Minutes of the 4\textsuperscript{th} meeting of the Empowered Committee on Basic Scientific Research held on May 25-26, 2015 at 10.30 A.M. in UGC Office, New Delhi.

The 4\textsuperscript{th} meeting of the Empowered Committee on Basic Scientific Research was held on \textbf{May 25-26, 2015 at 10.30 a.m. in UGC office, New Delhi.} List of participants is at Annexure - I.

At the outset Dr. Anil D. Sahasrabudhe Chairman, Empowered Committee welcomed all the members of the Empowered Committee. Thereafter the Agenda was taken up for discussion.

\textbf{Item No. 1: Confirmation of the Minutes of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} meeting of Empowered Committee held on April 6, 2015 in UGC Office, New Delhi.}

The minutes of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} meeting of the Empowered Committee held on \textbf{April 6, 2015} in UGC office, New Delhi were noted and confirmed.

\textbf{Item No. 2: Action taken on the Minutes.}

The Committee noted with satisfaction the action taken by the UGC on the minutes of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} meeting of the Empowered Committee.

\textbf{Item No. 3:(i) Discussion with Prof. R.P. Gandhi, Coordinator, Faculty Recharge Programme and Prof. Nangia regarding feedback and review of the scheme.}

Prof. RP Gandhi, National Coordinator, Faculty Recharge Programme apprised the committee about the feedback obtained from the 73 FRP faculty (relating to Cycles I & II of Appointment) who are in position at present. The feedback is based on the information included i) Teaching Load Details, ii) Research Work Carried Out, III) Guidance of Research, iv) Publication Details, from date of joining, v) Other...
Professional Activities, vi) Self Assessment, and vii) Research Plan and Teaching Assignment, for next one year. The committee observed that the performance of the FRP faculty has been gratifying.

Difficulties faced by the UGC faculty were also brought to the notice of the committee. Some major concerns of the large majority of the faculty, as reflected in their responses were as follows:

a) Protracted delays in disbursement of salary and start-up grant.

b) Inadequate office and lab facilities at the host institution.

c) Lack of opportunities for guidance and supervision of doctoral theses.

The Committee deliberated on the issues mentioned under a, b and c above and agreed that there is a need address the matters rather urgently. A letter clearly indicating the status and privileges of the faculty under the Faculty Recharge Programme may be sent by the UGC to the Vice Chancellors of host universities.

It was also decided that the online web-portal of the programme may resume the registrations for the faculty positions under FRP w.e.f 01.07.2015. The committee also requested UGC to release the salary of the faculty at the earliest.

Item No 4: Discussion with Prof. S.R. Gadre, Coordinator, and Prof. D.S. Joag, Associate Coordinator of Dr. D.S. Kothari Post-Doctoral Fellowship Cell and regarding the progress of the scheme.

Prof. S. R. Gadre and Prof. D. S. Joag presented the lists of selected candidates. The Committee approved the 58th list of successful candidates and 43rd list of unsuccessful candidates. Requests regarding change of mentor, conversion from bridging to normal/higher etc. received from the Dr. DS Kothari Fellows were approved by the Empowered Committee.

Prof. Gadre also briefed the Committee about the salient features of the Dr. DS Kothari Scheme and the research outcome of the fellows. Progress Monitoring meeting of the Fellows, Mentors and referees was held on May 6, 2015 in Pune. The committee noted that as per the
feedback of the mentors the DSKPDF scheme has been very beneficial in cultivating the culture of Postdoctoral research in Indian Universities.

The feedback revealed the usefulness of the scheme to pursue post doctoral research and creating new knowledge. The overall performance of the Dr. DS Kothari Fellows has been good as evaluated by the experts who had given the best grade to the original proposal at the time of selection. The overall feedback about DSKPDF web portal, UGC office and Canara bank has been satisfactory.

Based on the feedback, the committee recommended the following:

i. The selection criteria for the Dr. DS Kothari fellows should be tightened.

ii. The fellows must be discouraged from opting for the same institute, he/she obtained his/her Ph. D degree.

iii. The fellow should not be permitted to do Post Doctoral research under his Ph. D supervisor under any circumstance.

iv. The selection of the fellows in a given year may be done quarterly (once in every 3 months).

**Item No. 5: Discussion with Prof. Anunay Samanta, National Coordinator, UGC-Faculty Research Promotion Schemes regarding the review of three schemes i.e. (i) Start up Grant, (ii) One Time Grant and (iii) UGC BSR Faculty Fellowships.**

Prof. Anunay Samanta informed that, a 2-page Feedback Form, designed and developed by the National Coordinator, covering different grants related issues such as submission of application, operation and utilization of the grant, output from the grant, was e-mailed to 826 selected candidates. The bound printed copies of the received responses were tabled in the meeting.

It was noted from the feedback data that the recipients from all three categories have hugely appreciated the three excellent UGC initiatives being run under the banner of Faculty Research Promotion Schemes, for the promotion of scientific research in Universities. The feedback data also reveals the usefulness of a small quantum of fund in
helping the faculty to pursue research efforts, training manpower and creating new knowledge despite limited infrastructural facilities at many places.

It was observed that a large majority of the recipients suggested an increase in the quantum of support, a longer tenure for these schemes and flexibility in the utilization of the grant. Among the other responses received, long gap between web notification of result and receipt of the grant, communication issues with UGC, a greater emphasis on quality over the quantity, etc. were significant.

The committee deliberated on these issues and asked the National Coordinator to suggest a detailed proposal on revision of selection criteria, quantum of support, grant tenure and grant utilization flexibility for discussion in the next empowered committee meeting.

It was also decided that the online web-portal of the programme may resume the registrations under various Faculty Research Promotion Schemes w.e.f 01.07.2015.

**Item No 6: Review of other BSR Schemes:**

1. **UGC Networking Resource Centers**

   An interface meeting of the Empowered Committee with The Coordinators of 9 UGC-Networking Resource Centres was held on May 25, 2015 to review the progress made by the centres during past 7 years. Coordinators of the following UGC networking Resource Centres presented the academic activities conducted by them and status of grant (sanctioned / released):

   1. UGC-Networking Resource Centre in Biological Sciences, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai
   2. UGC-Networking Resource Centre in Radio Physics, University of Calcutta, Kolkata
   3. UGC-Networking Resource Centre in Chemistry, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad
   4. UGC-Networking Resource Centre in Biological Science, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
   5. UGC-Networking Resource Centre in Material Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangaluru
6. UGC-Networking Resource Centre in Physics, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi
7. UGC-Networking Resource Centre in Pharmaceutical Science, Punjab University, Chandigarh

It was observed that performance of the networking resource centres is generally satisfactory. The committee in particular appreciated the work done by UGC-NRC at Madurai Kamaraj University, UGC-NRC for Material Science, IISc Bangalore and UGC-NRC in Chemistry, Hyderabad. It was also observed that most of the Networking resource centres have not utilized the grant approved to them for various reasons.

The committee decided that the UGC-Networking Resource Centres may continue their activities for the current financial year i.e. up to March 31, 2016. The centres may utilize the unspent balance or the grant which is already due to them to carry out research activities during 2015-16. No additional funds will be provided for the year 2015-16.

ii) Revision of BSR fellowship Guidelines in accordance with the requirement of DBT.

The Empowered Committee resolved that the selection of the BSR fellows from 2015-16 will be done online by the DSKPDF Cell. The Universities may be informed about the same. For the necessary logistic support, the cell may appoint additional personnel (not more than two).

The Empowered Committee also requested Prof. Joag to come up with a detailed framework for the selection of BSR fellows in the next meeting.

iii) Approval of allocation of BSR fellowships for the year 2014-15.

The Committee decided that the allocation of BSR fellowship may continue as per the past practice for the Year 2014-15. The Committee reiterated that the selection of the BSR fellows from the year 2015-16 will be done by the DSKPDF cell.
iv) Review of other BSR schemes pertaining to infrastructure grants to universities and Colleges.

Deferred for the next meeting.

Item No 7: Any other item:
Query regarding utilization of startup grant in which 90% of the grant is sanctioned first

Deferred for the next meeting.

It was decided to hold the next meeting of the Empowered Committee by mutual consultation of the members to ensure attendance of full committee as far as possible in UGC, New Delhi.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.
Annexure- I

List of Participants who attended the 4\textsuperscript{th} of the Empowered Committee (EC) held on 25\textsuperscript{th} - 16\textsuperscript{th} May, 2015 in UGC, New Delhi

1. Dr. Anil D. Sahasrabudhe - Chairman, EC
2. Prof. Jawahar Lal Kaul - Member, EC
3. Prof. Jaspal Singh Sandhu - Member, EC
4. Prof. R.P. Gandhi - National Coordinator, FRP
5. Prof. Sudesh Nangia - Assoc. Coordinator, FRP
6. Prof. Shridhar Gadre - National Coordinator, DSKPDF
7. Dr. Dilip S. Joag - Assoc. Coordinator, DSKPDF
8. Dr. Anunay Samanta - Coordinator, FRPS
9. Dr. Sunita Siwach - DS(BSR)
10. Mrs. Paramjeet - US(BSR)
11. Dr. Shalini - EO(BSR)