

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3308
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2002
AREA STUDIES CENTRES
UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the University Grants Commission has any proposal to encourage "Area Studies" programmes in Universities;
- (b) if so, the financial assistance available for the Universities wishing to set up "Area Studies" programme;
- (c) whether the UGC propose to increase the incentives for this purpose;
- (d) if so, the facts thereof;
- (e) whether it is a fact that our universities have lagged behind in the "Area Studies" programmes; and
- (f) if so, the steps proposed to change this scenario?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PROF. RITA VERMA)

- (a): The University Grants Commission has established as many as 24 Area Studies Centres in Indian Universities. New Area Studies Centres are added as and when required.
- (b): A copy of the UGC guidelines for Area Studies Programme is enclosed as Annexure.
- (c) to (f): The UGC has constituted a Standing Committee to revise guidelines for promotion of Area Studies Centres. Further, the UGC has recently convened a Conference of Directors of Area Studies Centres at Hyderabad to, inter alia, discuss the proposals for the development of Area Studies Centres in Indian Universities.

GUIDELINES FOR AREA STUDIES PROGRAMME

1. A Centre of area Studies should function in a multi-disciplinary basis and have a wider canvas through proper organizational structure in the University system so that it may effectively utilise the expertise and facilities of all departments available in the University. It may operate as an independent administrative and academic unit and have the status of a department in the University.
2. A Centre for Area Studies should have a Director who should be a senior member from among the faculty of the Centre with specialisation of Area Studies. The term of the Director should be at least 3 years. If the Director is to be changed before this period it should be done in consultation with the UGC.
3. The Director of an Area Studies Centre should be specialist of the area concerned.
4. The Director of the Centre must be member of all appropriate bodies of the University and of the selection committee to recruit centre's faculty. The office of the Director should be located in the Centre.
5. There should be an inter-disciplinary Advisory Committee for each centre for the formulation, execution and coordination of its programme. The Advisory committee may be constituted by the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Director of the Centre who may be in convenor of the Committee.

The Committee should consist of the following :

- (i) The Director of the Centre
- (ii) Eminent scholars from the Department of Social Sciences, Humanities and Science.
- (iii) Three experts from outside the University.

6. While historical and theoretical studies are important, emphasis should also be made on the study and research of contemporary issues. The results of the studies in these centres should be useful in the formulation of our national policies in foreign affairs, defence, culture and in the spheres of bilateral, multilateral and regional cooperation. There should be close interaction between the centres of area studies and the relevant Ministries (e.g. External Affairs, Defence, Environment Science and Technology, Trade and Industry and Economic Affairs).
7. Programme should be, as far as possible of inter-disciplinary and language teacher should be integrated with the academic programme of the Centre.
8. The studies should involve, both, course work and project work, the student should be awarded the degree in basic discipline, which may entitle him/her for teaching in the basic discipline. Wherever feasible, the Universities at the initiative of Centre, may institute appropriate degrees in Area Studies. Course work must involve teaching of at least one non-Indian languages of the concerned area.
9. The faculty should be multi-disciplinary.
10. Special innovative programme of intensive nature may be devised on a select basis, and they may include both course study and research.
11. Every Area Studies Centre should have its own sectional library which forms part of the central library system in the University.
12. The Documentation Officer of the Area Studies Centre should primarily be responsible for indexing the material and for providing library service to the scholars.
13. Posts sanctioned for Area Studies Programme should be filled on the same basis as equivalent posts in the University. In the case of the appointment of language teacher, relaxation of qualifications, if necessary, should be done in consultation with the Advisory Committee.
14. As field trips connected with the research programmes of an Area Studies Centre are an essential part of the programmes, leave at absence for this purpose should be treated as 'on duty'.
15. Younger scholars should be encouraged to go for field work.
16. The scholar working in area Studies Centre should have a real working knowledge of the Area being studied. If necessary, facilities should be provided for the training of scholars in relevant language through organisation of orientation courses or providing facilities for training in the language either in India or abroad.
17. Area Studies Centre shall hereafter include in their studies and research not merely the history, politics and economics of the countries concerned but science and technology, culture, society religion and philosophy. More importantly, they should relate to the present and be relevant.
18. In order to maximise job opportunities for those scholars offering Area Studies subject in the NET EXAM, they should be deemed to have also qualified in the subject of their master's degree. The tenure of the project assistance in the Area Studies should be increased from one year to four years at a fixed emoluments of Rs.2,500/- per month.
19. The Area Studies Centres may be encouraged for interaction with the Ministry of External Affairs and other relevant Ministries in the Government.
20. Since the Area Studies Centres are mainly devoted to research and guidance of M.Phil/Ph.D. students, the University authorities should not apply the same formula of work load as applied to teaching departments in the University system. However, their accountability should be ensured in terms of reasonable research output, annual reports and evaluation.
21. The territorial head in the Ministry of External Affairs may be co-opted as a member of the Advisory Committee of the concerned Area Studies Centre.
22. The Study of relevant language and cultures of the concerned areas and countries is an essential component of the Research Centres for which the UGC will find out the language teacher under Cultural Exchange Programme.
23. The Area Studies Centres are devoted to inter-multi-disciplinary, research emphasis should be laid on the study of Culture Society, Politics, Law, Sociology, History, Geography, Economy and International and Strategic Studies.

UNIT-INPUTS

The UGC provides the following assistance on 100% basis to the Area Study Centre :

Non-Recurring

- (i) Building upto Rs.15.00 lakhs
- (ii) Office equipment and furniture Rs. 2.00 lakhs
- (iii) Books and journals Rs. 2.00 lakhs
- (iv) Field work Rs. 3.50 lakhs (plan period)
- (v) Seminar/Symposia/Conference Rs. 3.50 lakhs (5 years)
- (vi) Visiting faculty Rs. 2.00 lakhs (5 years)
- (vii) Operational expenses and Contingencies Rs. 2.00 lakhs (5 years)

Recurring

- i) Four faculty (one Professor as Director As per actuals of the Centre, one Reader and two Lecturers).
- ii) Upto two scholars on attachment basis As per actuals for a fixed term of 2 years on honorarium basis @Rs.4,000/-.
- iii) Diplomats as Ambassadors in Rs.50,000/- per year Residence salary and allowances to be provided by the Ministry of External Affairs.