

**National Conference  
On  
Development of Higher Education for Expansion, Inclusion and Excellence**

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Relevant Issues and Recommendations of  
Regional Conferences of the Vice Chancellors

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**University Grants Commission**  
New Delhi

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While higher education in India has achieved remarkable progress in terms of institutions, teachers enrolment and teaching-learning infrastructure including disciplines, it is strongly felt that there are a number of challenges that need to be addressed urgently. The foremost priority, at this juncture appears to be enhancing access to higher education, which shall require us to substantially increase the intake capacity in higher education institutions. As we do so, we have to also ensure that the higher education is made equitable and inclusive, meaning thereby that the regional and social imbalances prevailing in the access to higher education will have to be tackled. No less critical is the issue of relevance and quality of higher education as urgent steps are needed to address the issue of Inter-institutional variations in quality. Therefore, effective measures are necessary for the promotion of excellence in teaching- learning processes and outcomes in the forms of research, publications and creation of intellectual capital. The higher education system also requires academic and administrative reforms in order to become responsive to the needs and challenges of globalisation.

It is with the above in sight, the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the Planning Commission and the University Grants Commission have been working in tandem to evolve policies and programmes of actions to be given effect during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. However, effectiveness of these policies and programmes of action require proactive participation of all stakeholders. That would be possible only when the ground realities are incorporated in the policy formulation. It was with this in view that Shri Arjun Singh, Honourable Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India, desired that the University Grants Commission should initiate wider consultations on various proposals regarding expansion, inclusion, excellence and reform of higher education so as to obtain feedback and considered views of stakeholders and leaderships of higher education.

Accordingly the UGC decided to organise four Regional Conferences inviting participation of (a) Vice Chancellors of all Central, State, Deemed and Private Universities; (b) Directors of the College Development Councils of affiliating universities; (c) Secretaries/ Directors of Higher Education of different states; (d) Chairpersons of State Councils of Higher Education; (e) Renowned academicians and administrators known for their knowledge, experience and interest in higher education; (f) Heads of Educational Societies and Trusts. These four conferences were as under:

- *Western Regional Conferences* was hosted by University of Mumbai on September 13-14, 2007 and was attended by over 57 participants, mostly Vice Chancellors of universities in Maharashtra, Gujrat, Goa
- *Eastern Regional Conference* was hosted by Jadavpur University, Kolkata on September 15-16, 2007 and was attended by 63 participants, mostly Vice Chancellors of universities in West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand, Sikkim and the North Eastern States
- *Southern Regional Conference* was hosted by Jawaharlal Nehru Technical University, Hyderabad on September 18-19, 2007 and was attended by 51 participants, mostly Vice Chancellors of Universities in Andhra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Pondicherry

- *Northern Regional Conference* was hosted by Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi on September 20-21, 2007 and was attended by 51 participants, mostly Vice Chancellors of Universities in Delhi, J& K, Punjab, Haryana, UP, Rajasthan, MP, Chattisgarh, Himachal, Uttaranchal.

*Thus altogether about 222 Vice-Chancellors participated in the four Regional Conferences.*

These conferences were aimed at raising and discussing critical issues concerning the following seven themes:

- *Expansion of Higher Education* – raising the gross enrolment ratio in higher education by 5% and to cover such dimensions as establishment of new universities and colleges, consolidation and strengthening of existing institutions of higher education;
- *Equity and Inclusion* – removing barriers in access to higher education by the deprived, marginalized social groups and economically backward
- *Quality and Excellence* – identifying the causes of inter-institutional variation in higher education and working out the requirements for improving quality and excellence in higher education;
- *Academic and Administrative Reforms* – encompassing Admission System, Examination System, Faculty appointment, selection, performance, student-evaluation, curricula and pedagogy, Governance, appointment of Vice Chancellors, university autonomy, public accountability, Role of the UGC in higher education development; affiliating system of higher education;
- *Private Participation in Higher Education* – encompassing issues concerning the facilitation and regulation of private investment in higher education;
- *Internationalisation of Higher Education* – encompassing such issues as international collaboration, promotion of Indian higher education abroad, entry and regulation of foreign universities and other institutions of higher education;
- *Financing of Higher Education* - Fee related issues, Funding mechanism, public-private partnership; private investment in higher education and challenges and issues arising out of them;

In order to facilitate focussed discussion, the UGC prepared a comprehensive theme paper, which was circulated amongst all participating universities. The UGC also identified resource persons to make presentations on each theme and steer discussions in the technical session.

This document is a culmination of the above regional conferences and incorporates the theme paper circulated by the UGC and recommendations of the regional conferences on each of the theme. It is hoped that the participants of the National Conference will further deliberate upon the critical issues and arrive at a consensus on the development and reform of higher education.

New Delhi  
October, 2007

**Sukhadeo Thorat**  
**Chairman UGC**

Introduction:

Higher education in India has expanded many folds during the past six decades. The number of universities in the country has increased from 20 in 1947 to 378 whereas the number of colleges, which were no more than 500 at the eve of Independence, has gone up to 18064. No less significant has been the increase in the number of teaching staff which has gone up from a meagre 15, 000 to nearly 4.80 Lakhs during the same period. The number of students enrolled in higher education too has gone up from 1 Lakh in 1950 to over 112 lakhs in 2005. Obviously, the institutional capacity of higher education has increased by several folds. This has, in turn, enhanced access to higher education as we find that the enrolment ratio has increased from less than 1 % in 1950 to about 10 % in 2007. These developments notwithstanding, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in relative terms compares quite poorly with 60% in USA and Canada, over 40% in several European countries and more than 20% in many developed and developing countries. International experience shows that no country has been able to become an economically advanced country, if its enrolment ratio in higher education has been less than 20%. The foremost priority must, therefore, be enhancing access to higher education such that the GER is raised to a minimum threshold level of about 20 percent for sustained economic development. In immediate term, the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan has set the target GER of 15 percent.

Proposal & Strategies:

Such a substantial increase in enrolment would require multi-pronged strategy. Higher education being in the concurrent list, this will call for joint efforts by the union as well as the state governments. Necessary measures in this direction would require:

- ❖ Establishment of new universities and the colleges in order to cope with the increasing demand for higher education. While state governments are encouraged to establish new universities and colleges, the Central government may take proactive initiative in establishing central universities, institutions of national importance, deemed universities. Some announcements have already been made in this regard. These include establishment of 30 new central universities and establishment of new IITs and IIMs;
- ❖ Strengthening and increasing the intake capacity of existing colleges and the universities through increase in seats of existing courses as well as by introducing new courses. This may require enhanced additional development grants to existing universities and colleges
- ❖ Helping the state government and providing matching support from the centre, in setting up adequate number of colleges in those districts that are identified such where enrolment is less than all India average, with matching supporting from the centre;

- ❖ Supporting universities and colleges in specific area of low enrolment ratio (lower than the all India average) and also districts falling in remote, hilly, border area, small towns, and rural area and districts with concentration of SC, ST, OBC and minority;

Issues for discussion and comments:

- If we need to increase number of universities and colleges, we first need to find out the number of universities and colleges that are needed in the country. This will, in turn, require us to work out as to what should be regarded as an optimum size of a university and college?
- Once we know the optimum size, we need to work out as to how many additional universities and colleges will need to be set up and that may have to be decided in relation to the projected demand for higher education?
- We also need to work out a basis for deciding as to where should these new universities and colleges be located?
- If expansion has to come from increase in intake capacity of existing institutions of higher education, we need to decide as to how much capacity increase can be achieved through this mode? Do we need to increase seats in all existing courses or should that be done on selective basis by keeping in mind the demand for different types of courses? Do we need to introduce new courses rather than increasing the intake of existing courses? If yes, how can we identify the courses that are to be introduced? What & which infrastructure -physical and human – will need to be strengthened?
- Expansion in the number of institutions will also require revisit of collegiate and affiliating system of higher education. Some of the important inter-related issues in this regard would be about the changes needed in the Affiliating System. These will broadly include the following:
  - ❖ What are the problems of affiliating universities system? How to reform the Affiliating university system?
  - ❖ Given the accepted optimum size of colleges, what should be the minimum number of affiliated colleges and students' strength with one university?
  - ❖ What changes are necessary in the rules for affiliation of colleges –annual and permanent and the system of affiliation?
  - ❖ What measures are necessary to make existing colleges, which do not have permanent affiliation, to have them, permanent, so that they are able to receive development grants from the UGC?

### Recommendations of Regional Conferences:

- The GER in higher education is low partly because people's preference for the type of higher education has changed such that they want admission in market-linked professional and technical higher education and do not prefer general Arts, Science and Commerce courses.
  - As a predominant number of colleges offer higher education only in the conventional streams, they are not able to attract enough candidates for admission while the seats in professional and technical higher education are limited in public funded institutions. Private institutes that offer such courses charge high fees which a vast majority of students are not able to afford hence GER remains low:
  - While expanding higher education, priority should be given to increase in intake capacity of the professional and technical higher education for it is these courses where the supply – demand gap is enormous.
- The target GER of 15% (or net 5% point increase in the existing GER) by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan period is welcome but it will require multi-pronged strategy.
  - Establish new universities but the following should be taken into account:
    - New universities and colleges should not be set up in metros and state capitals. Rather they should be located in smaller towns and rural areas and should be multi-disciplinary and integrated type of universities in order to provide access to quality higher education in these areas – only this will serve the objectives of expansion with inclusion and excellence;
    - As new universities take some time to develop their reputations and brand equity, permission may be accorded to established universities with higher reputation and public confidence to set up a series of campuses if not across the country, then at least across the region in which it is located. Necessary funds may be provided, on the basis of project proposals submitted by the universities to this effect, by the UGC and respective state governments;
    - Establishment of private universities and colleges alone will not serve the purpose because they charge higher fees which a vast majority of population would not be able to access higher education because of economic constraints
    - Need was also felt for establishing more specialised universities and colleges and it was recommended that all universities and colleges need not necessarily replicate one another
    - Thus, enhanced public investment in higher education for setting up the new institutions would be imminent. The union government and state government may launch a joint initiative in this regard and on resource-sharing basis;

- Strengthening and upgrading of existing universities and colleges
  - Increasing intake capacity in programmes and courses offered by the universities and colleges would be desirable for it would be faster to implement and will also be more cost-effective;
  - Each university may be asked to develop a project proposal indicate as to how much increase in intake in its teaching departments and affiliated institutions would be feasible and what would be its financial requirements for academic and physical facilities and infrastructure and human resources. These requirements may be rationalised and sanctioned to these universities to achieve their enrolment targets;
  - While expanding the intake capacity of existing universities and colleges, preference should be given to such technical and professional courses as Management & Business Administration, Information technology and Computer Sciences, Medical, Health and Allied Sciences, Bio-technology and such other disciplines that are in demand by the industry and students;
  - Introducing new professional and technical courses that are job-oriented and preferred by students should be introduced in existing universities and colleges;
  - Special efforts are needed to introduce quality profession and technical education in rural and remote area colleges as such courses are not available in these areas and students are forced to emigrate to urban areas;
  - Focus on professional, technical and market-oriented courses must not be at the cost of humanities and social sciences for these disciplines are of critical importance for making and humane society. However, as preference for such courses are rapidly declining amongst students, these courses must be made compulsory for students pursuing professional and technical courses in universities and colleges.
  - Universities and colleges should also be asked to identify courses in which they have intake capacity but are not able to fill up all the seats. They may be asked to find out the reason and are provided incentives to launch special drive – including curricular revision, introduction of additional skill-based courses – to enrol students in these courses;
  - Permit colleges to run in double shift in order to optimise utilisation of infrastructure and expand intake capacity of the existing institutions of higher education in the country. The restrictions imposed by some state governments for second shift colleges need to be revisited;

- Encourage self-financing courses in publicly funded universities and colleges but the fees structure and quality of such courses should be regulated;
  - Funds should be provided for establishing postgraduate departments in the affiliating universities in all such disciplines in which undergraduate teaching is being offered either in the teaching departments or in affiliated colleges;
- While participants agreed that the universities and colleges must be of optimal size, they could not indicate as to what should that size be. However, it was recommended that the number of universities and colleges should be decided on the principle of optimality. While doing so, the following should be taken into account:
  - The optimal enrolment in teaching departments should be around 10,000 students per university across various disciplines;
  - The optimal enrolment size of a college should be 5000 in metropolises and state capital and about 2000 in other areas. However, due regard should be given to the demographic characteristics of the geographic regions in which a college is located;
  - The ideal number of colleges that could be affiliated to a university should be decided on the basis of the following:
    - The number of colleges that could be administered by an affiliating university effectively should not exceed 50;
    - In addition to the number of colleges, the geographic dispersion should also be considered; ideally a university should affiliate colleges in three districts but special exceptions will have to be made for universities affiliating colleges in remote and hill areas, where fewer number of colleges may have to be affiliated to a single university for reasons of difficult terrain;
    - The location of the colleges should also be based upon the availability of senior secondary schools/intermediate colleges in neighbourhood for they being the feeding institutions should be available in adequate numbers in immediate proximity of the colleges;
- Affiliating system is indeed a drain on the university system as a lot of time, energy and resources of the universities are spent on the conduct of examination and other affiliation related works. However, it would not be possible to do away with the affiliation system in totality in near future. However, process may be initiated to gradually unburden universities from the affiliating responsibilities. To this effect the following strategies should be resorted to:
  - The number of affiliated colleges, which presently could be as high as 400 per university, will have to be drastically reduced to a maximum of 50 per university or a

maximum of as many colleges as are located in three districts in proximity of the affiliating universities;

- Bigger and established colleges, with enrolment in excess of 5000 as well as colleges offering postgraduate courses should be granted autonomy on selective basis and should be permitted to offer courses and programme and award degrees to students in their own names;
- In order to liberate universities from affiliating burden, each affiliating university should be required to set up an independent board of undergraduate examination under the overall supervision of the university itself. This board will undertake responsibility of conducting examination related works in the affiliated colleges;

## **Chapter 2** **Equity and Inclusion**

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### Introduction:

It cannot be overemphasised that expansion in higher education should be made in such a manner that it offers equitable access to all. This will call for a conscious effort to ensure that the higher educational avenues and opportunities are made available to all and that the system does not suffer on account of disparities across region, gender, social groups such as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward castes, minorities, physically challenged and poor. The 11<sup>th</sup> Plan strategy will focus on the inclusiveness in higher education with schemes for inclusive education with a focus on regions and groups with lower enrolment ratio. These will have special focus on the following:

- Rural and Urban Disparities – enhance access to rural population
- Inter-State Variation – focus on state that have GER lower than the national average
- Gender Disparities – special attention to higher education of women
- Inter-religious group disparities – special focus on promoting higher education amongst Muslims;
- Social groups within religion – special focus on farmers, agricultural labourers, manual workers and lower castes within Muslims and Christians;
- Disparities across Income Groups – support to poor and marginalized to access higher education
- Disparities across occupation Group– special attention to agricultural labourer, other labourers and self-employed in rural areas; and casual labourers in the urban areas

- Inter-caste Disparities in GER – special attention for promotion of higher education among the SCs, ST and OBC

#### Proposal and Strategies:

The strategy of inclusiveness has to focus on three imbalances, inter-regional, inter-social group and male – female and may include all such measures as establishment of higher educational institutions for easy access to these groups and also provisioning of special support mechanism to remove economic and affordability barriers for these groups. Some of the suggested measures for addressing these issues would include the following:

#### ➤ Regional Imbalances:

- Support to colleges located in district having lower GER and district locate in rural, small town, hilly, remote, tribal and border area and small towns;
- Support to colleges with relatively high concentration of SC, ST, OBC, de-notified tribes and Muslim students;
- Establishment of colleges in districts with high concentration of SC, ST, OBC, de-notified tribes and Muslim minority population in order to provide accelerated opportunities of higher education

#### ➤ Group Imbalances:

- Support to socially disadvantaged groups like SCs, STs, OBCs, de-notified tribes, Minorities (Muslims), Poor, and women;
- Similarly, the strategy to reduce inter-social imbalance will have to include provision of fellowship, hostel, and remedial coaching, bridge courses, competency building programmes and other specific schemes for girls.
- Besides, it is also suggested that an Equal Opportunity Office will be set up in all Universities to deal with all schemes under one office related to SC, ST, OBC, minorities, girls, physically challenged and economically weaker section;

#### Issues for discussion and Comments:

- What should be the basis for identifying under-represented geographic areas with low educational institutional capacity for establishment of new institutions of higher education?
- How do we define rural, small-town, hilly, remote, border, and tribal areas for purpose of support?
- How do we define SC, ST, OBC and Minority population concentrated areas? What is the population threshold?

- What should be the policy to promote inclusive higher education? In addition to reservation and quota policy for specific groups. What other measures are necessary? What are the capacity barriers for these category of students or also affordability or economic barriers as well?
- In what form the financial assistance to the poor, needy, marginalized groups be provided to enhance their access to higher education – scholarship, fee waiver, work-learn, loan?
- What schemes are needed to support the students in self financing institutions, such as Deem Universities, self financing colleges and others institutions where the fee level is relatively high?
- How can we enhance capability of these categories to enable them access higher education?

#### Recommendations of Regional Conferences:

- Equity and quality must not be seen as two independent and conflicting objectives. Rather they are complementary and excellence in higher education will not be attainable unless it is made inclusive;
- Mere expansion in institutions and intake capacity shall not necessarily make higher education inclusive. This will call for a careful planning and policy framework to make higher education accessible by all:
  - Removal of regional disparities through targeted expansion of quality higher educational institutions in the deprived and underprivileged rural and remote areas;
  - Removal of economic barriers in accessing higher education by offering targeted scholarship, fellowship and subsidies to those who cannot afford higher education. This may also require subsidising the poor parents in order to motivate them to send their wards to the fold of higher education;
  - An effective student loan programme should be put in place to finance higher education of those who can not afford to pay;
  - Capacity building of the deprived, marginalized and economically poor in order to help them compete for admission in professional and technical higher education;
  - Providing for remedial courses/ bridge courses for the less-endowed and under-privileged to cope with the course requirements and in order to help them perform better in the courses of their choices;
  - The policies for inclusion must include the SCs, STs, OBCs, Minorities, Women, Physically Challenged and Poor;
- Special efforts will have to be made for making higher education inclusive. Some of the methods that were recommended are as follows:

- Establish new universities and colleges in areas that have GER lower than the national average;
  - Strengthen and expand existing universities and colleges that are located in areas that have GER lower than the national average;
  - Provide incentives in the form of additional grants to institutions that are located in under-privileged regions/areas and also to those that have higher proportion of such social groups as SCs, STs, OBCs, Minorities, Girls, Physically Challenged in their student and staff population;
  - Reservations and quotas for admission of the SCs, STs, OBCs, Minorities, Girls, Physically Challenged or admission criteria should provide for deprivation index so as to provide equal opportunity to all;
  - Fully subsidise higher education of the SCs, STs, OBCs, Minorities, Girls, Physically Challenged;
  - Establishment of equal opportunity office in each university and college;
  - Establish centres for capacity building of students from the deprived and marginalized social groups for clusters of colleges in order to help them compete on merit in courses of their choice;
  - Create student aid fund to ensure that no student drops out because of economic reasons;
  - Academic Staff Colleges should play proactive role in sensitising faculty members for social and equity concerns;
- Expansion must not be at the cost of quality and excellence. Thus the new universities and colleges that are proposed to be established must be funded well and should have all the needed physical facilities, infrastructure and teaching and non-teaching support staff;
  - It must be realised that the cherished vision of equitable and inclusive higher education cannot be achieved unless school education is strengthened such that it offers equitable access to quality education to all.
  - Better endowed and privileged universities and colleges need to network with under-privileged institutions located in rural and remote areas and thus offer the opportunity of providing the best talents and technology to the rural, backward and deprived institutions;

Introduction:

It is obvious that increased access to higher education will not be sufficient unless we also ensure that the higher education system is able and made capable of providing quality education and achieve excellence in the arena of creation and dissemination of knowledge. Our higher education system is characterized by degree of inter-institution variations in quality and excellence. One of the starting points must, therefore, be to formally find out the current status of quality of higher educational institutions in the country.

Status of Quality and Excellence:

The UGC has developed a framework to assess and promote the quality and excellence and it helps us to know the current status by our own definition of quality and excellence. Quality assessment mechanism is relative new to India, but the UGC has been using a quality assurance mechanism even since its establishment in 1956. These that have been in vogue for quite some times, can be described as under:

- Norms and Standards: UGC has been prescribing minimum norms and standards in term of physical facilities, infrastructure, human resource, particularly the teachers and financial viabilities. Universities and colleges are required to meet these norms in order to become eligible for recognition under section 2(f) and 12(b) of the UGC Act, and thus be eligible to receive development grants. It is through this mechanism that the UGC has historically been ensuring a base level of quality across all institutions of higher education. Based on this mechanism, the **current status of quality in higher educational** institutions can be summed up as under:
  - ❑ Of the total 14,080 colleges that are under the UGC purview only about 6000 are recognised under Section 12(b) and thereby making them eligible to receive development grants from the UGC. The rest of the colleges are not recognised because they do not meet the criteria of permanent affiliation, which is because they don't not meet minimum academic quality requirement prescribed by the affiliating universities.
  - ❑ Similarly, only 167 out of 224 state universities are recognised under Section 12 (b) while the rest are not able to qualify for recognition under this section for they fail to meet the minimum prescribed academic requirements under Section 2(f), and are, thus, deprived of the development assistance from the UGC;
  - ❑ Self-financing colleges and institutes, and also the self-financing courses in public universities and colleges do not receive grants and are consequently not assessed for quality.
  - ❑ Thus at the national level, about a third of universities and over 60% colleges and all of the self-financing institutions are not properly assessed for quality. The issue, therefore,

is as to how to bring non 12(B) Universities and colleges under assessment and grant giving mechanism of UGC?

- Special Status Institutions: The UGC had also developed a mechanism for identifying departments in universities who have been making special contributions in creation and dissemination of knowledge and depending upon their status has been awarding them special status in the form of DRS/ DSA/CAS.
- Excellence status: The UGC has developed a methodology to assess and promote excellence in universities, colleges and in the postgraduate departments of universities, which is called as: (1) universities with potential for excellence; (2) colleges with potential for excellence and (3) departments/centres with potential of excellence. Such institutions are categorised so on the basis of their academic capabilities and availabilities of physical facilities and infrastructure. (4) In addition to these, the UGC also grants special status to certain colleges and they are called the Autonomous colleges. The physical infrastructure and teachers related indicators used for identifying universities/colleges and departments for potential for excellence and for identification of Autonomous colleges are more rigorous than those used for quality under 2(F) and 12 (B). Based on these standards, the **current status of excellence** in institutions of higher education are as Under:
  - ❑ About 10 universities have been identified as universities with potential for excellence;
  - ❑ Only 100 colleges have, so far, qualified for the status of colleges with potential for excellence;
  - ❑ About 500 departments /centre across all universities are identified as Centre for excellence and;
  - ❑ About 250 colleges have been identifies as Autonomous colleges
- Assessment and Accreditation: In addition to the above, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is mandated to assess and accredit all institutions of higher education, particularly those that are publicly funded, and grade them on the basis of their academics, governance, physical facilities and infrastructure. The NAAC has developed an elaborate assessment mechanism under which it assess the universities and colleges and grade the institutions, which provide insight in to present quality of higher education system in the country. **Quality status of institutions of higher education as revealed by the NAAC** assessment is given below:
  - ❑ The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) have so far accredited 140 Universities and 3492 colleges by March 2007. Thus the quality status is formally known for these many institutions only;
  - ❑ A glance at the status of the accredited institutions reveals that:

- 68% of colleges are rated as 'B' while another 23% colleges are rated as 'C' grade; and only the remaining 9% are A grade
- 68%% universities are rated as B grade while another 23% are C grade; and the remaining 31% are A grade

#### Determinants of Quality:

Poor quality in a section of higher education institutions can be attributed to a variety of reasons spanning from under-investment to inadequate faculty resources to deficiencies in the teaching – learning process. Some of the reasons that are obvious even to a ubiquitous eye could be as follows:

- The 60 % of colleges are non 12(b) colleges as they do not meet the criteria of permanent affiliation due to deficiencies in physical infrastructure, teachers and other as prescribed by the affiliating universities.
- Similarly, out of 224 state universities about 57 state universities are not recognised under Section 12 (b) because they fail to meet the minimum prescribed academic requirements under Section 2(f).
- Self-financing colleges and institutes, and also the self-financing courses in public universities and colleges do not receive grants and are consequently not assessed for quality.
- NAAC assessment indicates that 68% of colleges are rated as 'B' while another 23% colleges are rated as 'C' grade; and only the remaining 9% are A grade. Similarly 68%% universities are rated as B grade while another 23% are C grade; and the remaining 31% are A grade

The NAAC assessment of colleges and universities indicate the reasons for inter-institutions variations in quality. Amongst the universities and colleges that receive development and maintenance grants from the UGC and the respective state governments, the dominant reasons for low quality of higher education could be summarised as under:

- Inadequacy of funds has led to a situation where physical facilities and infrastructure are not only inadequate and inappropriate but also the paucity of funds has led to poor maintenance and upkeep of existing infrastructure. These are reflected in terms of shabby classrooms, barely equipped laboratories, and poorly maintained libraries. Substantial proportion of teachers in universities and colleges are not provided with independent work-space;
- Resource crunch, particularly those faced by the state universities, has been forcing them to compromise on their academic input. The academic expenditure in the form of books and journal, consumables for labs, teaching-learning materials etc have been the first casualty.

- The most affected has been the creation of faculty positions. There have been either official ban on the creation of new teaching positions or an unofficial restrictive approach creating hindrance in the process of recruitment of faculty members even on the sanctioned posts, presumably in order to save resources;

Issues for Discussion:

- **About NAAC Assessment:**

- Should we make NAAC assessment mandatory to all institutions that is to bring all universities – central, state, deemed, private and all colleges and other degree awarding institutions under the purview of NAAC?
- Should we have assessment mechanism at state level and also require that each institution should have its own internal assessment, within the overall framework of national assessment system?
- The proposal is that NAAC assessment should be made mandatory for all educational institutions, Central universities, state universities, Universities set up under UGC provision section 3, private universities and all self financing institutions.
- At present a very large section of the universities and colleges and other institutions are out side the assessment and hence we have much less idea. Do we need to bring all higher educational institutions under the mandate of the NAAC?

- **About Non-12 B institutions:**

- How can we bring non-12 (b) colleges and non-2 (f) universities under the ambit of assessment and development assistance mechanism of the UGC?
- Can we evolve an strategy whereby the centre, state and individual institutions could contribute on matching basis in the development of the needed physical facilities and infrastructure to make them eligible to receive development assistance from the UGC and maintenance grants from the respective state governments?
- The proposal is that States government should make estimate of financial requirement of Non-12 (b) Universities and colleges and devised a plan with contribution from State government, central government and the concern institutions( in case of colleges) so that colleges and universities meet the 12 B requirement .

- **About adequacy and quality of teachers:**

- It is recognised that quality improvement will require strengthening of public educational institutions, which have suffered from under investment. But it has suffered because of lack of adequate faculty due to ban on recruitment of teachers in many state universities leading to shortage of good quality teachers, and also lack of comprehensive research

fellowship program, which is essential to supply good quality teachers for colleges and universities. It will also require greater participation and responsibility sharing by private stakeholders i.e. aided institutions and self-financing private universities. Some of the important issues relating to teachers in higher education would include the following:

- How can we attract and retain the best brains as faculty members? What incentive plans and reward schemes need to be put in place to promote excellence in teaching and research?
- What changes are required in the procedures for appointment of teachers? Also, other Important issues connected with the permanent, contract, tenure and other Methods
- What should be the minimum prescribed qualification for appointment of faculty members? Do we need to review the NET being the minimum eligibility requirements or should we exempt Ph. D. and/ or M. Phil holders from the requirements of NET?
- If we exempt PhD and MPhil as we do now, what changes are necessary in admission policy for PhD and M Phil?
- What strategies do we need to involve researcher, scientists from outside the universities and colleges in teaching and research in universities and colleges? How best can we link research fellowship with research of faculty?
- How can we make Academic Staff Colleges more effective and at centre-stage for faculty development and capacity building of teachers in higher education?
- What are the possibilities of initiating special programme for Recharge of faculty, which would include promoting PhD program and catching up postdoctoral for faculty position
- What strategy we devise to meet the present shortage of faculty in universities and colleges?

#### Recommendations of Regional Conferences:

- It may not be true that the quality of higher education has declined over time. But it is also true that there are substantial variations in quality across institutions of higher education. There are a number of factors, which are responsible for the variations in quality. These include:
  - Infrastructural constraints – the physical facilities and academic infrastructure in universities and colleges are neither adequate nor appropriate. Universities and colleges that have better infrastructure are also the one that are perceived to be of better quality because they are necessary conditions for effective teaching learning process and better performance;
  - Faculty and Human resources – adequacy and sufficiency of qualified faculty is the most important prerequisites for quality teaching – learning process and improved

academic performance of the institutions. Some indications in this regards are as follows:

- The student-teacher ratio in most universities and colleges are invariably very high;
  - Even out of the sanctioned positions, a significant proportion remain vacant for a fairly long period of time for one reasons or other;
  - A large proportion of faculty members in colleges and universities do not hold M. Phil or PhD degrees;
  - A number of reforms which is considered as a must like application oriented teaching, introduction of semester system, introduction of continuous internal assessment, credit based choices and inter-disciplinary courses, have not been implemented across all institutions because of the paucity of faculty members;
  - Recourse to part-time and visiting faculty teachers has been adversely affecting the quality of teaching and research;
- Teaching –learning Process – universities and colleges that have been able to introduce reforms in the teaching-learning process are found to be doing better than those that have continued to resort to conventional methods;
- Given the importance of physical facilities and infrastructure, the deficiencies in publicly funded universities and colleges need to be addressed urgently:
  - Newer universities and colleges, particularly those funded by the state governments have severe shortage of classrooms, libraries, laboratories, computing facilities, students amenities and several other critical facilities. So much so that an overwhelming majority of the colleges and a significantly large proportion of the universities are not able to provide even workspace to their faculty. These deficiencies need to be provide adequate funds to build world-class infrastructure;
  - Older universities suffer from obsolescence and dilapidated infrastructure. They need to be provided enhanced funding for upgrading and maintaining their infrastructure;
  - The physical facilities and infrastructure in colleges particularly those that are located in rural and remote areas are extremely poor. The affiliating universities and better endowed colleges should permit use of their intellectual and physical resources for the students and teachers of these institutions;

- Hostels for girl students, students from rural and remote areas and the students belonging to the deprived and marginalized social groups should be established by the UGC.
- Of all factors, the availability of committed quality teaching staff is the most crucial and necessary steps need to be taken urgently to ensure this.
  - The ban imposed on recruitment of teaching staff has aggravated the problem very seriously in more than one way. The worst affected have been the state universities and colleges, which constitute a vast majority of higher educational institutions: The consequences have been obvious:
    - Not being able to create and appoint new faculty positions, they have not been able to introduce new courses;
    - Having not been allowed to fill up faculty positions that have become vacant due to retirement or iteration, even the existing courses and departments are reeling under severe faculty shortages;
    - So much so that the state universities and colleges affiliated to them have not been able to fill up even those faculty positions that were sanctioned to them by the UGC under Plan Grants, for they are not able to get commitment of the respective state governments to take them in non-plan maintenance grants;
    - These institutions have resorted to appointment on contractual and part-time basis on a meagre salary and obviously that has been having adverse effect on quality of teaching staff;
    - Ban on creation and appointment of faculty position has sent a negative signal to the potential candidates and has deterred them from pursuing teaching and research as a career for they do not see any employment and career prospects;
    - In view of the above, it was strongly recommended that the blanket ban on creation of teaching posts and the recruitment of teaching staff should be removed urgently;
  - Shortage of faculty members has been a major deterrent in implementing such academic reforms as introduction of semester system, credit based courses, continuous internal assessment etc;
  - Nurturing Talents and Promoting Quality Faculty: Teaching Staff: Special and urgent efforts are needed in attracting and retaining the best available talents as faculty members in higher education. To this effect the followings are a must:

- Teaching staff must be given respect and importance in not only the decision making process of higher education but also by the politicians and bureaucrats;
  - The compensation to the teaching faculty must be comparable to the best offered by industry and or to any professionals in the country;
  - Offer performance-based incentives to teachers in higher education. Faculty members should be made partners in achieving objectives of higher education. They should be allowed to retain a part of revenue generated by them through research projects, consulting, training programme, short-term courses, management and executive development programmes;
  - As rewards and compensation of the faculty differ significantly between the centrally funded universities and the state universities, the latter find it all the more difficult to attract and retain talents. A uniform pay scale and compensation package for teaching faculty, research and other academic staff was strongly advocated;
  - Variations in pay scales and retirement age works adversely for the state universities and colleges and the same should be made uniform across all institutions throughout the country;
- The vice chancellors are in favour of using National Eligibility Test (NET) as minimum eligibility requirements for appointment as lecturer and desire that exemption from the NET should be given only in case of reserved categories, where NET qualified candidates are usually not available.
  - Some vice chancellors also favoured that the non-NET qualified candidates may be appointed as Lecturers on the condition that they must qualify NET within a period of three years;
  - Similarly, as NET qualified candidates are not available in professional and technical subjects, exemption from NET may be granted to such discipline;
  - As M. Phil and Ph. D. programmes prepare candidates to take up teaching and research careers, admission to these programmes should be based on rigorous admission tests to be administered by the concerned universities. A centralised admission test for admission test at the national or state level was not favoured by the participants of the conference;
  - Faculty development and preparedness of faculty to introduce academic reforms is of crucial importance. The Academic Staff Colleges set up by the UGC, therefore, will have to play most crucial role in academic staff development through continuous updating of knowledge and skills of teaching staff in universities and colleges;

- Student evaluation and feedback of courses and faculty should be introduced and these should be used for incentivising faculty members;
- UGC should provide financial assistance to universities and colleges for International faculty exchange, Inter-institutional faculty exchange within the country and also for faculty exchange between industry and academic institutions;
- Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) has been a boon in attracting and retaining faculty for it provides opportunities of promotion to faculty members but variations in the implementation process of the scheme requires certain improvements. The promotion should be based on rigorous evaluation of publications in peer-reviewed journals. Promotion should be given from the date of selection committee and not from the back dates. This will require the universities to complete the evaluation process and hold selection committees within a maximum of six months from the date of eligibility of a candidate;
- Inbreeding in recruitment and selection process need to be curbed. Universities and colleges should be given incentives to recruit at least one-fourth of their faculty positions from states other than the one in which the institution is located;
- In order to promote mobility of the faculty, certain proportion of faculty position should be prescribed to be filled up on contract basis; the compensation and reward for such faculty should be higher than those that are recruited on tenure basis;
- Quality Assurance:
  - Assessment and accreditation should be made mandatory for all institutions of higher education;
  - The assessment parameters must provide for credit to institutions that are located in remote, rural and under-privileged locations;
  - NAAC should also take up programme accreditation in addition to institutional accreditation;
  - NAAC may set up state-level agencies to speed up the accreditation process;
  - Each institution of higher education should have a strong internal quality assurance cell;
  - Universities that are rated high by the NAAC assessment should be given incentive grants for their performance;
  - Universities that are rated low by the NAAC assessment due to the deficiencies in physical facilities, infrastructure and teaching staff should be given additional grants for upgrading their facilities;

- Scientists in Indian universities and research laboratories should strive to create new knowledge and must work in tandem to ensure that the research findings are quickly translated into application and technology;
- In order to prepare and produce quality scientific manpower universities and research laboratories must collaborate in order to integrate teaching and research and to provide application oriented teaching to students;
  - Students in universities and colleges be required to take up projects in scientific laboratories;
  - Scientists in research laboratories should be involved in teaching in universities and colleges;
  - Collaborative research programmes between universities and research laboratories need to be encouraged;
- Universities should become powerhouse of research and development and industry must come forward to fund universities in their drive to take up researches

Introduction:

Unlike expansion, access enhancement, quality, excellence, equity and inclusion where policy formulation is still under discussion and in making, the policies concerning reforms in the arena of academics, administration and governance are already well formulated and publicly announced. These are all elaborated upon in details in the reports of Radhakrishnan Commission (1948), Kothari Commission (1968), National Education Policy (1986), Programme of Action document (1992), CAGE Committee reports, Resolutions of the conferences of the Vice Chancellors organised by the UGC and the AIU, Gnanam Committee, Sunehri Committee, a whole lot of other committees constituted by the UGC and MHRD from time to time are full of recommendations on such reforms. While recommendations of these committees have been accepted nearly by all and there has been developed a national consensus, a whole lot of them have not been implemented and operationalised as yet. Some of these have been tried and failed while some others have been implemented on selective basis. As a result there is a lot of institutional variations in admission, examination, faculty and governance related practices. Given the fact that most such recommendations are reflective of the most prevalent, if not the best, global practices, it is high time that they are put into practice without further delay.

Proposal and Strategies:

As a nation we need to seriously consider as to how can we urgently translate as well as share selected experience that we have in implementing the agreed upon policies and recommendations into concrete actions. But more important is to identify the necessary pre-requisite and conditions for effective implementation of academic and administrative reforms. Still more important is to create those conditions to create an enabling environment for putting them into practice. This may require selective and stage-wise approach. This also requires sharing of experience of those who have tried and failed and those who are doing it successfully and those who have not tried at all. It is, therefore, proposed to take a comprehensive stock taking of all such recommendations made so far and revisit them to identify problems in their implementation and operationalisation.

➤ **Academic Reforms:**

- Admission and Selection Process: Merit based selection with due consideration to equity, introduction of entrance examination system, Introduction of common admission test, Merit-based and competitive selection process for admission in M. Phil and Ph. D programmes;
- Academic Calendar: Introduction of Uniform academic calendar across all universities and colleges of the country, Increase teaching-learning and contact hours; Ensure that teaching takes place for at least certain minimum number of days in an academic year, Regular guidance and proactive supervision of PhD student;

- Student mobility and credit transfer: Introduction of Credit based courses, Credit accumulation and Credit transfer leading to mobility of students;
- Examination and evaluation System: Introduction of continuous internal assessment and phase out external examination system and gradually move to a decentralised examination and evaluation system, Introduction of semester system and phase out the annual examination system, Introduction of tutorial and seminar-based lecture to promote more involved learning, Focus on learning, understanding, analytical ability, creativity and application oriented learning as opposed to rote learning, Credit for work experience and earning while learning by taking up on-campus/ off-campus job;
- Curricula and Pedagogy: Facilitate and ensure implementation of model curricula as developed by the UGC from time to time, Regular and periodic revision and up gradation of curricula – at least once every three year, Make the curricula flexible and dynamic and promote Inter-disciplinary courses; cafeteria approach, Introduction of curricula in tune with job-market dynamics, Courses and papers should be evaluated by students and peer group on regular basis;
- Faculty related Reforms: Substantial increase in JRF/SRF an encouraging net qualified candidates to take up research and create intellectual property, Performance appraisal - evaluation of faculty by peers and students, Introduce monetary incentives to faculty members – let them share a part of the revenue generated by faculty through short-term courses, training and development programmes, consultancies, funded project, Make funded research projects a mandatory requirement for faculty

➤ **Administrative Reforms:**

- Changes and improvement in the governance structure to ensure transparency, autonomy and accountability, Restructuring of affiliating system Promoting and fostering university-industry linkages – offer incentives to institutions and individual faculty members for the same, Vice Chancellors are appointed on the basis of merit and for their proven administrative abilities through a search committee; Rationalise the size and composition of the decision making bodies (Academic Council, Executive Council, Courts etc) to make them more effective

➤ **Other Reforms:**

- Making the universities national in character and comparable to international standards in terms of physical facilities, infrastructure, human resources, teaching and research excellence, Integration of ICT in higher education leading to fully integrate digital campuses, Make accreditation mandatory and providing also for, in addition to the institutional accreditation, programme accreditation;

Issues for Discussion:

Critical issues for discussion and comments, therefore, are those that deal with practicalities of numerous recommendations and working out ways and means for implanting them. The most critical concerns about these issues, as mentioned earlier, would, therefore, revolve around such implementation issues as:

- What are the factors for successful implementation of new methods in some universities and colleges and departments/ courses of a university but not in other? What are the operational difficulties, and constraints in their implementation?
- How could these recommendations be operationalised in a speedy manner? What needs to be done to implement these reforms?
- Should these reforms be attempted across the board? Do we need to confine the initiative, to begin with, to only universities and in some selected colleges?

Should we go for these reforms in stages focusing on those institutions which meet the minimum requirement to implement these reforms?

#### Recommendations of Regional Conferences:

- Higher education must protect its autonomy and the most effective way of doing the same lies in behaving with responsibility. Autonomy with accountability, therefore, has to be the guiding principle. The higher education fraternity must work hard and excel in their pursuits to command respect. The higher education system needs to protect its autonomy and in no circumstances the universities should allow the external forces to control the contents of higher education.
- Accountability to stakeholders and monitoring mechanism are a must. Institutions of higher education must realise that their autonomy does not mean freedom to do whatever they like to do but it means that they should have freedom to do what they are expected to do;
- Higher education must continue to have dialogue with the world outside and network with society at large in order to gain its confidence;
- Regulatory Framework:
  - The UGC must be made the nodal regulatory authority and that all institutions of higher education, colleges and universities – central, state, deemed, private, foreign – must be brought under its ambit;
  - Presently the UGC guidelines are only advisory in nature and are not mandatory. The UGC should be given power to make its guidelines mandatory and non-compliance
  - Multiplicity of regulatory authorities is encroaching upon the university autonomy and creates confusion. It is suggested that:

- The UGC should be the sole regulatory authority for universities and that other regulatory authorities should respect the autonomy of these institutions and should play only an advisory role.
  - The mandates of other regulatory authorities – the AICTE, NCTE, etc should be confined to colleges offering professional and technical courses and private and self financed non-affiliated institutions only;
  - As medical and agricultural universities and colleges are funded by separate administrative Ministries, the MCI and ICAR should continue to regulate the medical and agricultural education in universities and colleges;
  - Other regulatory authorities should consult and involve the university concerned in their approval and accreditation process of affiliated institutions;
- The Expert Committee of the UGC for assessment and sanction of development grants and also the Peer Team of the NAAC should develop a comprehensive format to indicate the deficiencies (in terms of infrastructure and human resources) that various courses of a university or college have so that these institutions could approach the respective governments for financial and other supports to remove these deficiencies. This will require the UGC to develop a comprehensive norms of minimum requirements of physical facilities, infrastructure, teaching and other staff for each programme and the assessment should be done with reference to these norms;
  - All states should set up the State Council for Higher education and the UGC should fund and empower these councils to play an important role in promotion, maintenance and coordination of standards across all institutions of higher education throughout the country;
  - The opinion seems to be divided about the Indian Educational Services for while some participants emphasized upon the need for such a service for university administrators a significant majority of the participants felt that a centralised service shall be detrimental to the health of universities and would make the institutions of higher education even more bureaucratized;
- Governance and Decision making process:
    - The size of the decision-making bodies needs change. The number of members needs to be reduced to a size that facilitates quality deliberations and faster decision making;
    - The composition of the decision-making bodies should be such as to comprise of experts, educationists and professionals who can make active contributions in the promotion and growth of the universities;

- The ex-officio members and government nominees in the decision-making bodies often do not attend the meetings for they are members of so many such committees in various universities across the state and hardly find time to attend.
- The opinion about the government nominees in the decision-making bodies was somewhat divided. While some felt that this brings in outside interference and adversely affect the decision-making process, others felt that such nominees often play positive role and help the vice chancellors take best academic decisions for they prevail upon vested interests of internal members;
- The administration of universities even to this date are highly centralised which not only causes delay in the decision making and implementation process, it also adversely affect the degree of ownership of decisions by senior academic administrators. It is now high time that universities function in such a decentralised manner that Deans of the Faculties, Directors of the Centres and Principals of Colleges are considered as a responsibility centre and are able to take decisions with respect to their Faculty/ Centre/ College and could also be held responsible for non-performance;
- The universities should accord autonomy to their postgraduate teaching departments;
- Leadership in universities plays vital role in promoting quality and excellence in higher education.
  - The Vice Chancellors should be appointed on the basis of merit and for their academic reputation and proven administrative acumen and biases of any other type must not be allowed to creep in the process;
  - The search committee for the appointment of Vice Chancellors should comprise of academicians of repute and other external forces should not be allowed to play part in the selection of vice chancellors'
  - Vice Chancellors must exert their authority in providing leadership to their universities. They need to be empowered to be able to exert their authority:
  - Development funds to the tune of Rs. 2 Crores per year may be provided at the disposal and discretion of each vice chancellor to help him realise his vision;
  - The term of the Vice Chancellor should be uniform across all universities and that it should ideally be of 5 years duration and in order to ensure continuity the successor vice chancellor should be appointed in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the term of the continuing vice chancellor and that he should act as vice chancellor in waiting and be involved in decision making process of the university so as to

be ready and fully equipped to take charge upon the completion of the term of the incumbent vice chancellor;

- Right to Information Act:
  - Enactment and operationalisation of RTI Act has burdened the universities and colleges as the number of applications seeking information is not only rapidly increasing but the variety of information sought by the applicants are also going up by leaps and bound. The UGC need to prescribe a format for certain minimum disclosure norms which each of the universities and colleges should be required to compile and display and the application of the RTI Act should be limited to these disclosure norms;
  
- Syllabi and Curricula:
  - Need to be updated at regular intervals – obsolescence has no place in higher education. The prescribed text books and resources must be updated regularly;
  - Has to be relevant and the criteria of relevance must not be judged solely on the parameters of market requirements;
  - Technical and professional education must strive to produce all-rounded educated manpower rather than churning out robots;
  - Integrate Information Technology in all courses and leverage technology to its full potential and UGC should support universities and colleges to subscribe e-journals and e-books;
  - Introduce skill-based and personality development inputs in all courses to make the graduates across all disciplines employable;
  - Promote inter-disciplinary approach in higher education and introduce multi-disciplinary courses;
  - The curricula and programme structure of all courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate level must permit a student to choose courses from a cross section of disciplines;
  - Moral and value based higher education should be incorporated in all courses;
  - Curricula need to be standardised in terms of contents and coverage with flexibility to incorporate locally relevant input without which inter-institutional mobility of students would not be possible;
  
- Teaching-learning process and Pedagogy:

- The teaching-learning process should be interactive with scope of nurturing creative talents of students;
- Universities must leverage technology to make their teaching-learning process more effective and also for widening their reach;
- Examination Reforms:
  - Focus on producing thinking and enlightened individuals rather than those that can memorise and recall;
  - Introduce semester system based on continuous internal assessment;
  - The ultimate goal should be to devise a paper-less examination system based on online examination;
- Administration:
  - Move towards paper-less office and office automation
  - Campus connectivity- Internet and Intranet
  - Academic and performance audit should be introduced and made mandatory in universities and colleges

Introduction:

The issues concerning internationalisation of higher education can be discussed into two broad heads, which represent two broad dimensions of the issue. The first aspect deals with the demand for opening Indian higher education for international service providers while the second aspect deals with the internationalisation of Indian higher education. Important issues concerning these two dimensions are summarized below:

Regulation of Foreign Universities:

Going abroad for higher education has long been the most cherished goal for students of underdeveloped and developing countries. Students from these countries have, traditionally, been travelling across seven seas in search of specialized higher education. Invariably one agency or the other financed the studies of such students. In case of students from countries like India where sufficient facilities for further and higher education existed, students were encouraged to go abroad only for highly specialized courses and there were a number of scholarships and fellowships available to the meritorious. Keen on attracting the best talents, foreign universities too provided assistantships and scholarships for the bright students. In case of those countries where facilities of higher education were still less developed, the governments financed higher education of its citizens abroad. If nothing else, students from these countries would take teaching assistantship or other campus job to finance their education. While most foreign students were known for their diligence and dedication and were often a source of pride for their universities, they were seldom seen as a source of revenue. But things have changed a great deal in the post WTO/ GATS regime. Developing countries are now seen as a huge market for higher education and foreign universities from other countries are competing each other to increase their market share. As the demand for opening the higher education sector in India for international service providers is increasing, the issue of providing appropriate regulatory framework for international education providers is under consideration of the government. Effective regulatory mechanism is required to ensure quality higher education with equity and accountability. The foremost issue that requires discussion and comments in this regard should be:

- What regulatory framework do we need effective monitoring of international service providers in terms of entry conditions, admission and fees and quality assurance?
- Do we permit joint degree/ collaborative programs?
- In what mode should these programs be permitted?

These issues will have to be discussed within the broader frameworks of WTO and GATS.

Internationalisation of Indian Higher Education:

The second aspect of internationalisation deals with as to how can Indian universities and colleges benefit the most by the process of internationalisation? Indian higher education is widely recognized and respected across the globe. Most of the Indian universities are represented in

most of the universities of the world in terms of both the faculty as well as students. The Indian faculty in foreign universities is generally well respected for their teaching and research abilities. The Indian students abroad are rated at par with the best students of the world. Besides, the Indian higher education has the comparative cost advantage over the other countries offering higher education of comparable quality. However, the universities and colleges in India have not been able to capitalize on the opportunities of offering their educational programs to the world population in any significant manner. We, therefore, need to identify reasons for the same and find out ways and means to addressing those in order to attract international students on our campus. Other related issues in this regard could be:

- What need to be done to attract international students (Foreign nationals, Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) and Non-Resident Indians (NRI), to Indian campuses?
- Policy initiatives required at the part of the government as well as at the end of individual universities and colleges towards promotion of Indian higher education abroad?
- Can we work out a consortium approach to attracting foreign students on Indian campuses whereby those colleges, universities and institutions should become a members of the consortium which satisfy eligibility criteria as laid down by the UGC
- Do we need to make changes in the prevalent mechanism of verification of equivalence of foreign degrees/ diplomas/ certificates?
- Can we work out a single window approach to granting admission to the foreign students? Do we need to set up an international testing agency for screening foreign candidates for admission or do we need to accept scores of GMAT, SAT, GRE, TOEFL etc as the basis for granting admission to overseas students.
- What changes do we need in the curricula and pedagogy to make it more flexible and such as to permit credit transfer and credit acceptance?
- What physical facilities and infrastructure do we need to set in place to make Indian campuses comfortable for international students?
- Do we need to remove the restriction of territorial jurisdictions of universities in order to help them establish campuses abroad? Do foreign campuses of Indian universities require more autonomy/ special treatment in order to perform well?

#### Recommendations of Regional Conferences:

- Poor Infrastructure in universities and colleges is also a barrier in attracting foreign students on Indian campuses. Seed money be provided to universities and colleges to develop international students hostels and other support infrastructure;
- Institutions of higher education must network with global institutions in order to take up collaborative research. The restrictive provisions like permission from various government offices for entering into collaborative research and international linkages need to be simplified;

- Empower universities and provide for enabling provisions to allow and encourage Indian universities. To this effect, the following shall be required:
  - Permit Indian universities to offer dual degree programmes in collaboration with universities of international repute;
  - An autonomous institutions may be set up for promoting internationalisation of Indian higher education;
  - Yet another alternative could be, a consortia approach whereby universities and colleges with geographical proximity or with common and shard academic interests may pool their resources to attract international students on their campuses;
  - Remove restrictions imposed by territorial jurisdictions of universities in order to enable Indian universities set up their campuses abroad;
  - Universities should be required to develop a comprehensive project reports for internationalisation, which should identify their core competencies and work out the techno-economic feasibility of their internationalisation proposal.
  - The UGC should provide seed money or help universities access national and international funding to help Indian universities set up international campuses;
  - The UGC may set up an empowered committee of the Vice Chancellors to prescribe a policy framework and also to work out modalities for a facilitative mechanism for Internationalising Indian higher education;
  - *Medium of instruction* is a barrier in internationalising Indian higher education, more particularly the rural universities and colleges that largely impart higher education in Hindi and regional languages may not be able to attract foreign students;
  
- While ban on entry of foreign universities may not be advisable, necessary safeguards will have to be provided in the form of strong and effective regulatory mechanism to ensure that:
  - Indian universities and colleges are protected from unwarranted competition from the unequal and a level-playing field be created through investment for quality in higher education so that the Indian universities could compete with the global players;
  - Foreign universities do not engage in gross commercialisation and debasement of higher education;
  - Foreign universities set up their full-fledged campuses in Indian rather than resorting to franchising and courseware renting;
  - International universities of repute are encouraged and facilitated to set up their campuses and unaccredited, poor-quality, unknown foreign universities are deterred from setting shops in the country;

- Only such foreign universities that are accredited in their country be permitted to set up campuses in India;
- Indian universities and colleges should be permitted to form strategic alliances with international universities and other institutions of repute.
- Permit universities to take up collaborative research with foreign universities but the arrangements should be such where Indian counterparts share IPR and copyrights. The UGC may prescribe a standard format for the MOU that need to signed in case of such collaboration;

Introduction:

The spread of higher education was achieved through active state support whereby public funding was considered necessary in order to provide equitable opportunities of higher education to all. It has, however, been a proclaimed policy of the country to also encourage private investment in higher education so long as they are driven by charitable and non-profit motives. While universities have largely been in the public domain, India has had a history of having large number of colleges established and maintained by private management. They largely fell into two broad categories namely (a) the private but government aided colleges – those that were established and managed by private individuals, societies or trust but received development and maintenance grants from the public exchequer); and (b) private unaided colleges – those that were established and managed by private individuals, societies and trusts and were run on self-financing basis.

In recent times, the number of private self-financing institutions –colleges and other degree awarding institutions has gained prominence. At the same time, there has also been witnessed a tendency among the public funded institutions to start and run courses on self-financing basis. More recently, the private universities, either under state legislature or through the deemed university mode have also come to be established, though presently small in number, demand and tendency for establishing such institutions has been consistently on the rise. The situations that are prevailing as of now is characterised by the:

- Growth of private self financing colleges specially in medical, engineering, dental and education
- Growth of Self financing courses in government and government aided colleges
- Growth of private universities
- Growth of Unrecognised private institutions active in diploma and certificate programmes
- Growth of Unrecognised private institutions often in collaboration with foreign universities

It may be of interest to note that while attempt to have a central legislation enabling the establishment of private universities in the country that was tabled in Parliament way back in 1995, has not seen the light of the day, the state governments have lately been establishing private universities at a neck-breaking speed. As of now there are at least 10 Private universities established in the country and that they have been established by Gujarat (2), Himachal (1), Punjab (1), Tripura (1), UP (2) and Uttaranchal (3). It may also be mentioned that nearly all of the deemed universities established after 1995 are fundamentally Private Universities.

Issues for Discussion and Comment:

We do need proper regulatory framework for the private sector, to ensure the quality of higher education and also the equity. It is, therefore, important that we develop regulatory framework for the private universities, particularly in terms of their admission, fees, teaching-learning process and governance. A feedback on these issues appears necessary. Some of the important issues that need discussion in the conference include:

- The regulation of self financing courses in government and aided colleges with respect to fees, quality and inclusiveness of girls, socially and economically deprived groups
- The regulation of self financing courses educational institutions like private universities, Deem universities, self financing colleges and other institutions with respect to fees, quality and inclusiveness of girls, socially and economically deprived groups
- To develop university and industry collaboration
- To leverage public funding to attract more (not-for-profit) private investment

#### Recommendations of Regional Conferences:

- Non-availability of seats in professional and technical higher education in the public institutions has led to proliferation of private institutes and universities. Though some of them are good but a large majority of them suffer from:
  - Poor quality leading to production of graduates that are largely unemployable;
  - They are run largely on commercial lines, even though profit making objectives in educational endeavours are legally prohibited, and charge exorbitant fees which makes higher education exclusivists;
- Public private partnership and private initiatives and investment in higher education seem to have become inevitable. They may be encourage but the following safeguards need to be put in place:
  - It must be ensured that the quality of higher education is not diluted and commercial considerations do not get precedence over the academic factors;
  - It must be ensured that the private participation in higher education does not lead to exclusion;
  - Private and self-financed colleges need to respect social objectives of higher education;
  - A strong and effectively regulatory mechanism will be needed to regulate admission and fees in private institutions;
  - The governments may provide land at subsidised rate for establishment of private colleges and universities in return of which these institutions must agree to provide

higher education free of cost to the marginalized social groups and economically backwards and poor;

- Community may be encouraged to adopt colleges and provide financial and other support to the adopted institutions;
  - The industry should be encouraged to adopt colleges and universities in their neighbourhood or those that are engaged in research and developments in the areas of their interests. The industry should then sponsor research and make investments in infrastructure and human resources for improvement of quality and excellence in these institutions.
  - The universities should develop technology parks and invite industry to set up units on campuses so as to provide training and placements of graduates;
  - Universities and colleges should be permitted to establish public limited companies to take up and market their research and patents and the revenues generated through these entrepreneurial activities be used for strengthening and updating teaching and research infrastructure;
- It was recommended that there is a need to distinguish between those private institutions that are being run with charitable and philanthropic motives and those that are established with an objective of making profit. While the former category need to be encouraged and supported, the later will have to tightly regulated so as to force them perform social objectives of higher education;
  - Private investments in higher education should be encouraged in priority areas. Incentives may be offered to private institutions that are established in rural, remote and underprivileged areas that have lower than the national GER due to lack of quality institutions;
  - Make it mandatory for the private and deemed universities to offer courses in general higher education in addition to the high demand market oriented courses;

Introduction:

Financing of higher education and funding mechanism are perhaps the most crucial aspect for development of higher education and its capacity to reforms often impinges adequate and timely resource availability. While demand for higher education has grown by leaps and bound and, the central and state government financial support to the institutions of higher education has decelerated in real terms during the 1990s. This has had multiple ramifications. On the one hand the public-funded institutions suffered from under-investment, adversely affecting their quality. On the other hand, demand - supply mismatch prompted increasing participation private institutions. This has led to demand for revisiting the whole issue of financing and funding mechanism, which were addressed by appointing various committees. As of now, various recommendations that are under consideration, are given below:

Proposal and Strategies:

A number of recommendations have been put forward for improving the financing and funding mechanism for higher education. Some of the important ones are listed below:

1. Increase public spending on higher education and also create enabling environment for private investment in higher education;
2. Review fees structure in public institutions to develop an appropriate policy as suggested by the CABE Committee;
3. Provide for scholarship and fellowship at large scale so as to ensure affordable higher education by all;
4. Introduce students loan programme and Setting up of Higher Education Loan Guarantee Corporation for covering education loan and also to provide for Loan, Offering enhanced moratorium in loan repayment in order to increase affordability;
5. Balance development assistance to universities and colleges to meet the needs of institutions in the central as well as state sector;
6. Provide financial and other insentive to the universities and colleges for resource mobilisation
7. Regulate the fess structure of self financing educational institutions including private universities, deemed universities and other self financing institutions

Issues for Discussion:

The above are but only a few of the important recommendations. The issue of financing and funding mechanism for higher education requires elaborate discussions around the following themes:

- Commitments of the State for higher education: how to ensure an investment of at least 2% of the GNP on higher education by the state?
- Fee related issues – What is present pattern of fees in public higher educational institutions? What is the proportion of students that are enrolled in self-financed courses in public institutions? Are the fees charged for self-financing courses in public institutions very high? How much fees should be charged from students in public, private and self-financing institutions? What should be the fee regulation mechanism in private educational institutions?
- Financial support to students- What system of scholarship, fellowship, fee-waiver and loan programme shall be required? What system of educational loan is workable? What is the experience of educational institution in this regard?
- Funding mechanism – what are the improvements required in the grant in aid system? Does the system provide incentives to the universities to perform better? Do we need to evolve performance based funding? What should be the criteria used for performance based funding? What are the likely difficulties at the institutional level

#### Recommendations of Regional Conferences:

- The crisis in higher education is not as much due to lack of resources as it is of priorities. Unless higher education appears high on the priority of the union and state governments, the resource constraints shall continue to remain;
- UGC needs to set up an standing committee to monitor the utilisation of funds and performance of various schemes that it has launched for promoting quality, excellence and inclusion;
- Resource constraints and declining budgetary allocation has led to many adverse consequences:
  - Universities and colleges have been introducing self-financing seats in regular courses. Besides, the Universities and colleges have been starting new courses in self-financing mode where fees chargeable from students are manifold higher than the regular courses;
  - Revenue realisation from students being ridiculously low is at best half-truth and data does not capture the reality. If we take into account the total revenue collected from fees in the regular courses and self-financing division together, the contribution of fees revenue could be as high as 30-40% of the total revenue of the universities and colleges;

- Universities and states where block grant system was introduced has been realising nearly 50% of their revenue through fees from students either through self-financing seats or through self-financing courses;
- Adequate public funding to the state universities and colleges affiliated to them need to be provided in order to develop decent infrastructure and maintenance thereof;
- The opinion seems to be divided over the level of fees chargeable from students. It was strongly felt that while fees for higher education should not be ridiculously low, it was strongly felt that fees cannot and must not be considered as a major source of revenue for universities and colleges.
  - Fees can be gradually increased to recover a maximum of 20% of the operating expenses. However, it was felt that such a step would be met with resistance from stakeholders and thus this decision could be taken at the level of government and communicated to the universities and colleges so as to safeguard them from local politicking;
  - Increase in fees should be supported by introduction of scholarship, fellowships and subsidies for a large number of students who can not afford to pay higher cost due to economic constraints;
  - Cross subsidization in the form of variable fees structure such that those who are able to pay are charged higher fees and fee-waiver for those that are not able to afford should be preferred;
  - The other way of cross-subsidisation could be introduction of self-financing seats in regular courses and also introduction of self-financing sections.
  - Student Loan programmes can also be tried but should not be taken as a substitute for fee-waiver, scholarship and fellowships for these remain at the core of ensuring equity and inclusion in higher education;
  - Fees for self-financing courses and self-financing seats in public funded universities need to be regulated;
- The maintenance grants provided by the state government are not even enough to meet the committed expenditure on salaries and utilities. This has adversely impacted the maintenance of the infrastructure and academic input. Thus:
  - The maintenance grants should be drastically increased. As state sector in higher education plays a very dominant role, the UGC and MHRD should urgently initiate dialogue with state governments to impress upon them to accord higher education the priority that it deserves;

- The maintenance grants should be linked with the optimum unit cost of higher education and that the same should be linked with inflation index and the state governments should commit to provide up to 90% of the unit cost of higher education and that the universities should raise the remaining 10% through fees and other internally generated revenue;
- Maintenance grants should also be provided to the self-financing courses in public funded universities in order to regulate quality and to ensure implementation of UGC prescribed pay scale and qualification of teaching staff engaged in teaching of these courses;
- The development grants of the UGC to the state universities and colleges affiliated to them should:
  - Take into consideration the student population and should be raised substantially. The development grants of such institutions should be at par with the development grants sanctioned to the central universities of comparable size, age and location;
  - State governments should be involved in the process of providing development grants to state universities by the UGC so that commitment could be obtained for providing matching grants and no-objection for taking over the financial responsibilities in non-plan grant after the plan period is over;
  - UGC should involve nominee of the University concerned while allocating development grants to affiliated colleges;
  - Delay in sanction and release of development grants leads to under-utilisation and wastages and should, therefore, be eliminated
- Universities and colleges should be provided incentives for resource mobilisation and development of corpus. The UGC and the state government should provide matching grants for resources that are generated by the institutions of higher education;
- Grants in aid procedures suffer from several deficiencies and they need to be corrected. Teaching positions are sanctioned department wise and not for the university as a whole. As a result the universities are not able to use the transfer even the vacant faculty positions from departments whose courses have become less popular to those that have increasing demand;
- The differential treatment accorded by the UGC in funding of the self-financed universities, deemed universities and other self-financed institutions is a deterrent in achieving excellence by these institutions. While these are largely self-financed universities, the state governments or the union governments do not provide either the development grants or maintenance grants to these institutions. It is recommended that:

- Such institutions be declared eligible to receive development grants from the UGC and state governments and also be eligible to apply for and receive special purpose grants under various scheme of the UGC like hostels for girl student, SCs, STs, OBC and minorities and also for grants under SAP;
- Students in these institutions should be entitled to receive scholarships, fellowships and subsidies that are available to the students of publicly funded universities and colleges;
- The faculty members of these institutions should be eligible to apply for major and minor research projects and faculty improvement programmes;
- Industry associations like FICCI, ASSOCHAM, CII should be involved to persuade member companies to contribute funds for the development and maintenance of higher education;

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**Western Regional Conference (Mumbai)**

1. Professor Sukhadeo Thorat, Chairman UGC
2. Mr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman Atomic Energy Commission
3. Professor Y.K. Alagh, Chairman, IRMA
4. Professor M. C. Ananth, Director, IIT Madras
5. Mr. J.J. Irani, Director, Tata Sons & Chairman, IIM Lucknow
6. Professor (Ms) Romila Thapar, Professor Emeritus, JNU
7. Dr. D.P. Sable, former Vice Chancellor, Yeshwantrao Chavan Open University
8. Professor (Ms) Mariamma Verghese, former Vice Chancellor, S.N.D.T. University
9. Dr. K. H. Gharda, CEO, Gharda Chemicals
10. Professor Vijay Khole, Vice Chancellor, University of Mumbai

**Eastern Regional Conference (Kolkata)**

1. Professor Sukhadeo Thorat, Chairman, University Grants Commission
2. Professor R.K. Poddar
3. Professor Bela Dutta Gupta
4. Professor Rama Ranjan Mukherjee
5. Professor Ranju Gopal Mukherjee
6. Professor Subir Choudhury, former Director, IIM Calcutta
7. Professor Amiya Dev
8. Professor S. Roy
9. Professor K.K. Sanyal, Vice Chancellor, Jadavpur University

**Southern Regional Conference (Hyderabad)**

1. Mr. N.D. Tiwari, Honourable Governor, Andhra Pradesh
2. Ms. D. Purnadeswari, Honourable Minister of State, MHRD, Government of India
3. Mr. D. Srinivas, Honourable Minister of Higher Education, Andhra Pradesh
4. Prof. Sukhadeo Thorat, Chairman, University Grants Commission
5. Mr. K.C. Reddy, Chairman, Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education
6. Professor Sayed E Hasnain, Vice Chancellor, Hyderabad Central University
7. Professor P. Dayarathnam, former Vice Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru Technical University
8. Professor M. Sulaiman Siddiqui, Vice Chancellor, Osmania University
9. Professor D. Swaminadhan
10. Professor B. Vishwanathan
11. Professor A.R. Reddy
12. Dr. K. Rajgopal, Vice Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University

**Northern Regional Conference (Delhi)**

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2. Professor Yash Pal, former Chairman, University Grants Commission
3. Professor R.A. Yadav, Vice Chairman, All India Council for Technical Education
4. Professor Mushirul Hasan, Vice Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia
5. Mr. Sunil Kumar, Joint Secretary, MHRD
6. -----, Vice Chancellor
7. -----, Vice Chancellor
8. -----, Vice Chancellor

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**Resource Persons**

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1. Professor (Ms) Surbhi Banerjee, Vice Chancellor, Open University, Kolkata
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3. Dr. Ajinkya Patil, Chancellor's Nominee to Management Council, University of Mumbai
4. Dr. Sudarshan Iyenger, Vice Chancellor, Gujrat Vidyapeeth
5. Dr. Manikrao Salunke, Vice Chancellor, Shivaji University
6. Professor Dilip Deobagkar, Vice Chancellor, Goa University
7. Dr. (Ms) Kamal Singh

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2. Prof. Sudhansu Bhusan

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2. Sri Lakshmi Narayana, IAS
3. Professor R. Varaprasada Rao
4. Professor P. Ram Reddy
5. Professor Praskash
6. Professor Vijay Kumar
7. Professor Tataji, Vice Chairman, AP State Council of Higher Education

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4. Professor S. L. Sharma, Institute of Corrective Administration
5. Professor Jayati Ghosh, JNU
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