

Report of the Committee constituted by the Chairman, UGC to assess the viability of the proposal of Sri Ramachandra Medical College & Research Institute (Deemed University), Porur, Chennai for establishment of Off-shore Campus at Mauritius

The UGC received a proposal from Sri Ramachandra Medical College & Research Institute (Deemed University), Porur, Chennai for establishment of off-shore campus in Mauritius to initially run the MBBS course and add other courses of study subsequently. The Chairman, UGC constituted an Expert Committee consisting of the following members to visit the Institute and assess the viability of the proposal of the Institute.

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| 1. Dr. K. Ramamurthy Naidu,
Member UGC, 506
Dwarakamai Apartment
Hyderabad – 500 073 | Chairman |
| 2. Dr. Jagdish Prasad
Head, Department of Cardiology
(Cardiac Surgery)
Safdarjung Hospital
Krishna Block, Navodaya Colony,
New Delhi | Member |
| 3. Dr. Naseem Shah
Chief, Center for Dental Education and Research
AIIMS, New Delhi | Member |
| 4. Shri S.C.Chadha
Deputy Secretary
UGC, New Delhi | Member Secretary |

Accordingly the Committee consisting of the above members visited the Institute at Chennai on 18th & 19th July, 2006. Shri S.C.Chadha, Deputy Secretary, UGC coordinated the work of the Committee.

The Committee was received by Vice-Chancellor / Registrar and other faculty members. At the outset, the Registrar / Vice-Chancellor welcomed the members of the Committee and briefed them about the proposal of the Institute. A power point presentation was also made before the members by the Registrar about the infrastructure

and activities of the Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute (Deemed University) and the genesis of the proposed off-shore campus at Mauritius.

Background of the Institute:

Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute (SRMC&RI)(DU) was established by Sri Ramachandra Educational and Health trust in the year 1985 as a private and self-financing institution with an emphasis on Medical Education, Research and Health Care and conferred Deemed University status by UGC during 1994 under the provisions of the UGC Act, 1956. The said Deemed University is one of the premier medical educational institutions in the country and it offers 85 courses of study in the disciplines of medicine, dentistry, paramedical and allied health sciences at undergraduate, post-graduate and post-doctoral levels. The institution at present have around 100 research scholars pursuing full-time and part-time research work. More than 3500 students are receiving their teaching and training in the university campus at Porur, right at the inter-section of the busy Chennai-Bangalore expressway and Chengelpet Chennai Toll way. It is 8 Km. away from the International airport and 12 Km. from the heart of the city.

The SRMC (DU) is spread over in 175 acres and a built-up area of 3.5 million sq. feet, with refreshingly green campus, well manicured lawns, sprawling open spaces and tree. The campus itself is a township with colleges, medical centre, staff and student housing, conference facilities, well maintained library, play grounds, etc. multi-cuisine restaurants, ATMs, gift shops and even post office.

The Committee had a detailed interaction with the Management, Senior Faculty, Teachers and Students. The Committee visited all the departments, medical laboratories, clinical laboratory, operation theatres, library etc. The committee further went around the

entire campus and appreciated the management for the infrastructure provided by the management.

It was noted that SRMCI & RI(DU) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sri Ramachandra Health International (Mauritius) Ltd. a company incorporated in Mauritius hereinafter referred to as SRHI under which both the Institutions have agreed to start MBBS course at off-shore campus in Mauritius, a copy of which is enclosed as Annexure-I. The major features of the MoU are as under:

Whereas SRMC & RI(DU) is one of the premier educational and research institutions in India and has expertise and experience in providing medical dental, allied health sciences education, research and consultation services and development of health care services;

And whereas SRHIM has been established with the primary objective of establishing world class educational institutions in Mauritius and also in other countries to impart medical, dental, para medical and allied health sciences education to the international students and to provide health care services;

And whereas SRMC&RI (DU) has obtained permission from the Government of Mauritius to establish a medical college/off-shore center in Mauritius and is interested in engaging a strategic financial partner to invest in the proposed project for this purpose;

And where SRHIM has agreed to invest and provide the necessary infrastructure to SRMC&RI(DU), for the said off-shore center proposed to be established by SRMC&RI (DU) in Mauritius;

1. Obligations of SRHI

SRHI shall

- a. Provide adequate buildings and other infrastructural and instructional facilities such as lecture halls, tutorial rooms, various laboratories with necessary equipments, central library, departmental libraries, office accommodation for

Principal, faculty members and other staff, student, common rooms, seminar hall, auditorium etc., with necessary furniture and fittings, separate hostel for male and female students, transport and other allied facilities and supporting services as per the plan and design given by SRMC & RI (DU) and entrust the entire campus to SRMC & RI (DU) for organizing and running MBBS course, initially and other courses subsequently;

- b. Meet the entire expenditure for developing the infrastructure for the proposed off-shore centre in Mauritius and also meet all expenditure connected with day to day activities including but not limited to electricity and water charges, salary to faculty members and staff and such other administrative expenses, payment of rates and taxes, repayment of loan, interest on loan etc;
- c. Render assistance and help in interacting with the Governmental authorities, other statutory authorities, universities, medical council etc., in Mauritius;
- d. Assist SRMC & RI (DU) in securing student visa and fulfilling other immigration requirements in respect of students coming from other countries; and
- e. Make all necessary investments related to the said off-shore centre project in respect of the present and future activities.

2. Obligations of SRMC & RI (DU)

SRMC & RI (DU) shall –

- a) take possession of the entire campus developed by SRHI in accordance with clause 2(a) hereinabove, for the proposed off-shore centre and administer the affairs of the said off-shore centre in terms of (i) recruitment of qualified faculty members, non-teaching and other supporting staff, (ii) admission of eligible candidates to the courses of study, (iii) imparting and monitoring of

- medical education and training to the students in accordance with the curriculum of SRMC & RI (DU);
- b) undertake necessary steps for evaluation of the students at appropriate stages and award Degrees, certificates and other academic titles to the successful candidates;
 - c) take necessary steps to comply with the relevant regulations and norms of the UGC and other professional bodies concerned in regard to minimum standards of instruction, qualification of teachers, merit based admission of students on international basis;
 - d) liaise with Government and other statutory authorities in Mauritius as well as in India in relation to the educational and research activities undertaken in the said off-shore centre;
 - e) arrange for conduct of Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs, workshops, seminars and training programs for the benefit of faculty members, students and staff;
 - f) devise and implement various programs for growth and development of the proposed off-shore centre;
 - g) arrange for entering into inter-institutional alliance with accredited and reputed international educational institutions like Harvard Medical International, with a view to enhance the quality of medical education and health care services;
 - h) arrange for a tie-up with Government Hospital facility in Mauritius for providing clinical training; and
 - i) fix the scale of the structure to be levied for different courses of study in consultation with SHRI.

4. Term of Agreement:

1. The term of agreement shall be for a minimum period of 10 years initially and it will be liable for renewal on mutual consent.
2. However, in the event of cessation of this agreement on expiry, the students admitted and registered with SRMC & RI (DU) shall continue to be under the purview of SRMC & RI (DU) till they complete their respective course of study.

5. Mutual covenants:

- a. SRMC & RI (DU) shall not collaborate with any other organization in Mauritius other than SRHI during the term of this Agreement in regard to the matters contained herein;
- b. Notwithstanding sub clause (a) SRMC & RI (DU) shall be entitled to set up any institution in any other countries in association with any person / bodies / authorities; and
- c. Neither of the parties to this Agreement shall do anything prejudicial to the interests of the other party hereto or in respect of the said project, in any manner.

6. Both the parties agree that the proposed off-shore centre shall be a constituent unit of SRMC & RI (DU). SRMC & RI (DU) shall administer, control, monitor and evaluate the entire academic activities of the proposed off-shore centre independently. SRMC & RI (DU) shall not be liable for any financial commitment in relation to the said off-shore center.

7. For availing the said services of the SRMC & RI (DU) in operating and administering the said off-shore centre in Mauritius, an amount equivalent to 7.5% of the gross annual

tuition fees receivable by the said off-shore centre shall be transferred to the account of SRMC & RI (DU), not later than 30th September of every year.

8. Both the parties agree to comply with all rules and regulations of the Govt. of India / Reserve Bank of India in relation to remittance and transfer of funds to the account of SRMC & RI (DU).

9. Both the parties agree that either the UGC or the Government of India **shall not be** involved in any legal or administrative problem relating to the operation of the proposed off-shore centre in Mauritius.

10. Arbitration:

Any issue that may arise in regard to implementation or interpretation of the Agreement will be amicably resolved by the parties hereto. Any dispute or claim or difference of any nature whatsoever regarding any right, liability, act or omission of the parties hereto arising out of or in relation to this agreement shall be referred to the sole arbitrator to be appointed by the parties hereto. The provisions of Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 and its amendments thereto shall be applicable to the arbitration. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding. The venue of arbitration shall be Chennai and the arbitral proceedings shall be conducted in English language. The cost on arbitration shall be borne by the parties equally. The parties hereto unconditionally and irrevocably agree to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the competent court in Chennai only in regard to any question or matter arising out of this Agreement.

The Committee noted that :

1. While the Medical Council of Mauritius have vide their letter dated 3rd April, 2006 stated that they should have no objection to give SRMC & RI (DU) the necessary recognition. However, as per established procedures at the Medical Council of Mauritius, due recognition for the medical degree MBBS awarded by

SRMC & RI (DU) will be considered once the first batch of students from the off-shore campus passed their final MBBS examination and submit the application for registration at this Medical Council. A copy of their letter is enclosed as at **Annexure-II.**

2. The proposed off-shore campus in Mauritius will be the constituent unit of the Deemed University.
3. SRMC & RI (DU) has not been accredited by NAAC. However NBA has accredited B-Pharm course from 2004-07.
4. The MCI has separately indicated that there is no provision under MCI Act and Regulations for issuing NOC for establishing off-shore campus outside India.
5. The Republic of Mauritius, Ministry of Health and Quality of life, Office of the Minister has permitted SRMC & RI (DU) and earmarked Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam National Hospital for clinical training at Mauritius as at **Annexure-III.** The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life of the Mauritius, Govt. has given permission to utilize their hospital for student teaching and training.
6. The proposed infrastructure, equipments and faculty members provided at Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute (Deemed University), Porur, Chennai and that is proposed to be provided at off-shore campus for Mauritius temporarily at Chennai duly certified by the Registrar as at **Annexure-IV.**

The Expert Committee, after visiting various departments, seeing the infrastructure facilities and equipments, power point presentation, necessary papers/ information provided by the Institute SRMC & RI (DU) certificates/undertakings given by SRMC & RI (DU) to abide by and strictly follow the "UGC Guidelines for establishing off-shore campus by Deemed Universities" and having discussions with the Management of the Institute, the faculty members, observed as under:

Observations of the Committee:

The SRMC (DU) is spread over in 175 acres and a built-up area of 3.5 million sq feet, with refreshingly green campus, well manicured lawns, sprawling open spaces and tree dot the campus. The campus itself is with colleges, medical center, staff and student housing, conference facilities, well-maintained library, play grounds, multi-cuisine restaurants, ATMs, gift shops and even post office.

The SRMC & RI (DU) have committed and very highly qualified faculty in various disciplines and faculty retention is very high percentage being over 10-15 years and few from the inception itself.

The medical hospital has two separate blocks – one is free and the other is paid indoor care. In free wards, patients get treatment, medicine and food free. Bed occupancy is high (70-75%). In the paid indoor facility world class, state-of-art facilities for investigations and treatment are available. Their deluxe suites caters to foreigners and promotes medical tourism. They have ultra-modern newly renovated laboratories for total blood analysis, microbiology, pathology and genetics with automation. There are innovative departments such as Environmental Health Engineering. The Institute is one of the few centers which offers Masters programme in Human Genetics. They have modular operation theatre and total of 114 ICU beds in several critical areas. They have

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all modern diagnostics such as CT, MRI, US, Colour Doppler etc. and super-specialities like cardio-thoracic surgery neuro-surgery, nuero-radiology, etc. are well developed.

They have well-stocked library with not only books, journals but models of marequins where students can learn anatomy by seeing the organs and parts in 3-dimensions. They have excellent facilities for teaching – class-rooms, seminar rooms fitted with audio-visual aids. The hostel facilities on campus is adequate for all categories of students and additional 250 guest rooms.

The Committee interacted with the management of the Institution (Deemed University) on 19th July, 2006 on the following points:

1. The management should come out with clear cut stand/policies by Medical Council of Mauritius about the recognition of MBBS course to be started at Mauritius. In turn, the management clarified that it is the uniform policy of their Council to recognize the course only at the time of passing out of the first batch. This practice, the Committee was informed that applies to all medical institutions at Mauritius.
2. The management produced original letter with regard to the allotment of land by Government of Mauritius. The management also produced documentary evidence for the appointment of faculty for Mauritius campus, i.e. the advertisement issued in two national dailies and the applications received in response to that. Further process is yet to be finalized. The management also assured the Committee that existing staff will not be used for the proposed Mauritius Campus. Management also gave an undertaking to this effect. *These are collectively enclosed as Annexure - V*
3. The management also assured that the existing infrastructure and the equipments will not be used for the proposed medical college at Mauritius. Further they have shown two floors in a newly constructed building for running the course temporarily at Chennai which is ill-equipped, ~~at present~~ *102-103*
4. The management has got clarity in the fee structure and the same was brought to the notice of the Committee as given under:

The total tuition fees for the entire five and a half years MBBS Course will be USD 60,000/-. This can also be paid in installments as follows:

- On admission USD 25,000
- At the beginning of second year USD 15,000
- At the beginning of third and fourth year USD 10,000 each.

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- If paid in one lump sum payment : USD 55,000
- Candidates withdrawing their admission after the first two weeks (15 days) of the commencement of classes are not entitled for any refund of fees.

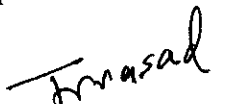
The management also clarified on the point as per clause 7 of MoU of SRMC (I) with regard to the allocation of 7.5% of the gross tuition fees collected which is towards the services to be rendered by SRMC(I).

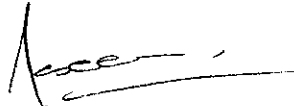
5. The management is running the existing UG/PG courses at Medical College, Pharmacy College, Dental College and Nursing College with commitment and effectively.

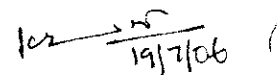
Recommendations of the Committee:

In view of the above observations and the physical inspection of the Infrastructure of the Institute the committee felt that the Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute (Deemed University) has the capability and vision to start offshore campus at Mauritius and the Committee has no objection for that.

The Committee also felt that ^{the same} committee may be deputed to visit Mauritius after the necessary infrastructure is established and before commencing the course to physically inspect the same.


(Dr. Jagdish Prasad)


(Dr. (Mrs.) Naseem Shah)


(Prof. Ramamurthy Naidu)