuring uniform norms and standards prescribed for technical education across the country.

3.20 The Committee finds logic in the contention of the Council. The Committee strongly feels that primary objective of co-ordinated development of technical education system throughout the country entrusted to the Council through the AICTE Act of 1987 can only be fulfilled in the real sense if this dual stream of technical education is brought under one regulatory body. The Committee, accordingly, recommends that Section 10 (k) be modified to include the faculties and departments of Universities including Deemed to be Universities imparting technical education at the time of granting them approval for their establishment and starting new courses as well. Definition of the term 'technical institution' as given in Section 2(h) may also be modified accordingly. The Government may also examine feasibility of trifurcating the functions of the accreditation, regulation and control with each entity functioning with autonomy and arm's length relationship with Government.

IV Linkages between Industry and Technical Institutions

4.1 It is an accepted fact that technical education comprising of almost all the disciplines has to have a well-established linkage with the industry both in terms of its proper growth and job opportunities to the students. Over the years, although there has been tremendous expansion in the number of technical institutions, employability of students passing out of such technical institutions remains a matter of serious concern. The situation has become more complicated due to the fast changing global scenario and emerging new technologies. The Committee notes that the Council has been operating a number of schemes fostering industry-institute partnership as indicated below:

- Industry Institute Partnership Cell (IIPC) Scheme.
- National Facilities in Engineering and Technology with Industrial Collaboration (NAFETIC).
- Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC).
- AICTE –INAE Distinguished Visiting Professorship.
- Financial Assistance to Professional Societies/Bodies Scheme.

4.2 **The Committee is, however, surprised to note that inspite of several initiatives taken for meaningful interaction between industry and academia for mutual benefits specific to technical education system, linkages between industry and technical institutions continue to remain weak. The Committee has been given to understand that anticipated response from the industry is simply missing. The variety of initiatives has failed to evolve the desired level of participation of the industry. Tie up with industry associations such as CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, NASSCOM and with entrepreneurship promoting agencies such as NSTEDB-DST, EDI, NISIET, NIESBUD have failed to take off. The fact that monitoring was required to ensure good progress of all the existing schemes, as admitted by the Council itself, indicates the dismal state of affairs in this most vital area. The Committee is not impressed by the reported move of the Council in setting up yet another Committee for review of the existing Industry-Institute Partnership Schemes. In Committee's opinion, to term it as a strategic initiative cannot be considered justified. Need of the hour is to initiate a meaningful dialogue with the representatives of industry so as to have the real understanding of their requirements and remove the existing bottlenecks. The Committee is not aware as to how many technical institutions have an Industry Institute Partnership Cell operational in the real sense. The Committee strongly underlines the need for a review of this facility so as to make such cells the focal point for better interaction between the academia and industry. Undoubtedly, the Council will have to play the role of co-ordinator and facilitator between the industry and institutions. The Committee would also like to emphasize that in view of the need to foster public/private partnership and harness private sector resources, AICTE should holistically examine its existing rules, regulations and procedures to further this objective. This may be undertaken after broad-based consultations with Industry. The findings of such consultation and proposed action may be submitted to this Committee within three months.**

V. Institutions operating programmes of foreign universities in the Country

5.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that there was no specific provision under the Act regarding the technical institutions and universities of foreign origin for their establishment directly or in collaboration with an Indian institution or University. The Committee has noted that in the absence of a regulatory authority, quite a few such institutions have come up in the country during the recent years. As informed by the Council, there are at present 68 technical institutions which are operating programmes of foreign universities. The Committee takes note of the regulations notified in 2005 whereunder detailed procedure has been laid down for processing proposals for entry and operation of foreign universities and institutions in the country for conducting technical education programmes. The Committee was informed that only six Indian institutions have been accorded approval for registration having collaboration with foreign universities/institutions under these regulations so far. **The Committee finds it very disturbing that as many as 62 such institutions are operating in the country without any apparent control. The Committee understands that complaints were registered with the Council where students were taken for a ride by such institutions. However, in the absence of any statutory powers enshrined in the Act, the Council authorities have remained a helpless witness so far. The only action taken by it has been to put a list of such unapproved institutions on its web site, public notices issued in the print media and advisories sent to the concerned State Governments/UTs for initiating action for closure by invoking civil and criminal laws applicable in such cases.**

5.2 A suggestion which has been made to the Committee by the Council is that such foreign universities/institutions be brought under Section 10 (k) along with modification in the definition of 'technical institution' and 'university'. The Committee also feels that these modifications may make the task of the Council somewhat easier. At the same time, the Committee would like to point out that in the context of Indian technical institutions inspite of there being statutory provisions and relevant regulations, the Council has simply remained a mute spectator with regard to handling of unapproved technical institutions so far. Therefore, the Council, besides being pro-active will also have to explore some other mechanism to curb the uncontrolled expansion of foreign institutions/programmes in the country.

VI. Procedure for Approval of new technical institutions

6.1 Granting approval for starting new technical institutions is one of the most important functions assigned to the Council. There are elaborate procedures and norms and standards laid down by AICTE which are to be complied with by all the applicants. The Committee observes that it is a well-established process which has undergone required changes with the passage of time. Specific time schedules are laid down whereunder a proposal goes through scrutiny at different stages. The process starts with report of the concerned State Government and the affiliating university followed by a scrutiny by the Regional Office Committee and subsequent presentation before the Hearing Committee. Only thereafter the Letter of Intent is issued to the applicant who is given sufficient time for preparation. Finally, the Inspection Committee consisting of Experts, representatives of State Government and affiliating University visits the institution for physical verification of infrastructure

and academic facilities.

6.2 The Committee is, however, surprised to note the general perception, as revealed from the feedback received in response to the Press Release issued by it mentioning that the Council has been spending its entire energy, time and resources only on one function *i.e.* grant of approval for starting new institutions and introduction of new courses. Even on that account, many of the approved institutions do not fulfill minimum standards and prescribed criteria with respect to infrastructure, number of faculty members etc. It has also been pointed out that the procedure for granting recognition and approval is not only complicated but suffer from irregularities and non-transparency. The Committee has also been given to understand that access to AICTE officials for seeking clarifications is extremely difficult which is further causing undue delay. A time-bound system for the approval process may be placed on the website and accountability for deviations need to be assigned to secure transparency and minimize harassment.

6.3 From the details furnished to the Committee, it is evident that performance level with regard to approval of new technical institutions can be considered more than satisfactory. Following figures for Engineering and Management institutions for 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 (upto 30.6.2008) indicate a steady growth in the number of technical institutions.

Year	Engineering Colleges	Management Institutes
2006-07	1511	1132
2007-08	1668	1149
2008-09	2297	1238
(upto 30.6.08)		

6.4 From the trend of approvals being granted for opening of new technical institutions, the Committee was inclined to presume that the Expert Committee visiting a new institution for physical verification of infrastructure and academic facilities must be well-versed and fully equipped to handle the assigned task. However, the very fact that the Council itself has admitted that there was no scientific training mechanism in place for the assessors and experts involved/engaged to process the proposal for grant of approvals, indicates that all is not well at the ground level. Not only this, remuneration and incentives being provided to them is also reported to be low and unrealistic. On a further query in this regard, the Committee has been given to understand that the Council is working on the revision of honorarium to assessors and experts.

6.5 The Committee wonders whether there is any prescribed criteria for selection of experts for the Inspection Team and if it exists, whether it is being strictly adhered to. Besides the general lack of confidence in the existing procedure of inspection carried out at the initial stage,

the Committee would like to point out that the list of 137 unapproved technical institutions displayed on the web site of the Council confirms its apprehension that prescribed norms/guidelines for grant of approval are not being adhered to. Instead of members of the Inspection Team being randomly handpicked, criteria for their selection should be foolproof and unquestionable. The Committee has also been given to understand that members of Inspection Team are generally from Government institutions. With the increasing participation of private sector in the field of technical education, their representation to the extent possible should also be reflected in the Inspection Team. This crucial issue needs to be considered by the Council, without any further delay.

6.6 Committee's attention has been drawn to the unapproved institutions which are operating in the country. Needless to mention, AICTE has not been able to take any concrete action in the matter. The Committee has been informed that the Council has issued show cause notice to such institutions. A list of the unapproved institutions has been compiled and put on the website. Public notice has been issued for informing the general public. The Council has even apprised the State Governments about it with the suggestions to initiate legal actions against such institutions. The Council has taken a plea that there is no provision in the AICTE Act for taking action against these erring institutions and therefore an amendment in the said Act is called for. The Committee however, differs with the viewpoint of the Council. In fact, para 2.11.1(b) of Regulations, 2006 for AICTE Grant of approval for starting new technical institutions, introduction of courses or programmes and increase/variation intake capacity of seats for the courses or programmes and Extension of approval for the existing technical institutions gives adequate powers to the Council to take the required action as reproduced below: -

“In case of violations of norms and standard and regulations etc. as prescribed by the Council and as communicated to the technical institutions based on the recommendations of the Inspection Committee, the Council may decide to withdraw its approval/or impose ‘no admission’ status for one or more courses/or programme or impose any other punitive action deemed necessary.”

The Committee therefore, fails to comprehend the rationale behind the Council's suggestion for amending the Act when the required power has already been provided in the Regulations. It is the execution part of the Regulation which is not coming forth. The inability of the Council to take stringent action against the unapproved institutions and those violating norms and standards under this Regulation is quite disturbing. The accountability of the Council does not end simply by issuing show cause notices to these institutions and requesting the State Governments to take action against them. The Committee expresses its serious concerns over the large number of institutions continuing to flout the norms and operating without any check. The Committee, therefore, urges the Council to assume its mandated responsibility and take immediate corrective steps for curbing the institutions that are flouting the norms and standards prescribed by AICTE.

VII. Inspection of existing Technical Institutions

7.1 A well-established inspection system is the mandatory requirement for monitoring the maintenance of norms and standards of technical education. This is all the more required in view of a variety of disciplines covered under technical education institutions spread across the country. The Committee notes that as on 30th June, 2008, there were 2297 Engineering Colleges and 1238 Management Institutes in the country. Number of institutions imparting education in Pharmacy, MCA and Architecture is also quite large, and in future, this number is likely to increase further.

7.2 Section 10 (p) empowers the Council to inspect or cause to inspect any technical institution. Section 11 further supplements this primary function assigned to the Council by laying down the inspection procedure of both technical institutions and such departments of a university so as to ascertain their financial needs and standards of teaching, examination and research. Findings of the inspection are to be communicated to the concerned institution and action recommended has to be taken as a result of such inspection. Further, the Council is empowered to verify by random and surprise inspections whether the deficiencies pointed out as a result of previous inspections have been rectified or not.

7.3 Surprisingly enough, from the feedback given to the Committee, it seems that norms for inspections laid down under Section 10 (p), although being revised from time to time, have simply remained on paper so far. In response to a specific query in this regard, the Committee got the details of inspections carried out under Section 11 during the last three years. Total number of 655 inspections were carried out in Engineering Institutions with 448 inspections made during 2006-07, 119 in 2007-08 and 88 in 2008-09. These figures when compared with the number of Engineering Institutions during this period (1511 in 2006-07, 1668 in 2007-08 and 2297 in 2008-09) are self-revealing.

7.4 In such a scenario, the Committee can well understand the status of follow-up action and corrective measures taken on the basis of inspection reports. The Committee would appreciate if details of action taken on the 655 inspections carried out during the last three years are forwarded to it. The Committee apprehends that situation would be similar in respect of other disciplines of technical education. The Committee would also like to draw the attention of the Council to the fact that a well-built inspection mechanism having all the expertise and objective approach is the very foundation of the technical education system in the country. Any neglect in this regard is simply not acceptable. The Council should, therefore, conduct a review of the existing inspection mechanism for bringing in the required improvements.

VIII Shortage of faculty – Qualitative and Quantitative

8.1 Expansion of technical education which started in the late fifties has witnessed tremendous growth during the last two-three decades. With the emergence of new technologies, this growth was bound to continue unabated. As on 30.06.2008, there were 2297 engineering colleges, 1021

Pharmacy colleges and 1238 management institutes. Similar expansion has been observed in respect of other disciplines of technical education also. Unfortunately, during this period, shortage of qualified faculty has also continued to steadily become more and more acute. During its interaction with both the Secretary, Department of Higher Education and Chairman of AICTE, this issue was deliberated upon extensively. Not only this, problem of faculty shortage was also highlighted by many stakeholders in response to the Press Release issued by the Committee. As per the details made available to the Committee, shortage of 30, 000 Ph.Ds and 24, 000 M. Tech was reported to be in 2003. According to a recent study by Prof. Banerjee and Mule, this shortfall in faculty is expected to go upto 2, 31, 166 by 2011-12. Ninety per cent shortfall would be in the market-driven courses like IT, Computer and Electronics. Both qualitative and quantitative aspects of faculty in private institutions leave too much to be desired.

8.2 Another dimension of this problem which is equally worrisome is the existing/available faculty not being adequately qualified. On a specific query in this regard, following factors were highlighted as responsible for this discouraging scenario:

- (i) Inadequate facility for training and upgradation of knowledge and skill for the existing faculty.
- (ii) No encouragement to faculty to undertake research and consultancy in technical institutions.
- (iii) No scheme in position to attract trained manpower for teaching.
- (iv) Inadequate growth in technical education at PG level resulting in shortage of qualified faculty.
- (v) Faculty development schemes operated by AICTE since 1994 have become outdated due to substantial changes in the field of technical education and industry.
- (vi) Remuneration offered to faculty is not commensurate with the qualifications and experience prescribed for the faculty positions while the industry offers much higher compensation packages. This has resulted in exodus of faculty to industry.
- (vii) Procedures and mechanisms in place for appointment of teachers in majority of the institutions not conducive for qualified trained persons.
- (viii) Unrealistic restriction on exit/retirement of teachers and unrealistic qualifications/experience prohibiting trained personnel from R & D and private industries to join technical institutions.

8.3 The Committee was informed that various measures/schemes/programmes have been taken by the Council with a view to both attract and retain the qualified and competent faculty in technical education institutions. Some of the significant initiatives are listed below:

- (a) Promoting postgraduate education and research through scholarship to GATE qualified students, offering National Doctoral Fellowship to bright Ph.D scholars and facilitating in-service teachers to enhance their qualifications under the Quality Improvement Programme.
- (b) Career advancement scheme, offering Career Award for Young Teachers and visiting professorship.
- (c) Promoting R & D and institutional development activities of faculty through various

schemes such as modernization and Removal of Obsolescence (MoD ROBS), Research Promotion Scheme (RPS), National Coordinated Project (NCP), National Facility in Engineering and Technology (NAFETIC), Entrepreneurship and Management Development Cells (EMD) and Industry Institute Partnership Cells (IIPC) etc.

- (d) Attracting experienced industry professionals through AICTE-INAE Distinguished visiting professorship.
- (e) Attracting competent professionals as adjunct/visiting faculty.
- (f) Conducting Induction training Programme, Industry Training Programme for teachers.

8.4 Besides the above measures, a High Power Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Prof. P. Rama Rao in 2005, recommended various measures to tackle shortage of faculty and improve the competency of existing faculty. This was followed by the setting up of another Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Anandkrishnana for reviewing the Faculty Development Schemes. Thereafter, an action plan has been charted out. Action points in brief are as follows:

- (i) Upgradation of qualification of existing faculty and their competency building by identification of 100 mentor institutions.
- (ii) Promotion of Technology Enhanced Distance Education Programme (TEDEP).
- (iii) Setting up International Centre for Excellence in faculty development etc.
- (iv) Attracting young graduates/post-graduates to teaching by enhancement of scholarship amount and number.
- (v) Promoting integrated masters and dual degree programmes.
- (vi) Setting up virtual technical University.
- (vii) Increasing the age of retirement of existing faculty at Professor level from 65 to 70 and
- (viii) Attracting adjunct/visiting faculty from industry

8.5 The Committee observes that the Scheme of Mentor Institutions has been evolved after an extensive exercise undertaken by two Expert Committees namely Prof. P. Rama Rao Committee and Prof. Anandkrishnana Committee. The idea behind this scheme is that premier institutions such as IITs, NITs, IIMs etc. are identified and made to undertake the task of upgrading the competence of existing faculty members and also to produce post-graduates, doctorates and fellows in different disciplines of technical education as potential faculty. The Scheme is built on two main components *i.e.* (i) Programmes for Development of Existing Faculty by upgrading qualifications and Competency Building and Professional Development and (ii) Programmes for Attracting and Developing Potential Candidates for Faculty. This scheme will be implemented by establishing Faculty Development Centres (FDCs) in 100 identified technical institutions to be called as Mentor Institutions. These centres will act as nodal centres for all Faculty Development Programmes.

8.6 The AICTE Chairman informed the Committee that for upgrading the qualification of existing faculty members and providing opportunities to the faculty members to go in for part time M. Tech programme the Mentor Institutions would create the facility for sequential M. Tech programme or Ph.D programme or fellowship programme. The mentor institute would organise programmes for

competence building and professional development. They would further attempt to attract and develop the potential candidates for the faculty.

8.7 The Committee notes that a number of steps as indicated below have already been suggested by the P. Rama Rao Committee for making the Scheme operational:

- Constitution of Faculty Development Board in AICTE.
- Finalization of attributes of a Mentor Institution.
- Selection of Mentor Institutions and defining the discipline/specialized area of operation.
- Identification of Principal Co-ordinator in each Mentor Institution.

8.8 The Committee hopes that the above-mentioned line of action must have been completed by now. If not, the Committee would appreciate if this exercise is expedited to ensure launching of the scheme at the earliest.

8.9 The Committee understands the gravity of the problem of faculty shortage in technical institutions. The very purpose of opening new institutions is defeated if they do not have the required faculty for imparting technical education. The Committee would like to emphasize that qualified and competent faculty has to be there in all technical institutions for imparting quality education. Merely filling the vacancies of faculty positions by less qualified persons who do not meet the prescribed criteria would only result in sub-standard education system which is unfortunately evident in majority of technical institutions at present.

8.10 The Committee appreciates the efforts made by the Council but much more needs to be done for addressing this problem. The Committee observes that it was almost three years back, the Scheme of Mentor Institutions was recommended by the two Expert Committees. However, the AICTE could not launch the scheme as sufficient funds for the purpose have not been allocated. Out of Rs.950 crores earmarked for Mentor Institutions in the Eleventh Five Year Plan, only Rs. 5 crores have been allocated for the financial year 2008-09 for faculty development. The Committee considers non-allocation of funds as sheer lack of initiative on the part of both the Council and the Department for this major scheme, which was the outcome of the deliberations of two Expert Committees. The matter needs to be urgently taken up with the Planning Commission/Ministry of Finance for allocation of funds. Before that, the Council should ensure that all preparatory exercises and feasibility studies are completed beforehand so that there is no further delay in launching the scheme. Secondly, concerted efforts should be made to attract and retain qualified persons in the teaching profession. Attractive remuneration packages at par with the industry should be offered to qualified and competent persons so that exodus of such people is arrested. The Committee also believes that wide publicity should be given to highlight the wide scope and better prospects of technical courses

so that more and more students opt for them. The need of the hour is to make the profession attractive with ample training opportunities and other incentives.

8.11 Committee's attention has been drawn by the Early Faculty Induction Programme introduced by the Council to attract fresh graduates into teaching profession. The Committee has been informed that there has been no beneficiary in the last two years under this scheme. AICTE attributes the failure of the scheme to non-involvement of prospective employers in the selection of candidates. As recommended by the Prof. Anandkrishnan Committee, the scheme is being phased out to be replaced by the Scheme of Mentor Institutions. **The Committee can only emphasize that all-out efforts need to be made by the Council and the Department so as to ensure that the proposed scheme does not meet the fate of the Early Faculty Induction Programme. A number of other measures/programmes besides the scheme of Mentor Institutions have been recommended by the two Expert Committees both for upgradation of qualifications of existing faculty and their competency building and for attracting young Graduates/Post-graduates to teaching. The Committee hopes that these measures would also be implemented at the earliest. The Committee, however, has reservation on the recommendation of increasing the age of retirement of existing faculty at Professor level from 65 to 70. The Committee reiterates that the right step would be to attract the talented youth to the noble profession of teaching by giving maximum incentives.**

IX. Pending legal cases against AICTE

9.1 The Committee was informed that a considerable number of legal cases involving AICTE are pending in the Supreme Court and different High Courts. As many as 26 cases are pending in Supreme Court whereas 798 cases are pending in various High Courts of the country. Majority of cases are with the Madras High Court (180 cases pending) and A.P. High Court (190 cases pending). Such a high figure of cases is an indication of the extent of disenchantment and grievances the stakeholders have with the functioning of AICTE.

9.2 **The Committee believes that the large pendency of cases against AICTE speaks volume of the poor grievances redressal mechanism forcing the aggrieved to resort to courts. The Committee understands that there is an Appellate Committee constituted by the Council for redressal of grievances. At present, there are only 13 cases before this Committee. This figure is abysmally low in view of dissatisfaction expressed by a large number of stakeholders against the functioning of the Council. The Committee believes that either the redressal mechanism does not inspire confidence amongst the aggrieved or the people are not aware of the mechanism itself. The Committee believes that the functioning of this Appellate Committee needs to be reviewed and made effective so that affected persons bring their cases before this Committee instead of filing cases in courts for redressal of their grievances. Efforts should be made by the Council to give wide publicity about its Appellate Committee mechanism. The Committee would term it a suitable mechanism where the people first approach the Appellate Committee of the Council and then resort to legal help.**

9.3 The Committee notes that apart from the Appellate Committee, a Public Grievances Cell has also been created in AICTE. The Council has received 341 applications related to refund of fees/return of original documents etc. Out of these 341 cases, 224 cases have been resolved. **The Committee is of the opinion that grievances received in the Cell should be attended to with due priority and be redressed within shortest possible time in order to prove the efficacy of the Cell so that the interest of the complainant is addressed in the right earnest. AICTE should through its Grievance Cell endeavor to protect the rights of the representationists in general and the students in particular.**

9.4 Committee's attention has been drawn by another problem area which has emerged due to the large number of legal cases pending against the Council in various courts of the country. The Committee was given to understand that Officers of the Council are being implicated in their personal capacity (by name) in such cases. As a result, these officers are finding it difficult to perform their duties, due to decisions taken by them in their official capacity being questioned by the petitioners. There have been many cases where the officers of the Council have been made to defend themselves in their individual capacity in courts. **The Committee observes that in similar Acts, a provision safeguarding the interests of officials and functionaries against any personal liability in the performance of their duties is duly incorporated. The Committee is of the view that AICTE Act should not be an exception and a provision on the lines of similar provision in other Acts may be incorporated in it.**

X. Commercialization of technical education

10.1 Commercialization of technical education is a serious issue which has been agitating not only the stakeholders but also discussed at length during Committee's deliberations. There are allegations about corrupt practices including exchange of money on wide-ranging aspects relating to admission, recognition and approval. There is lot of commercialization specially in Engineering and management institutions. Different courses attract different rates of speed money. The Council has also been held responsible for not regulating capitation fee. Students, who can afford, get admission in the best institutions by shelling out hefty amount. There are allegations that students do not get admission even after passing the test whereas those who have not even appeared in the exam are accommodated after taking higher fees. Some institutes even withhold the certificates and the fees in respect of the students who leave for other institutes.

10.2 These assumptions are corroborated by the irregularities like conducting unapproved courses along with the approved ones, sharing of infrastructure for two or more courses etc., violation of norms for area of land built up area, faculty and cadre ratio, computer and library facilities, lab and workshop requirements, non-refund of fees/original certificates, excess admission etc being noticed from time to time by the Expert Committees constituted by the Council. Due to admission period for all the technical institutions being the same, students have to face harassment sometime. Instances have come to the notice of the Committee where a student opting for admission to another institution

due to valid reasons fails to do so for the simple reason that his certificates are not being released by the earlier institution. Hefty fee deposited not being refunded was another problem area. When the matter was raised during the course of deliberation with the representatives of the Department and the Council, the Committee was informed that an order was issued last year ordering that none of the institutions would be allowed to keep the original certificates and the amount deposited with them. They were only allowed to keep a processing fee of Rs. 1000 per student. The Committee was further informed that a Public Grievances Cell has been created in the Council which on its own or on receipt of specific complaints takes all steps necessary to enforce the directions given by the Council. **While welcoming this initiative, the Committee feels that such cases need to be dealt with expeditiously so that students' interest and future remains secure. AICTE has to play a pro-active role by constant monitoring of such complaints and taking suitable action in case of deviations. The Committee is also of the view that the initiative needs to be taken to give wide publicity so that message reaches all concerned.**

10.3 Feedback received in response to the Press Release has highlighted another area of serious concern. **The Committee finds that a suitable mechanism for charging of fees covering all categories of technical institution is yet to be evolved.** The Secretary also conceded that commercialization was happening due to both AICTE and the Government not having full control over admissions. As a result, technical institutions in the private sector continue to charge fees as per their own norms set with a commercial angle.

10.4 The Committee notes that in accordance with Supreme Court directions given in various judgments, State level Fee Committees and Admission Committees prescribe fees to be charged by technical institutions and oversee the admission and charging of fees in all private technical institutions. The Committee, however, feels that the main objective behind setting up of such Committees of technical education being not commercialized perhaps continues to remain elusive. Not only this, another disturbing trend noticed in the recent years is level of commercialization in the charging of fees by private Universities running technical courses. At present, they are free to fix the amount of fee to be charged, quality of education being imparted by them remaining a non-issue.

10.5 The Committee understands that the State level fee and Admission Committees were interim in nature and the Central Government/State Governments were supposed to come up with a legislation or mechanism to regulate this area. The Committee has been informed that a National Fee Committee under the Chairmanship of former Chief Justice, Sh. Ranganath Mishra has been constituted by the Council to work out a mechanism for charging of fees by technical institutions. This Committee is in the process of conducting meetings with representatives of State Governments/universities/Technical institutions to ascertain the views of stakeholders before finalizing its recommendations. Meetings have been held so far at Hyderabad, Delhi and Mumbai.

10.6 The Committee notes that commercialization of education particularly changing of "capitation fee" is a reality in majority of technical institutions. The students are being exploited and fleeced by

these institutions. **The Committee firmly believes that education sector should be protected from being commercialized at all costs. The Committee recommends for exploring the feasibility of a uniform fee structure commensurate with the infrastructure and other facilities available in the institutions. The Committee hopes that the Report of the Ranganath Mishra Committee comes out with a sound and effective mechanism for the regulation of admission and fee structure of technical institutions. However, this exercise has to be expedited in the interest of students as this matter has already been over-delayed. In the meantime, the State Fee Committees and State Level Admission Committees have to take stringent action against institutions violating the regulations made by these Committees.**

XI. Administrative and Financial Problems in the functioning of AICTE

11.1 Shortage of staff at AICTE is the other major problem area, coming in the way of its smooth functioning. Status Note furnished by the Council indicates that it has been functioning with acute shortage of officers and staff and space. No infrastructure including permanent building, guest houses and accommodation are available. Centralized decision-making resulting in accumulation of work at the Headquarters because of limited staff at Regional Office, no in-house training system and non-implementation of E-Governance in its functioning are the other administrative constraints with which the Council is working.

11.2 **The Committee can well understand the kind of administrative drawbacks with which the Council continues to remain burdened inspite of it being in existence for so many years. However, the Committee fails to comprehend the sheer lack of any initiative on the part of the concerned authorities for taking corrective measures. Nobody can deny the fact that such administrative constraints could have been very easily removed. The Committee, therefore, impresses upon the Council to carry out a thorough review of its functioning both at the Headquarters and Regional Offices level and bring about the overdue administrative reforms.**

11.3 There are eight Regional Offices of AICTE functioning in different parts of the country. The regional Offices face shortage of staff and other constraints in their functioning. The Committee has also been given to understand that due to centralization of power in the hands of AICTE, Regional Offices do not enjoy much authority or responsibility.

11.4 **The need of the hour is to strengthen the Regional Offices by assigning greater responsibilities to deal with technical institutions in various parts of the country. As recommended by the High Power Committee, delegation of responsibility would make AICTE focus on policy issues and major initiative for quality growth and excellence of technical education in the country and the Regional Offices would shoulder responsibilities of directly dealing with the technical institutions. Therefore, additional manpower for the Regional Offices is the need of the hour. The Committee recommends that proposal for sanctioning additional posts for the Regional Offices may be moved by AICTE for the smooth functioning of its regional Offices. The Committee would like to emphasize on a pertinent point of**

decentralization of powers and workload to the Regional Offices of AICTE. Centralization of powers means heavy workload and inefficient functioning of the Council. The need of the hour is to delegate responsibilities to the Regional Offices so as to strengthen them to officiate on their own.

11.5 As per the recommendations of the study conducted by the Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of the Ministry of Finance in 2005 on the manpower requirement of AICTE, 33 posts should be created and 75 posts should be abolished. The Committee was informed that the proposal based on the SIU recommendation has been taken up with the Ministry by the Council. However, keeping in view the extent/volume of workload and the need of decentralization with delegated responsibility to Regional Offices, there was a serious need to review the sanctioned strength of manpower of AICTE. Reason given is that the workload of the Council has multiplied over a period of time and increased staff strength is the need of the hour both at the Headquarter and Regional Offices. AICTE has, accordingly, submitted a proposal to Ministry of HRD for sanctioning 41 posts over and above these assessed by the SIU.

11.6 The Committee observes that AICTE has not been able to assess its manpower requirement for its smooth functioning. At the time of the study by SIU of AICTE's manpower requirement in 2005, the Council failed to express its need for increased staff strength. Now the Council is submitting a proposal for sanctioning 41 more posts. The Committee believes that AICTE should assess thoroughly its manpower requirement at its Headquarters and in the Regional Offices and then request the Ministry for additional staff.

XII. New initiatives for expanding technical education

12.1 AICTE has recently invited applications through newspaper advertisements for running of second shift of Polytechnics in existing Polytechnic institutions/existing Engineering Institutions and also second shift of Engineering Institutions in existing engineering Institutions. Similarly, applications have also been invited for development of integrated campus with multi-discipline imparting technical institution and new technical institutions for women.

12.2 The Committee believes that the initiative regarding opening of second shift taken by AICTE is a welcome step but it need to be further explored regarding its feasibility in technical institutions. One of the major hindrances, according to the Committee would be the shortage of faculty. The Committee would like to point out that when the faculty requirement for the existing institutions remains far from fulfilled, additional faculty for teaching in the evening shifts seems to be a far-fetched idea. The Committee wonders in what manner, the most important component of this new venture would be taken care of. The Committee strongly feels that any ad-hoc measures would only turn out to be self-defeating. Appropriate arrangements are required to be in place before embarking on this idea.

12.3 With regard to the idea of development of integrated campus with multi-discipline

technical institution, the Committee is of the opinion that it is a progressive idea but it requires more and more resources/infrastructure for the same. The Committee understands that such integrated campuses are being administered by some private institutions and Universities. It would be better if their expertise is used so as to ensure smooth functioning of the proposed integrated campuses. Feasibility studies for having an integrated campus should be completed beforehand to avoid inordinate delay.

XIII. Miscellaneous

13.1 Committee's attention has been drawn to the problem of unfilled seats in other courses of technical education due to increasing popularity of IT and computer courses. Seats remain unfilled in the technical courses like civil engineering, mechanical engineering etc as students are opting for much more popular IT-related courses having a more lucrative future. Two Committees have been set up by the Council to look into the issue of increasing number of students going for IT-related courses and the problem of unfilled seats. Pilot surveys are being conducted by the two Committees. **The Committee urges the Council to expedite the reports of the two Committees constituted by the Council in this regard. Also, technical courses like mechanical engineering, civil engineering etc need to be popularized by the Council. Link-up with the industry for prospective jobs in these fields need to be strengthened by the Council so that students opt for the other courses also.**

13.2 The Committee would like to draw attention of the Council towards the private coaching institutes set up to impart coaching for taking admissions in premier technical institutions like IIT, IIM etc. These coaching institutes charge very high fees from the students for their services. They are being managed by the private sector with a commercial approach in totality. There is no regulatory mechanism to check their malpractices. As a result, there is a mushrooming of such coaching institutes across the country and our young children continue to become their victims. The present scenario has already become very alarming. **The Committee strongly feels that Government cannot remain a mute spectator. Some urgent proactive action is required on its part. The Committee has noticed that the faculty members of prominent technical institutions have been engaged in the coaching institutes. The Committee expresses its serious reservations over this trend. It would like the Council to monitor this aspect and take appropriate action against the erring coaching institutes.**

13.3 Another similar kind of problem is the multiplicity of entrance exams held in the country for admissions in various technical institutions. There is a total disconnect between bodies/institutes like AIEEE, IIT, etc. Entrance Tests and also those conducted by various States and many private institutes. Due to this, students have to join different coaching institutes for preparation for these entrance tests. All this leads to undue mental pressure on such students. Instances of students attempting/committing suicides occur every year. **In the opinion of the Committee, there is an urgent need for review of entrance test procedure with a view to streamline it so as to make it more scientific and less cumbersome.**

XIV. CONCLUSION

14.1 During the examination of the subject, attention of the Committee was drawn to the setting up of the three Expert Committees in the past with the objective of examining technical education in the country from different angles. The Committee has been given to understand that follow up action on a number of recommendations as contained in the reports of these Committees is at present being taken by AICTE.

14.2 That apart, subsequent to Committee taking up the Functioning of AICTE for examination, AICTE has set up a number of internal Committees on a number of pertinent issues on technical education as pointed out by the Committee during the course of its deliberations on the subject. Not only this, Rangnath Mishra Committee is already working on a mechanism for determining the fees to be charged by the technical institutions and admission procedure in accordance with the directions given by the Supreme Court. Latest in the series of such Committees is the Yashpal Committee set up to examine the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission pertaining to technical education.

14.3 A long list of the Committees is indicative of the plethora of issues which either remained unresolved or needed to be reviewed in the field of technical education. The Committee presumes that the Council must be flooded with innumerable suggestions/complaints with regard to its functioning. Scrutiny of suggestions and evolving remedies thereof is a continuous exercise for any institution. The Council which is primarily shaping the future technocrats and management experts cannot be an exception for such exercise. The Committee appreciates the review exercise going on in the Council through its Committees. However, only setting up Committees and lingering on the action to be taken would not serve the purpose. Important thing is how and when the outcome of the studies is translated into reality. The recommendations of the Committees set up to look into various aspects of functioning of the AICTE and Government's response thereto may be submitted to this Committee within three months so as to enable it to have a holistic view on the system as a whole.

14.4 The Committee believes that the examination of functioning of AICTE by it would be providing additional inputs to the Council in the review exercise. It hopes that the Council would consider its recommendations in the right perspective and endeavour to streamline and strengthen the whole gamut of technical education in the interest of all concerned.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE – AT A GLANCE

III NEED FOR AMENDMENTS/ENFORCEMENT OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE AICTE ACT, 1987

The Committee appreciates the need for inclusion of emerging technical programmes under the AICTE Act. However, it is skeptical about the capability of the Council in handling this additional mandate mainly due to the general perception about the Council not satisfactorily managing the programmes presently under its purview. New programmes, the Committee feels, would mean garnering additional financial, administrative and infrastructural facilities. AICTE itself has expressed several constraints including inadequacy of resources for handling the programmes under its purview. The Committee is constrained to note that AICTE with its existing limitations would not be able to manage the newly emerging areas along with the existing ones. Committee's apprehensions have been aggravated by the fact that AICTE has, at present, no mechanism for forecasting growth in new technologies for developing educational programmes in the emerging areas due to inadequate information system. As a result, vital task of updation for both introducing new courses and funding is yet to be taken up by the Council. The Committee, therefore, opines that taking up added responsibilities would pose a challenge to the Council and it is upto the Council to devise ways to do a good job in managing all the courses of study including new areas. The Committee would like to emphasise that the Council needs revamping to update itself about newly emerging areas for developing technical educational programmes. A mechanism needs to be evolved having a group of experts so as to facilitate the Council in doing research and forecasting growth in new technologies. The need of the hour for the Council is to move, change, grow and re-orient its strategies with the changing times. The Committee is also of the view that the AICTE should consolidate its core competence, revamp its infrastructure and restructure the organization keeping in view the altered realities prior to enlarging its mandate to cover new disciplines.

(Para 3.3)

The Committee agrees with the expert views advocating retention of management education under the definition of "technical education". However, in view of the mushrooming of institutions providing management education across the country, the monitoring apparatus in this regard is required to be strengthened. Even while recognizing the commonalities keeping in view the differentiating characteristics, management education needs a varied calibrated approach. The AICTE should consider creating a specialized wing with independent domain specialized for considering all aspects of Management education.

(Para 3.6)

The Committee is of the view that the existing regulatory system for pharmacy education sector should continue.

(Para 3.7)

The Committee is surprised to note that such a situation has been allowed to persist for long without any pro-active step being initiated. The Committee would appreciate if this crucial issue is examined without any further delay and a rightful decision keeping the interests

of student community as a whole is taken. The present overlapping of functions and conflict of interest needs to be stopped forthwith by having only one regulatory body for the discipline of architecture.

(Para 3.8)

The Committee opines that taking into consideration the newly emerging areas and the demand for excluding few disciplines from the definition of technical education, Section 2 (g) needs to be redefined with specificity rather than in generic terms. Hence, amendment of the said Section is definitely called for.

(Para 3.9)

Section 10 : Powers and Functions of the Council

Three very important functions *viz* (i) evolving suitable performance appraisal systems for technical institutions/ universities, incorporating norms and mechanism for enforcing accountability, (ii) advising the Central Government in respect of grant of charter to any professional body/ institution in the field of technical education conferring powers, rights and privileges on it for promotion of such profession; and (iii) laying down norms for granting autonomy to technical institutions have remained on paper only, all these years for reasons best known to the Council. Feedback submitted to the Committee clearly indicates the disinclination of the Council in this regard. The Committee can understand the reasons for there being no quality control on the standard of technical institutions whose numbers keep on increasing every year. The Committee presumes that before bringing this legislation, the policy formulators and law-makers must have examined all the pros and cons while prescribing very specific functions for the regulatory body for technical education in the country. The Committee can only emphasize that serious rethinking is required in this regard by all concerned. Status of the remaining 18 functions entrusted to the Council as indicated to the Committee leaves much scope for improvement. Considering the need to attract and retain high quality faculty the Committee strongly urges that norms for granting autonomy to technical institutions should be finalized and implemented on a priority basis.

Following are the provisions which in the Committee's opinion require introspection followed by pro-active action on the part of the Council: -

(Para 3.10)

The Committee was constrained to note that the AICTE till date has failed to undertake any survey whatsoever in any field of technical education leaving thereby the crucial mandate of making forecast about the needed growth and development in technical education unattended so far.

(Para 3.11)

The Committee expresses its deep anguish that the Council has not undertaken any survey till date to anticipate and forecast the growth and development in technical education.

The Committee wonders as to how the Council has been coordinating the maintenance of standards in the absence of any such survey. The Council seemingly appears clueless about the existing ground realities with respect to the various disciplines of technical education. Undoubtedly policies, regulations or norms cannot be formulated without relying on some authentic data. In a situation where data provided by the National Technical Manpower Information System (NTMIS) is not being used for educational planning, the Committee deprecates the lack of initiative on the part of Council to fill the gaps. The Committee finds that it was only after this issue was raised by it, the Council initiated some action by setting up a Committee represented by the Chairmen of all the Boards of Studies to suggest a reliable survey mechanism. This is indeed a very discouraging state of affairs that the Council has taken such a long time to realize the lack of efficacy of a scheme envisaged for planning the advancement of technical education in the country. The Committee has been given to understand that a pilot study has been commissioned to be conducted in three States *i.e.* one state with the highest enrolment rate (Tamil Nadu), another State with the average enrolment rate (Madhya Pradesh) and the third State with the lowest enrolment rate (Bihar). Report of the pilot study is to be given within two months and on the basis of this Report, an all India survey would be conducted. The Committee is happy to note the initiation of the pilot study though it got delayed beyond comprehension. The Committee would like to emphasize that the Report of the said pilot study should be submitted by the Committee of the Council at the earliest so that required action is not further delayed. Further, based on the findings of the Pilot Study, an Action Plan for covering the entire country within 12 months should be evolved if necessary through outsourcing.

(Para 3.12)

The Committee observes that concentration of institutions in specific regions is the testimony of extent of regional imbalance. The very objective of proper planning and co-ordinated development of the technical education system throughout the country in the backdrop of evolving AICTE from an advisory body to a statutory body seems to have been defeated. The Committee would like to draw the attention to the following extract from the National Policy on Education 1986 making a specific mention of the need for making AICTE a statutory body.

“The All India Council for Technical Education will be vested with statutory authority forensuring the co-ordinated and integrated development of technical and management education.”

The recent efforts made by the Council for setting up a Committee for overcoming regional imbalance are too late and apparently not very effective. More than twenty years have passed since the Council became a statutory body. Despite the self claimed reforms in approval process of the Council, the regional imbalances have continued. The Committee is hardly convinced with the restrictive approach of the Council. The Committee would like the Council to share the recommendations of its Committee and the follow up action taken in the matter within one month.

(Para 3.14)

The Committee appreciates the initiatives undertaken by the Council for promoting technical education amongst women, the handicapped and the weaker sections. It has also taken cognizance of advertisements recently issued by AICTE for women specific technical institutions which is a welcome step. (Para 3.15)

Committee's attention has also been drawn to the perceptible lack of co-ordination between AICTE, State Governments and other agencies having a key role in the implementation of welfare schemes for the aforesaid categories in their respective States. Not only this, there are no guidelines/regulatory support for the weaker sections of the society for getting technical education. Also, AICTE has no role in the admission of students of weaker sections of the society in technical institutions. The Committee fails to understand the reasons for lack of any pro-active action on the part of AICTE as the statutory regulatory body for all conceivable aspects of technical education in this vital area. It is high time that serious efforts are initiated for elimination of aforesaid constraints. (Para 3.16)

The Committee has taken note of three major drawbacks in this provision as pointed out by the Council. The first major drawback is the word 'agencies' remaining undefined and thus leading to ambiguity with regard to specific agencies required to be consulted for grant of approval of new technical institutions. The Committee is in agreement with the contention of the Council and recommends that definition of 'agencies' may be incorporated under the relevant section of the Act.

(Para 3.18)

The Committee finds logic in the contention of the Council. The Committee strongly feels that primary objective of co-ordinated development of technical education system throughout the country entrusted to the Council through the AICTE Act of 1987 can only be fulfilled in the real sense if this dual stream of technical education is brought under one regulatory body. The Committee, accordingly, recommends that Section 10 (k) be modified to include the faculties and departments of Universities including Deemed to be Universities imparting technical education at the time of granting them approval for their establishment and starting new courses as well. Definition of the term 'technical institution' as given in Section 2(h) may also be modified accordingly. The Government may also examine feasibility of trifurcating the functions of the accreditation, regulation and control with each entity functioning with autonomy and arm's length relationship with Government.

(Para 3.20)

IV Linkages between Industry and Technical Institutions

The Committee is, however, surprised to note that inspite of several initiatives taken for meaningful interaction between industry and academia for mutual benefits specific to technical education system, linkages between industry and technical institutions continue to remain weak. The Committee has been given to understand that anticipated response from the

industry is simply missing. The variety of initiatives has failed to evolve the desired level of participation of the industry. Tie up with industry associations such as CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, NASSCOM and with entrepreneurship promoting agencies such as NSTEDB-DST, EDI, NISIET, NIESBUD have failed to take off. The fact that monitoring was required to ensure good progress of all the existing schemes, as admitted by the Council itself, indicates the dismal state of affairs in this most vital area. The Committee is not impressed by the reported move of the Council in setting up yet another Committee for review of the existing Industry-Institute Partnership Schemes. In Committee's opinion, to term it as a strategic initiative cannot be considered justified. Need of the hour is to initiate a meaningful dialogue with the representatives of industry so as to have the real understanding of their requirements and remove the existing bottlenecks. The Committee is not aware as to how many technical institutions have an Industry Institute Partnership Cell operational in the real sense. The Committee strongly underlines the need for a review of this facility so as to make such cells the focal point for better interaction between the academia and industry. Undoubtedly, the Council will have to play the role of co-ordinator and facilitator between the industry and institutions. The Committee would also like to emphasize that in view of the need to foster public/private partnership and harness private sector resources, AICTE should holistically examine its existing rules, regulations and procedures to further this objective. This may be undertaken after broad-based consultations with Industry. The findings of such consultation and proposed action may be submitted to this Committee within three months.

(Para 4.2)

V. Institutions operating programmes of foreign universities in the Country

The Committee finds it very disturbing that as many as 62 such institutions are operating in the country without any apparent control. The Committee understands that complaints were registered with the Council where students were taken for a ride by such institutions. However, in the absence of any statutory powers enshrined in the Act, the Council authorities have remained a helpless witness so far. The only action taken by it has been to put a list of such unapproved institutions on its web site, public notices issued in the print media and advisories sent to the concerned State Governments/UTs for initiating action for closure by invoking civil and criminal laws applicable in such cases.

(Para 5.1)

A suggestion which has been made to the Committee by the Council is that such foreign universities/institutions be brought under Section 10 (k) along with modification in the definition of 'technical institution' and 'university'. The Committee also feels that these modifications may make the task of the Council somewhat easier. At the same time, the Committee would like to point out that in the context of Indian technical institutions inspite of there being statutory provisions and relevant regulations, the Council has simply remained a mute spectator with regard to handling of unapproved technical institutions so far. Therefore, the Council, besides being pro-active will also have to explore some other mechanism to curb the uncontrolled expansion of foreign institutions/programmes in the country.

(Para 5.2)

VI. Procedure for Approval of new technical institutions

The Committee is, however, surprised to note the general perception, as revealed from the feedback received in response to the Press Release issued by it mentioning that the Council has been spending its entire energy, time and resources only on one function *i.e.* grant of approval for starting new institutions and introduction of new courses. Even on that account, many of the approved institutions do not fulfill minimum standards and prescribed criteria with respect to infrastructure, number of faculty members etc. It has also been pointed out that the procedure for granting recognition and approval is not only complicated but suffer from irregularities and non-transparency. The Committee has also been given to understand that access to AICTE officials for seeking clarifications is extremely difficult which is further causing undue delay. A time-bound system for the approval process may be placed on the website and accountability for deviations need to be assigned to secure transparency and minimize harassment.

(Para 6.2)

The Committee wonders whether there is any prescribed criteria for selection of experts for the Inspection Team and if it exists, whether it is being strictly adhered to. Besides the general lack of confidence in the existing procedure of inspection carried out at the initial stage, the Committee would like to point out that the list of 137 unapproved technical institutions displayed on the web site of the Council confirms its apprehension that prescribed norms/guidelines for grant of approval are not being adhered to. Instead of members of the Inspection Team being randomly handpicked, criteria for their selection should be foolproof and unquestionable. The Committee has also been given to understand that members of Inspection Team are generally from Government institutions. With the increasing participation of private sector in the field of technical education, their representation to the extent possible should also be reflected in the Inspection Team. This crucial issue needs to be considered by the Council, without any further delay. (Para 6.5)

The Committee therefore, fails to comprehend the rationale behind the Council's suggestion for amending the Act when the required power has already been provided in the Regulations. It is the execution part of the Regulation which is not coming forth. The inability of the Council to take stringent action against the unapproved institutions and those violating norms and standards under this Regulation is quite disturbing. The accountability of the Council does not end simply by issuing show cause notices to these institutions and requesting the State Governments to take action against them. The Committee expresses its serious concerns over the large number of institutions continuing to flout the norms and operating without any check. The Committee, therefore, urges the Council to assume its mandated responsibility and take immediate corrective steps for curbing the institutions that are flouting the norms and standards prescribed by AICTE.

VII. Inspection of existing Technical Institutions

In such a scenario, the Committee can well understand the status of follow-up action and corrective measures taken on the basis of inspection reports. The Committee would appreciate if details of action taken on the 655 inspections carried out during the last three years are forwarded to it. The Committee apprehends that situation would be similar in respect of other disciplines of technical education. The Committee would also like to draw the attention of the Council to the fact that a well-built inspection mechanism having all the expertise and objective approach is the very foundation of the technical education system in the country. Any neglect in this regard is simply not acceptable. The Council should, therefore, conduct a review of the existing inspection mechanism for bringing in the required improvements.

(Para 7.4)

VIII Shortage of faculty – Qualitative and Quantitative

The Committee hopes that the above-mentioned line of action must have been completed by now. If not, the Committee would appreciate if this exercise is expedited to ensure launching of the scheme at the earliest.

(Para 8.8)

The Committee understands the gravity of the problem of faculty shortage in technical institutions. The very purpose of opening new institutions is defeated if they do not have the required faculty for imparting technical education. The Committee would like to emphasize that qualified and competent faculty has to be there in all technical institutions for imparting quality education. Merely filling the vacancies of faculty positions by less qualified persons who do not meet the prescribed criteria would only result in sub-standard education system which is unfortunately evident in majority of technical institutions at present.

(Para 8.9)

The Committee appreciates the efforts made by the Council but much more needs to be done for addressing this problem. The Committee observes that it was almost three years back, the Scheme of Mentor Institutions was recommended by the two Expert Committees. However, the AICTE could not launch the scheme as sufficient funds for the purpose have not been allocated. Out of Rs.950 crores earmarked for Mentor Institutions in the Eleventh Five Year Plan, only Rs. 5 crores have been allocated for the financial year 2008-09 for faculty development. The Committee considers non-allocation of funds as sheer lack of initiative on the part of both the Council and the Department for this major scheme, which was the outcome of the deliberations of two Expert Committees. The matter needs to be urgently taken up with the Planning Commission/Ministry of Finance for allocation of funds. Before that, the Council should ensure that all preparatory exercises and feasibility studies are completed beforehand so that there is no further delay in launching the scheme. Secondly, concerted efforts should be made to attract and retain qualified persons in the teaching profession. Attractive

remuneration packages at par with the industry should be offered to qualified and competent persons so that exodus of such people is arrested. The Committee also believes that wide publicity should be given to highlight the wide scope and better prospects of technical courses so that more and more students opt for them. The need of the hour is to make the profession attractive with ample training opportunities and other incentives.

(Para 8.10)

The Committee can only emphasize that all-out efforts need to be made by the Council and the Department so as to ensure that the proposed scheme does not meet the fate of the Early Faculty Induction Programme. A number of other measures/programmes besides the scheme of Mentor Institutions have been recommended by the two Expert Committees both for upgradation of qualifications of existing faculty and their competency building and for attracting young Graduates/Post-graduates to teaching. The Committee hopes that these measures would also be implemented at the earliest. The Committee, however, has reservation on the recommendation of increasing the age of retirement of existing faculty at Professor level from 65 to 70. The Committee reiterates that the right step would be to attract the talented youth to the noble profession of teaching by giving maximum incentives.

(Para 8.11)

IX. Pending legal cases against AICTE

The Committee believes that the large pendency of cases against AICTE speaks volume of the poor grievances redressal mechanism forcing the aggrieved to resort to courts. The Committee understands that there is an Appellate Committee constituted by the Council for redressal of grievances. At present, there are only 13 cases before this Committee. This figure is abysmally low in view of dissatisfaction expressed by a large number of stakeholders against the functioning of the Council. The Committee believes that either the redressal mechanism does not inspire confidence amongst the aggrieved or the people are not aware of the mechanism itself. The Committee believes that the functioning of this Appellate Committee needs to be reviewed and made effective so that affected persons bring their cases before this Committee instead of filing cases in courts for redressal of their grievances. Efforts should be made by the Council to give wide publicity about its Appellate Committee mechanism. The Committee would term it a suitable mechanism where the people first approach the Appellate Committee of the Council and then resort to legal help.

(Para 9.2)

The Committee is of the opinion that grievances received in the Cell should be attended to with due priority and be redressed within shortest possible time in order to prove the efficacy of the Cell so that the interest of the complainant is addressed in the right earnest. AICTE should through its Grievance Cell endeavor to protect the rights of the representationists in general and the students in particular.

(Para 9.3)

The Committee observes that in similar Acts, a provision safeguarding the interests of officials and functionaries against any personal liability in the performance of their duties is duly incorporated. The Committee is of the view that AICTE Act should not be an exception and a provision on the lines of similar provision in other Acts may be incorporated in it.
(Para 9.4)

X. Commercialization of technical education

While welcoming this initiative, the Committee feels that such cases need to be dealt with expeditiously so that students' interest and future remains secure. AICTE has to play a proactive role by constant monitoring of such complaints and taking suitable action in case of deviations. The Committee is also of the view that the initiative needs to be taken to give wide publicity so that message reaches all concerned.

(Para 10.2)

The Committee finds that a suitable mechanism for charging of fees covering all categories of technical institution is yet to be evolved.
(Para 10.3)

The Committee notes that in accordance with Supreme Court directions given in various judgments, State level Fee Committees and Admission Committees prescribe fees to be charged by technical institutions and oversee the admission and charging of fees in all private technical institutions. The Committee, however, feels that the main objective behind setting up of such Committees of technical education being not commercialized perhaps continues to remain elusive. Not only this, another disturbing trend noticed in the recent years is level of commercialization in the charging of fees by private Universities running technical courses. At present, they are free to fix the amount of fee to be charged, quality of education being imparted by them remaining a non-issue.
(Para 10.4)

The Committee firmly believes that education sector should be protected from being commercialized at all costs. The Committee recommends for exploring the feasibility of a uniform fee structure commensurate with the infrastructure and other facilities available in the institutions. The Committee hopes that the Report of the Ranganath Mishra Committee comes out with a sound and effective mechanism for the regulation of admission and fee structure of technical institutions. However, this exercise has to be expedited in the interest of students as this matter has already been over-delayed. In the meantime, the State Fee Committees and State Level Admission Committees have to take stringent action against institutions violating the regulations made by these Committees.

(Para 10.6)

XI. Administrative and Financial Problems in the functioning of AICTE

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The Committee can well understand the kind of administrative drawbacks with which the Council continues to remain burdened inspite of it being in existence for so many years. However, the Committee fails to comprehend the sheer lack of any initiative on the part of the concerned authorities for taking corrective measures. Nobody can deny the fact that such administrative constraints could have been very easily removed. The Committee, therefore, impresses upon the Council to carry out a thorough review of its functioning both at the Headquarters and Regional Offices level and bring about the overdue administrative reforms.

(Para 11.2)

The need of the hour is to strengthen the Regional Offices by assigning greater responsibilities to deal with technical institutions in various parts of the country. As recommended by the High Power Committee, delegation of responsibility would make AICTE focus on policy issues and major initiative for quality growth and excellence of technical education in the country and the Regional Offices would shoulder responsibilities of directly dealing with the technical institutions. Therefore, additional manpower for the Regional Offices is the need of the hour. The Committee recommends that proposal for sanctioning additional posts for the Regional Offices may be moved by AICTE for the smooth functioning of its regional Offices. The Committee would like to emphasize on a pertinent point of decentralization of powers and workload to the Regional Offices of AICTE. Centralization of powers means heavy workload and inefficient functioning of the Council. The need of the hour is to delegate responsibilities to the Regional Offices so as to strengthen them to officiate on their own.

(Para 11.4)

The Committee observes that AICTE has not been able to assess its manpower requirement for its smooth functioning. At the time of the study by SIU of AICTE's manpower requirement in 2005, the Council failed to express its need for increased staff strength. Now the Council is submitting a proposal for sanctioning 41 more posts. The Committee believes that AICTE should assess thoroughly its manpower requirement at its Headquarters and in the Regional Offices and then request the Ministry for additional staff.

(Para 11.6)

XII. New initiatives for expanding technical education

The Committee believes that the initiative regarding opening of second shift taken by AICTE is a welcome step but it need to be further explored regarding its feasibility in technical institutions. One of the major hindrances, according to the Committee would be the shortage of faculty. The Committee would like to point out that when the faculty requirement for the existing institutions remains far from fulfilled, additional faculty for teaching in the evening shifts seems to be a far-fetched idea. The Committee wonders in what manner, the most important component of this new venture would be taken care of. The Committee strongly feels that any ad-hoc measures would only turn out to be self-defeating. Appropriate arrangements are required to be in place before embarking on this idea.

(Para 12.2)

With regard to the idea of development of integrated campus with multi-discipline technical institution, the Committee is of the opinion that it is a progressive idea but it requires more and more resources/infrastructure for the same. The Committee understands that such integrated campuses are being administered by some private institutions and Universities. It would be better if their expertise is used so as to ensure smooth functioning of the proposed integrated campuses. Feasibility studies for having an integrated campus should be completed beforehand to avoid inordinate delay.

(Para 12.3)

XIII. Miscellaneous

The Committee urges the Council to expedite the reports of the two Committees constituted by the Council in this regard. Also, technical courses like mechanical engineering, civil engineering etc need to be popularized by the Council. Link-up with the industry for prospective jobs in these fields need to be strengthened by the Council so that students opt for the other courses also.

(Para 13.1)

The Committee strongly feels that Government cannot remain a mute spectator. Some urgent proactive action is required on its part. The Committee has noticed that the faculty members of prominent technical institutions have been engaged in the coaching institutes. The Committee expresses its serious reservations over this trend. It would like the Council to monitor this aspect and take appropriate action against the erring coaching institutes.

(Para 13.2)

In the opinion of the Committee, there is an urgent need for review of entrance test procedure with a view to streamline it so as to make it more scientific and less cumbersome.

(Para 13.3)

XIV. CONCLUSION

A long list of the Committees is indicative of the plethora of issues which either remained unresolved or needed to be reviewed in the field of technical education. The Committee presumes that the Council must be flooded with innumerable suggestions/complaints with regard to its functioning. Scrutiny of suggestions and evolving remedies thereof is a continuous exercise for any institution. The Council which is primarily shaping the future technocrats and management experts cannot be an exception for such exercise. The Committee appreciates the review exercise going on in the Council through its Committees. However, only setting up Committees and lingering on the action to be taken would not serve the purpose. Important thing is how and when the outcome of the studies is translated into reality. The recommendations of the Committees set up to look into various aspects of functioning of the

AICTE and Government's response thereto may be submitted to this Committee within three months so as to enable it to have a holistic view on the system as a whole.

(Para 14.3)

The Committee believes that the examination of functioning of AICTE by it would be providing additional inputs to the Council in the review exercise. It hopes that the Council would consider its recommendations in the right perspective and endeavour to streamline and strengthen the whole gamut of technical education in the interest of all concerned.

(Para 14.4)

**MINUTES
IV
FOURTH MEETING**

The Committee on Human Resource Development met at 4.00 p.m. on Friday, the 11th January, 2008 in Room No. 139, First Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. Shri Janardan Dwivedi ¾ *Chairman*

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Dwijendra Nath Sharmah
3. Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik
4. Shri Vijay Kumar Rupani

LOK SABHA

5. Shri Ashok Argal
6. Shri Basudeb Barman
7. Shri Harisinh Chavda
8. Smt. Paramjit Kaur Gulshan
9. Shri Ramswaroop Koli
10. Shri G.V. Harsha Kumar
11. Smt. Archana Nayak
12. Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh
13. Dr. Thokchom Meinya
14. Shri K. Virupakshappa
15. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
16. Shri Francis K. George

17. Shri Rahul Gandhi

18. 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

LIST OF WITNESSES

Department of Higher Education

1. Shri R.P. Agrawal, Secretary
2. Shri K.M. Acharya, Special Secretary
3. Prof. R.A. Yadav, Chairman (Acting), AICTE
4. Prof. K. Narayana Rao, Member Secretary
5. Shri Ravi Mathur, Joint Secretary
6. Mrs. Pratima Dikshit, Director
7. Shri A.K. Nassa, Asstt. Educational Adviser
8. Prof. Prasad Krishna, Adviser, AICTE
9. Dr. Rakesh Sharma, Adviser, AICTE
10. Dr. Swadesh Gupta, Adviser, AICTE
11. Dr. K. Madhumurthy, Adviser, AICTE
12. Dr. Rajnish Srivastava, Adviser, AICTE

2. After welcoming the Members of the Committee, the Chairman outlined those aspects of the All India Council for Technical Education functioning which are intended to be examined by the Committee. The Committee, thereafter, heard the oral evidence of the Secretary, and other representatives of the Department of Higher Education on the issues raised by the Chairman. The Secretary made a presentation on the activities and achievements of the Council. The Members, then, sought clarifications to which the Secretary of the Department and Acting Chairman, AICTE, replied.

3. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

4. The Committee then adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

I

FIRST MEETING

The Committee on Human Resource Development met at 4.00 p.m. on Monday, the 11th August, 2008 in Room No. 63, First Floor, Parliament House, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. Shri Janardan Dwivedi $\frac{3}{4}$ *Chairman*

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik
3. Shri Vijaykumar Rupani
4. Shri Laxminarayan Sharma
5. Shri Uday Pratap Singh
6. Shri N.K. Singh

LOK SABHA

7. Shri Basudeb Barman
8. Shri Harisinh Chavda
9. Shri Abu Hasem Khan Chaudhary
10. Shri Francis K. George
11. Shri Ramswaroop Koli
12. Shrimati Nivedita Sambhajirao Mane
13. Shrimati M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran
14. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat
15. Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh
16. Dr. Ramlakhan Singh
17. Dr. Meinya Thokchom
18. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
19. Shri K. Virupakshappa

SECRETARIAT

Smt. Vandana Garg, Joint Secretary
Shri H. C. Sethi, Director
Shri J. Sundriyal, Joint Director
Shri Sanjay Singh, Committee Officer

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the members of the newly reconstituted Committee. He gave a brief outline of the work done by the Committee during the last one year and apprised the

Committee about the status of issues such as functioning of AICTE, * * * presently before the Committee. * * *

3. The Committee then adjourned at 4.20 p.m.

***Relates to other matters.

II SECOND MEETING

The Committee on Human Resource Development met at 4.00 p.m. on Tuesday, the 16th September, 2008 in Committee Room 'A', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. Shri Janardan Dwivedi $\frac{3}{4}$ *Chairman*

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik
3. Dr. K. Keshava Rao
4. Shri N.K. Singh
5. Shri M. Rama Jois

LOK SABHA

6. Shri Ashok Argal
7. Shri Basudeb Barman
8. Shri Harisinh Chavda
9. Shrimati Paramjit Kaur Gulshan
10. Shri Ramswaroop Koli
11. Shrimati Nivedita Sambhajirao Mane
12. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat
13. Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh
14. Shri Chengara Surendran
15. Shri K. Virupakshappa
16. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
17. Shri Francis K. George
18. Shri Anantkumar Hegde
19. Dr. Ramlakhan Singh
20. Shri Abu Hasem Khan Chaudhary

SECRETARIAT

Smt. Vandana Garg, Joint Secretary
 Shri H. C. Sethi, Director
 Shri Sanjay Singh, Committee Officer

2. *** Thereafter, the Chairman gave a brief outline of the action taken in respect of examination of the subject "Functioning of AICTE".
3. The Committee then heard the Chairman, AICTE on the problem areas in the functioning of AICTE. The members raised certain queries and also gave some suggestions which were taken note of by the Chairman, AICTE. The Committee decided to send a detailed questionnaire based on the Background Note furnished by AICTE, unanswered queries of Members and feedback received in response to the Press Release issued by it and directed the Chairman, AICTE to forward the replies thereto at the earliest.
4. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.
5. The Committee then adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

***Relates to other matters.

III**THIRD MEETING**

The Committee on Human Resource Development met at 4.00 p.m. on Friday, the 28th November, 2008 in Committee Room 'D', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. Shri Janardan Dwivedi $\frac{3}{4}$ *Chairman*

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik
3. Dr. K. Keshava Rao
4. Shri N.K. Singh
5. Shri M. Rama Jois

LOK SABHA

6. Shri Harisinh Chavda
7. Shrimati Paramjit Kaur Gulshan

