

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE FIFTH MEETING EMPOWERED COMMITTEE ON BASIC SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH HELD ON 16TH JANUARY, 2007 AT 11 AM IN THE UGC OFFICE.

The Fifth meeting of the Empowered Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof.M.M.Sharma on Basic Scientific Research in Universities was held on 16th January, 2007 at 11 AM in the UGC Office, New Delhi. The following attended the meeting:-

1. Prof.Sukhadeo Thorat
Chairman, UGC.
2. Prof.Mool Chand Sharma
Vice-Chairman,UGC.
3. Prof.M.M.Sharma
3, Jaswant Baugh,
Behind Akbar Allys,
V.N.Purav Marg,
Chember Nake,
Mumbai-400 071
4. Prof.G.Mehta
Hon.Prof. & CSIR,
Bhatnagar Fellow,
Indian Institute of Science,
Bangalore-560 012
5. Dr.Kota Harinarayan
Raja Ramana Fellow,
Structure Division,
National Aerospace Laboratories,
Bangalore-560 017
6. Prof.P.Rama Rao
Flat No.301,
Naimisum, Plot No.22,
Tri Nagar Colony,
Hyderabad-500 073

7. Prof.S.P.Thagrajan
#5, 1st Main Road,
Nehru Nagar, Adyar,
Chennai-600 020
8. Dr.(Mrs.)Pankaj Mittal
Joint Secretary,UGC
9. Ms.Parbati Bose
Under Secretary, UGC

At the outset, the Professor M.M.Sharma, Chairman of the Committee welcomed the members and appreciated the efforts made by the UGC for implementing the recommendations of the Committee. He expressed his happiness about the fact that the UGC has allocated 5 fellowships each to the Universities with Potential for Excellence, Centres with Potential for Excellence, Centres of Advance Studies and Department of Special Assistance in Science subjects. He informed that the industry including IT is facing a huge shortage of qualified Ph.D. students and it is high time that the higher education system should gear up to fill this gap. He indicated that in US about 23,000 Ph.D. are produced in Science and Technology annually whereas the corresponding number in India is just 5,000.

The members deliberated at length on various issues. The recommendations of the Committee for each Agenda point is given in the enclosed statement. The silent recommendations are given below:-

1. The Committee recommended that there is a need for revival of Science and Technology particularly in State Universities and UGC should try to increase the number of Ph.D awardees by increasing the spread of fellowships to cover more and more deserving and motivated students.
2. Information may be sought from the DRS Departments with regard to faculty positions, number of Ph.Ds registered and number of Ph.Ds produced annually to identify potential DRS Department which can be

considered for giving 5 fellowships at par with DSA and CSA Departments.

3. The Committee recommended that in the year 2006-2007 a grant of Rs. 20 lakhs each be sanctioned to each DSA/CAS Department in Sciences, Bio-Sciences, Agricultural Sciences and Engg. Sciences for strengthening of infrastructure in terms of power supply, water supply, safety equipment, laboratories working tables and infrastructure required for including the component of research at PG level etc. While releasing this grant it should be made clear to the University that this is the first grant of a long drawn process of creating first grade infrastructure in Universities as a part of UGCs endeavor to improve policies in Science and Technology based on the recommendations of the Empowered Committee. The first grant would help the Universities to just get off the ground. The release of subsequent grant will depend upon the optimum and best utilization of this first instalment.
4. The Committee strongly recommended that an Empowered Cell may be created in the UGC to effectively implement the recommendations of the Empowered Committee. The Committee was informed that a proposal has gone to the MHRD for creation of a Cell consisting of one Deputy Secretary, one Education Officer, one Section Officer, one Assistant, one UDC and one LDC. However, till the approval comes from the MHRD, one Under Secretary and one Assistant has been posted on full time basis in the Empowered Cell and Joint Secretary (Plan) is heading the Empowered Cell on a part time basis. While appreciating the efforts of the UGC, the Committee recommended that the desired cell should be created under the Chairmanship of full time Director in the pay scale of Additional Secretary, UGC. It was desired that sanction for a such a post may be obtained from the Government at the earliest.

5. The Committee was of the opinion that the JRFs given to the DSA and CAS Departments should be implemented w.e.f. 1.1.2007 for new as well as existing candidates. In case of existing candidates the candidate should fulfill through the provisions contained in the guidelines to be eligible for getting the fellowships. The Committee also recommended that 5 more fellowships should be given to each department in the next financial year starting from 2007- 2008.

6. The Committee strongly emphasized that it should be the mandate of the UGC to cover all deserving and motivated candidates who have registered for Ph.D. under the UGC fellowship programme. These fellowships should be advertised widely and a well defined procedure should be introduced in every university (wherever it is not existing at present) to ensure that only meritorious and deserving candidates get registered for Ph.D. It was recommended that JS(Plan) may draft a scheme for Ph.D.fellowships on the above premises and send it to Professor P.Rama Rao for approval. The draft scheme should include fellowship and contingency besides ensuring that only deserving candidates get the fellowships to avoid its abuse. The Committee also felt that UGC should identify the Universities who have well structured procedure for Ph.D. admissions and in the first instance the fellowships should be given only to these Universities to encourage other Universities to follow the suit.

It was proposed to hold the next meeting of the Committee on **9th March, 2007** at 11 AM in the UGC Office.

The meeting ended with the vote of thanks to the Chair.

Encls: Recommendations of the Committee on each Agenda Point.