

**UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
NEW DELHI**

Minutes of the 28th Meeting of the Empowered Committee on Basic Scientific Research held on 12th October 2009 at 09:30 a.m. at Board Room, NAAC, Bangalore.

The 28th Meeting of the Empowered Committee on Basic Scientific Research was held on 12th October 2009 in NAAC, Bangalore. The following attended the meeting

Members present:

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| 1. | Prof. M.M. Sharma
Mumbai | Chairman |
| 2. | Prof. Goverdhan Mehta
CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow, IISc, Bangalore | Member |
| 3. | Prof. P. Rama Rao
Hyderabad | Member |
| 4. | Dr. Kota Harinarayana, Bangalore | Member |
| 5. | Prof. S.P. Thyagarajan, Chennai | Member |
| 6. | Dr. P. Prakash, Jt. Secretary, UGC | Member-Secretary |

Prof. H.A. Ranganath, Director, NAAC attended the meeting as a special invitee.

Prof. M.M. Sharma welcomed all the members of the Committee and took up the agenda.

Item No.1: - Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 31.08.2009 at UGC, New Delhi

The minutes of the 27th meeting of the Empowered Committee held on 31st August 2009 were confirmed with the following modifications:

- (1) A grant of Rs. 5 lakhs per department may be sanctioned for a period of 3 years in order to improve and facilitate students to take up the research work at the undergraduate level and building up requisite infrastructure to support such a programme. It has been decided to support an innovative programme for the students who may be picked up from second and third year of their under-graduation on a defined basis of selection by the department with a stipend of Rs. 3,000/- and a

contingency amount of Rs. 1000/- per student with minimum of 10 students per annum. It has been decided to make an allocation of Rs.5,00,000/- for departments of Engineering and Technology, identified under UGC-SAP programme.

Item No. 2:- Action taken on the minutes

The Committee noted the action taken by the UGC.

Item No. 3:- Letter received from Centre of Advanced Study in Geology, University of Lucknow, Lucknow regarding permission to replace the old field - vehicle.

The Committee considered the matter but however, recommended that they may hire a vehicle for field visits as and when required for research activities vis-a-vis purchase of new vehicle as envisaged in the request.

Item No. 4:- Introducing a new scheme for Single Girl Child named as Indira Gandhi Junior Research Fellowship Scheme for Single Girl Child under the scheme "Basic Scientific Research (BSR)".

In pursuit of the importance of supporting the new scheme for Single Girl Child for research and gender justice, the Empowered Committee recommends that departments which have participated in BSR activities, would be invited to send recommendations for single girl child fellowship to take up research and the same may be treated as an super-numerary fellowship in addition to the existing fellowships that are available in the aforesaid UGC-BSR scheme.

Item No. 5:- Budget of BSR

The Committee noted the budget statement and its expenditure and once again reiterated that it may be enhanced to Rs. 200 crores for the present financial year as against the present allocation of Rs. 123 crores.

Item No. 6:- Any other item

- ❖ Since the meeting was held in NAAC premises, the Director, NAAC Dr. Ranganath being special invitee, made a power-point presentation in the forenoon to apprise the UGC-BSR Committee about NAAC structure, functions and its academic role in assessment and accreditation for quality assurance in higher education. The Committee appreciated the role of NAAC in higher education and suggested few academic parameters that may be incorporated in its assessment parameters.
- ❖ Dr. Prakash apprised the Committee that he along with two of his colleagues Mr. A.N. Sharma and Ms. Parbati Bose visited JNU campus with regard to the identified site for the faculty recharge cell of BSR programme. The Committee expressed that if the aforementioned site is tenable for operation of the faculty recharge cell (upon renovation) the

National Co-coordinator and Associate Coordinator may initiate the work in the first week of November 2009. However, the Committee once again requested Dr. Prakash to visit the identified site once again and see its progress along with Dr. Gandhi and Prof. Sudesh Nangia. If there is a delay and site is not feasible for operation /functional, avenues to seek two rooms at Gomati Guest house may be explored without further delay.

- ❖ Having observed from the statement of expenditure, the total number of fellowships (both SAP and Non-SAP departments and Dr. D.S. Kothari post-doctoral fellowships), the Committee expressed the concern about the actual approved/allocated number vis-à-vis the sanctioned amount. The committee opined that Dr. Sridhar Gadre the coordinator of the programme who transacts the business of approval of the fellowships and also keeps the track of date of joining of the research fellows may address the issue and sort it out on a faster mode as the registration is online procedure.
- ❖ The Committee also opined that the fellowship amount for BSR scheme both for SAP/Non-SAP meritorious fellowships, Dr, Kothari Post-Doctoral fellowships may be hiked in commensurate with the hike in CSIR-UGC NET fellowship as and when it is being notified.

In the forenoon Dr. Gunasekharan, the Coordinator of Madurai Kamaraj Biological Sciences Network Centre also presented UGC-BSR network centre's infrastructure, functions along with all its requisite details. The Committee was very much pleased and was impressed with its research activities. However, it urged that various positions that are in the programme need to be modified as Honorary faculty and its Administrative staff on project mode basis with their emoluments purely as honoraria per month vis-à-vis the duly nomenclatured positions with running pay scale.

In the afternoon, the Committee interacted with various SAP coordinators of Bangalore and Mysore Universities. The Committee was very much constrained to note that despite various communications that have been mailed to the Registrar and their Vice-chancellors office, the communications of the BSR and the SAP programme did not reach their respective departments. The Committee also observed that within the SAP programmes of the same university, there are communication gap(s) and disparity in the functions of the programme. The authorities of the university need to address these problems spontaneously so as to bridge the gap within the stakeholders. The Committee felt that probably there is need to address these issues on a wider forum.

The matter for further release of grants including Autonomous Colleges was considered by the Committee and it was suggested that we may have, in the first instance, facts and figures of the Departments/Institutions which have received the BSR grants and the request made thereupon, so that the matter with regard to infrastructural grants may be considered.

The committee places on record its appreciation and gratitude to the Director, NAAC for all the hospitality extended to the Committee for its stay and conduct of the meeting. It was decided to hold the next meeting of the Empowered Committee on November 26, 2009 at UGC, New Delhi.

The meeting ended with the vote of thanks to Chair