

**UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
NEW DELHI**

**MINUTES OF THE 19TH MEETING OF THE EMPOWERED COMMITTEE ON
BASIC SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH HELD ON 3RD June, 2008 AT 11.30 A.M. IN
THE UGC OFFICE**

The 19th meeting of the Empowered Committee on Basic Scientific Research was held on 3rd June, 2008 at 11.30 a.m. in the UGC Office.

The following attended the meeting:

1. Prof. Sukhadeo Thorat
Chirman, UGC.
2. Prof. Mool Chand Sharma
Vice Chairman, UGC
3. Prof. M.M. Sharma
3, Jaswant Baugh (Runwal Park)
Behind Akbar Allya
V.N. Purav Marg, Chembur Naka
Mumbai – 400 071
4. Prof. Goverdhan Mehta
Hon. Prof. & CSIR
Bhatnagar Fellow
Indian Institute of Science
Bangalore - 560 012
5. Prof. Kota Harinarayan
Raja Ramana Fellow
Structure Division
National Aerospace Laboratories
Bangalore-560 017.
6. Prof. S.P. Thyagarajan
#, 1st Main Road,
Nehru Nagar, Adyar,
Chennai - 600 020
7. Mr. A.K. Dogra
Joint Secretary, UGC
8. Ms. Parbati Bose
Under Secretary, UGC

Prof. P.Rama Rao could not attend the meeting.

After formally approving the corrected minutes/records of discussions held on 6th May, 2008, Dr. M.M. Sharma welcome, the committee members and took up the agenda items one-by-one.

Item No.1: Confirmation of the record of minutes of brainstorming session held on 6.5.2008.

.. The minutes of the 18th meeting of the Empowered Committee held on 6th May, 2008 were confirmed.

Item NO.2:- Action taken on the minutes.

While the Committee noted with satisfaction the action taken on some decisions like approval of the first list of Dr.D.S. Kothari PDF, providing the complete list of Non-SAP depts., etc., the Chairman requested the UGC office to get the Chairman's on-file approval for the revised budget allocation for this year 2008-2009. Prof.S.P.Thyagarajan provided the Status report format to UGC for circulation to the beneficiary departments for their feedback (enclosed as Annexure-I).

Item No3: Letter from Shri R. Chakrabarty, Deputy Secretary enclosing letter dated 2nd May, 2008 from Shri Sam Pitroda, Chairman, National Knowledge Commission, addressed to the Hon'ble Prime Minister containing a set of recommendations to attract and retain talented students in basic sciences.

After due discussion, the Committee suggested that UGC may send the report of the Empowered Committee earlier submitted to the Parliamentary Committee as a reply to this letter.

Item No.4:- Note regarding exemption from NET qualification for appointment and Career Advancement of teachers in universities and affiliated colleges (Mungekar Committee recommendations) for eliciting views of the Empowered Committee.

The Chairman, UGC briefed the Chairman and members of the Empowered Committee about the background due to which the Commission meeting on the 21st May, 2008 referred the above item to the Empowered committee. The Chairman, UGC also mentioned that it is all the more pertinent to take the views of this Committee in view of the fact that two of the members of this Committee, Prof.M.M.Sharma and Dr.Kota Harinarayana were also the

members of Dr.Mungekar Committee. Keeping in mind the impending writ petition at Bombay High Court (Nagpur) in CWP No.4266/2006, the committee discussed the agenda item provided with the copy of Mungekar report and further proceedings in UGC. As nominated by Chairman, UGC and endorsed by the Empowered committee, Prof.S.P.Thyagarajan, Member of the Empowered Committee has been authorized to draft the recommendations of the Committee in this regard and submit it to Chairman, UGC.

1. Based on the recommendation made by the Mungekar committee after detailed consultative methodology and on analysis of the after-effects of the UGC notification dated 14.06.2006 which resulted in the opening of the floodgates for the registration of M.Phil and Ph.D degrees in universities, especially through Open Universities and Distance Education Centres of Universities, which is feared to result into further deterioration of the quality of these degrees, it is suggested that,

“NET should remain the compulsory requirement for appointment as Lecturer in universities and affiliated colleges for both undergraduates and postgraduates. However, those candidates who have already registered for M.Phil/Ph.D and secure these degrees on or before 31st December,2011 shall stand exempted from the requirement of NET qualification for appointment as Lecturer. The cut-off date of 31st December,2011 has been provided keeping in view of the hardship which may be faced by the candidates who have registered for M.Phil/Ph.D as per the terms of UGC notification dated 14.06.2006. This is one time transitory measure for M.Phil/Ph.D candidates and shall not be extended in future.”

- 1.1. In order to motivate Universities to satisfy the immediate and imminent need for devising measures for improving and ensuring high quality research in University/ Institutions, it is suggested that exemption from acquiring NET qualification for appointment as Lecturers by Ph.D qualified candidates could be given ONLY if they register for PhD degrees in universities which execute an undertaking with UGC :
- 1.1.1. To admit students in their M.Phil/Ph.D programmes only through a Common Entrance Test conducted at the university level followed by an interview held at the School/department/institution level; Those who have qualified NET could be taken for the admission process for Ph.D in lieu of the CET conducted by the universities;

- 1.1.2. Not to conduct M.Phil/Ph.D programmes as Open University Programmes or through their Distance Education Centres;
- 1.1.3. Not to insist on M.Phil as a prerequisite for registering for Ph.D ;
- 1.1.4. To integrate course work for one or two semesters with research methodology as a component during the first year of the Ph.D programme;
- 1.1.5. To prescribe the minimum eligibility criteria for being the supervisor for M.Phil/ Ph.D to have atleast two publications in standard academic journals with two years of Post-Ph.D experience;
- 1.1.6. To restrict the maximum number of candidates that a supervisor could register at a given time to ONLY SIX Ph.D candidates including both part-time and full-time and to only TWO per year for M.Phil programme; and
- 1.1.7. To accept to safeguard against plagiarism and piracy by submitting a soft copy of all Ph.D theses processed by the university to UGC for hosting in the unit of INFLIBNET accessible to all universities for the purpose of checking piracy and plagiarism.
- 1.2. Even if the universities execute the above undertaking, the exemption clause is not applicable for M.Phil registered candidates who have to appear for NET to become eligible for Lecturership.
- 1.3. This revised guidelines are to be effective from 1st August,2008.
- 2.0. The UGC should restructure the NET examination papers I, II and III meant for Lecturership and JRF and also in the evaluation pattern.
- 2.1. The precondition of success of the candidates in Paper I and Paper II as the basis for evaluation of Paper III could be removed and an aggregate qualifying percentile (instead of Percentage) on a 100 point scale could be 40 in all the three papers instead of 50% marks as at present.
- 2.2. While the spectrum of the subjects/disciplines to be included for the conduct of NET and methodology of evaluation pattern could be elaborately worked out subsequently by UGC through a suitable Committee, it is suggested that the percentage based pass system has to be replaced by Percentile system on a 100 point scale as done in the GATE examination system.

- 2.3. This percentile system could also be given the provision of normalization of the marks obtained by the examinees instead of moderation of the low-mark candidates as per the procedure followed in the Grading system of Credit-based semester system. This normalization procedure could be adopted to any or all the paper(s) based on the overall perception of the quality of question papers of that NET session and the overall student response to the question papers across the country by taking the first mark at the national level in the paper valuation equated to 100 and normalizing the rest of the marks below accordingly.
- 2.4. Paper I should be more general in its nature to test the awareness of the students rather than their knowledge. The weightage given to different disciplines should have equal proportion, making the questions as far as possible domain neutral; The questions to a large extent should not test merely the recall of information. They should be framed in such a way that the information is present in the question and the student is asked to analyse, interpret or judge so that the reasoning ability gets tested;
- 2.5. Questions in Paper II should be varied in nature with i) Multiple choice type with four options; ii) Assertion & Reasoning types; iii) Sequencing types; iv) Matching types; and v) Paraphrasing types.
- 2.6. The Paper III needs to be restructured as follows:
 - 2.6.1. In Section I, choice should be given and students be asked to answer 5 out of 7 questions;
 - 2.6.2. In Section II, students be given a choice to answer 15 questions out of 20;
 - 2.6.3. In section III, in each elective, students should be given a choice of answering 5 questions out of 7.
 - 2.6.4. In section IV, instead of asking the students to write one essay question of 1000 words to carry 40 marks, students could be asked to write two short essays of 500 words each carrying 20 marks . In this section also, a choice of 4 questions be given to answer the two short essay questions.
 - 2.6.5. There should be one section in the Paper III containing separate questions for candidates who opt for “Both JRF+ Lecturership” and separate questions for those who opt for “Lecturership only”
 - 2.6.6. The duration of time for Paper III be increased to 3 hours instead of the present 2 ½ hours.

- 2.7. While creating a question bank at UGC for NET may be at risk of confidentiality and might lead to breach of secrecy, selected standard reference books and authors for the NET could be published for all the subjects covered as per the prescribed syllabi for the benefit of students;
- 3.0. There is a need for special coaching for candidates from rural areas, disadvantaged sections and disadvantaged communities such as SCs, STs and Minorities. Since UGC may not be in a position to organize special coaching programmes, the Department of Higher education, Ministry of HRD could be moved to propose a Central Sector Scheme for funding special coaching for NET urgently to bridge the demand-supply gap for university/college teachers and to improve the overall quality and standards of Higher Education in the Country. This should be an integral part of the XI Plan proposals of the Ministry of HRD.
- 4.0 The NET Bureau should have a Question resource branch with fully computerised and equipped library, full fledged Computer Centre with adequate technical personnel in Library sciences and system administrator and programmer for the processing the preparation of question papers, applications, coordination of examination centres, tabulation, analysis and preparation of data etc., The UGC should propose a special scheme for such modernisation of NET Bureau in the XI Plan.
- 5.0. The UGC should constitute a separate SLET/SET Review Committee to review the requirement and standard of the SET across the country. The UGC should also lend adequate support for sets in terms of technical expertise so that State Level Eligibility Tests are made to maintain the standards of NET, in case they are accredited by the UGC.

Item No.5:- Discussion with Prof. Shridhar Gadre with regard to next list of candidates for Dr. D.S. Kothari PDF.

Prof. Shridhar Gadre presented the 2nd list of probable candidates who could be selected for Dr. D.S. Kothari Post Doctoral Fellowship in various subjects. After due scrutiny of the list provided to the committee by Dr. Shridhar Gadre, the committee approved the following candidates for the award of the IInd batch of Dr. D.S. Kothari PDFs.

S.No.	Name of the Applicant	Name of the Proposed Mentor/Place
1.	Maishnam Rustam Singh (OBC)	Prof. B. Choudhury Department of Anthropology Guwahati University Guwahati-781 014, Assam
2.	Dr. Mahender Singh Rathore (Open)	Dr. H.S. Gehlot Plant Physiology Laboratory Department of Botany, JNV University, New Campus Jodhpur-342 005
3.	Pranveer Singh (Open) (Bridging Fellowship)	Prof. Raghavan Varadarajan Molecular Biophysics Unit Indian Institute of Science Bangalore-560 012
4.	Ishrat Khan (Open)	Prof. Muhammed Iqbal Department of Botany Faculty of Science, Jamia Hamdard, N.Delhi-62
5.	Alka Karwa Jajoo (Open)	Dr. M.K. Rai Dept. of Biotechnology Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Amravati-444 602
6.	B. Anil Kumar Reddy (Open)	Dr. K.J. Rajendra Prasad Dept. of Chemistry Bharathiar University Coimbatore-641 046 Tamil Nadu
7.	Subhendu Naskar (Open)	Dr. Shyamal Kumar Chattopadhyay Dept. of Chemistry BESU, Shibpur, Howrah-711 103 West Bengal
8.	J. Joseph (OBC) (Bridging Fellowship)	Dr. S. Gopalakrishnan Dept. of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli-627 012 Tamil Nadu
9.	Dharavath Shyamraj (Bridging Fellowship)	Prof. M. Periasamy School of Chemistry University of Hyderabad Hyderabad-500 046

10.	Harinder Singh Bawa	Prof. Manjit Kaur Dept. of Physics Panjab University Chandigarh-160 014
11.	Ankur Jain (Open)	Prof. I.P. Jain Director-CNER 14, Vigyan Bhawan, Centre for Non-Conventional Energy Resources, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur-302 004
12.	D. Pamu (SC) (Bridging Fellowship)	Prof. A.K. Bhatnagar School of Physics, University of Hyderabad, Gachibowli, Hyderabad-500 046
13.	Dr. Ginson P. Joseph (Open)	Dr. Jacob Philip Dept. of Instrumentation, Cochin University of Science & Technology, Cochin-22 Kerala
14.	Somasri Sen (Open) Starting Fellowship Rs.22,000/-	Prof. M. Sami Center for Theoretical Physics, Jamia Millia Islamia New Delhi

*** Cases kept aside because only two reports are received**

1.	Ranjith Naik Kumavath (SCST) (Bridging Fellowship)	Dr. Ch Ventakata Ramana School of Life Sciences University of Hyderabad Hyderabad-500 046
2.	A. Ezhilarasi (Open) (Bridging Fellowship)	Dr. N. Thajuddin Bharathidasan University Tiruchirappalli Tamil Nadu-620 024
3.	Sujatha K. (Open)	Dr. R. Shenbagarathai Head, Deptt. of Biotechnology, Lady Doak College, Madurai-2 Tamil Nadu

The committee noted with satisfaction that Three SC candidates have been selected in this IIInd batch. The Committee also recommended that PH/08/0042 Somasri Sen be given a higher start of fellowship at Rs.22,000/- in view of the candidate's project rating of three 'A'. The committee asked UGC to give the approval letter to Dr.Gadre so that he could host it in the website and inform the candidates.

Item No6:- To discuss modalities for implementing the UGC Scheme.”Operation Faculty Recharge”.

The item was discussed by both Chairman UGC and Chairman of the Committee with the Pro-Vice Chancellor of JNU, Dr.Rajender Prasad and Dr. R.P. Gandhi, the National co-ordinator for this scheme. The Committee narrated as to how this scheme would be prestigious programme for JNU to host in view of the fact that JNU is now the UGC Networking centre besides many other programmes of UGC. While the Pro VC endorsed his pride on behalf of JNU, he suggested that the ownership of JNU would become complete, if one of the faculty of JNU (one of the several FNAs in the University) is also involved in the operation of the programme. He also in principle accepted to take the agenda forward to the JNU authorities for provision of space and infrastructure for this programme. Chairman, UGC assured the Committee that he would personally take it up and get the clearance. Subsequently, the Committee accepted to identify one Associate Co-ordinator for this Scheme among the FNAs of JNU.

The Committee further recommended the following:-

1. After 5-6 weeks a reminder may be sent to the DSA/CAS departments who have not submitted the statement of expenditure for Rs.20 lacs released for infrastructure development.
2. The XI Plan Visiting Committee while visiting the departments of the universities may ask the departments to send the statement of expenditure.
3. For Non-SAP departments, the new criteria may be:
 1. Numbers of Faculty 5
 2. Numbers of Ph.Ds produced during the last five years 5
 3. Numbers of Publications 10

For those institutions which have been established less than 3 years ago, for them Ph.Ds requirement will not be there. Publications of faculty can be considered.

4. After 6 months a reminder may be sent to Non-SAP departments for status of the grants released.

5. For Networking/summer-winter schools, the committee recommended that besides CAS, DSA departments can also be considered. The committee further recommended that one more Networking Centre each in Physics & Chemistry can be considered. For the purpose, following departments may be called for presentation before the Empowered Committee in its meeting scheduled to be held on August 11, 2008 at 11.30 a.m. in the IGC Office.

1. Physics Department, University of Delhi
2. Chemistry Department, University of Delhi
3. School of Physics, Madras University

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the chair. It was decided to hold the next meeting of the committee on August 11 at 11.30 a.m. in the UGC Office.

Annexure-I

“MHRD-UGC SCHEME ON STRENGTHENING OF BASIC SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH”

FUND UTILISATION CUM PERFORMANCE REPORT

1. Name of the department & University :
2. Name of the HOD with communication address & e-mail :
3. Quantum of infrastructure grant & JRFs sanctioned with date of UGC communication :
4. Date of receipt of grant at the University :
5. Items under which the infrastructure grant has been utilized :

Sl.No.	Item detail	Cost	Nature of Utilization
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6. Whether U.C. has been submitted to UGC, if not the reason for not able to submit :
7. What type of requirements to which the next installment of infrastructure grant has to be granted. :
8. Furnish suggestions for quicker utilization of UGC infrastructure grant released, at your university level. :
9. Any other suggestion to strengthen students' facilities for conducting Ph.D. research. :

Station :
Date :

(Signature)