

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:134
ANSWERED ON:25.02.2009
NATIONAL KNOWLEDGE COMMISSION
Gaikwad Shri Eknath Mahadeo;Mane Smt. Nivedita

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the main issues dealt with by the National knowledge Commission in its recommendations;
- (b) whether the Government has constituted any committee to study these recommendations;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;and
- (d) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

(a) to (d) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 134 BY SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE AND SHRI ESNATH M. GAIKWAD FOR ANSWER ON 25.2.2009 REGARDING NATIONAL KNOWLEDGE COMMISSION

(a) to (d): The Planning Commission has examined the following recommendations of National Knowledge Commission till date:

I Libraries, II Translation, III Teaching in English Language in Schools,IV Integrated National Knowledge Network,V Portals, VI Right to Education,VII IRAHE, VIII Medical Education, IX Higher Education, X Vocational Education & Training, XI E-Governance, XII Legal Education, XIII Open & Distance Education, XIV Open Educational Resources, XV Management Education, XVI Health Information Network, XVII National Science & Social Science Foundation, XVIII Legal Framework on Public Funded Research,XIX Intellectual Property Rights, XX Traditional Health Systems, XXI School Education, XXII Attracting Talented Students to Maths & Science, XXIII Innovations, XXIV Attracting More Quality PhDs, XXV Engineering Education

The Planning Commission undertook two inter-ministerial meetings to review the status of action taken on the recommendations of NKC (on 07.02.08 and 15.04.08).

The updated status as on 31.12.2008 on the recommendations of NKC processed in the Commission is at Annexure-I. A high level Committee was constituted to look into the establishment of an Integrated National Knowledge Network.

Annexure-I

Planning Commission Education Division

Follow up on Recommendations of National Knowledge Commission – Updated Status as on 31.12.2008

I. Libraries

Recommendations of NKC:

- # Set up a National Commission on Libraries
- # Prepare a National Census of all Libraries
- # Promote ICT application in all libraries
- # Revamp and encourage PPP in library information services

Action Taken - updated status

Based on the recommendations of NKC the Ministry of Culture (MoC) proposed setting up a National Mission for Libraries during the 11th Plan as a Central Sector Scheme. The EFC Memo is under revision by the MoC and is being restricted to Rs. 180 crores earmarked for the same during the 11th Plan. The NML will cover only libraries under the MoC.The project / mission will cover a 4-

year period from 2008-09 – 2013. The activities under the NML include: National Census of Libraries; Modernization including networking of Libraries under DOC; establish Knowledge Centres; establish Digital Libraries.

II. Translation

Recommendations of NKC:

- # Propagate Indian language and literature through high quality translation
- # Provide impetus for developing translation as an industry
- # Establish a store-house of information on all aspects of translation involving Indian languages
- # Create and maintain various tools for translation, including machine translation
- # Provide quality training and education for translators
- # Translate pedagogic materials at all levels
- # Set up a National Translation Mission and web portal for this purpose

Action Taken - updated status

The National Translation Mission (NTM) has been approved for implementation. This Mission has a 11th Plan outlay of Rs.75 crore. The CILL, Mysore would be the nodal agency for implementation of the mission. The Project Advisory Committee under MHRD is working out details.

III. Teaching in English Language in Schools

Recommendations of NKC:

- # Introducing English from Class I and modify Pedagogy, train teachers, revise textbooks, use multi media for English language teaching.

Action Taken - updated status

25 States have already introduced English subject from class I. With the help of NCERT and CIEFL the MHRD is guiding English Teaching in schools in the States / UT's by developing appropriate curriculum, materials and training of teachers with skills in English.

IV. Integrated National Knowledge Network (iNKN)

Recommendations of NKC:

Proposes inter-connecting all knowledge institutions throughout the country through an electronic digital broadband network with adequate capabilities to encourage sharing of resources and collaborative research.

Some specific recommendations are:

- # Build a National Knowledge Network with gigabit capabilities to connect all universities, libraries, laboratories, hospitals and agricultural institutions to share data and resources across the country in a time bound manner. Implementation could be in phases targeting 500 to a 1000 nodes in the first phase.

One time capital support should be given to user institutions to set up Fast Ethernet LANs to enable them to hook on the grid.

A special working group of experts should be set up to finalise specifications, implementation plans, cost estimates, network plans, carry out the actual task of procurement and commissioning of the network.

A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) consisting of major stakeholders should manage the day to day working.

Action Taken - updated status

During 2008-09 Rs. 100 crores has been allocated for the iNKN which proposes interconnecting knowledge institutions with gigabit capabilities for sharing resources and research. A high level committee in DIT has been constituted. Separate committees under different ministries would work out content development in their respective application areas for use with in NKN. The NIC (under DIT) would be the main implementer of the NKN. The network would be operationalised in two phases. The core and distribution network covering 1000 nodes with gigabit capacity would be initially set up. The network is scalable and its coverage can grow up 10,000/ nodes/ institutions. The High Level Committee in DIT has met thrice in the current year in May, July and November 08 and is firming up the proposal. Thereafter, the proposal shall be appraised by the EFC.

V. PORTALS

Recommendations of NKC:

Creation of national web based portals for basic needs on certain key sectors such as Water, Energy, Environment, Education, Food, Health, Agriculture, Employment, Citizen Rights.

A consortium consisting of representatives from a wide range of stakeholders from the sectors should own and manage the portal.

Provide access to Government held data.

Encourage collaborative funding

Action Taken - updated status

NKC has facilitated the setting up of four portals: one on Water (indiawaterportal.org), championed by Arghyam Trust; one on Energy (indiaenergyportal.org) championed by The Energy Research Institute (TERI); one on Environment (indiaenvironmentportal.org.in), championed by Centre for Science and Environment; a National portal for teachers (teachersofindia.org), championed by Azim Premji Foundation. A portal on biodiversity being developed by the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) will be launched in December.

Planning Commission in its earlier reviews has given the following suggestions: Each Ministry should establish its individual Portals / websites under "indiagov.in" under guidance of NIC

(DIT) which has developed guidelines for standard and security for portals.

VI. Right to Education Bill

Recommendations of NKC:

Steps to be taken to enforce Right to Education

Action Taken - updated status

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill 2008 was introduced in the Parliament.

VII. Independent Regulatory Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE)

Recommendations of NKC

Setting up IRAHE, an overarching body, which will be responsible for setting criterion and deciding on entry of institutions.

Eligibility of setting up new institutions of higher education, technical education, medical education, distance/correspondence universities and colleges, management institutes, law colleges and universities would be decided by IRAHE.

The entry regulatory functions of the AICTE, MCI, BCI would be performed by the IRAHE so that their role is limited to that of professional associations

The role of the UGC shall be redefined to focus on disbursement of grants and maintenance of public institutions in higher education.

The MCI will function only as a professional association with powers to conduct examinations and provide licenses to those who want to join profession

IRAHE would be the only agency authorized to accord degree granting power to higher education institutions.

IRAHE be responsible for standards and settling disputes

IRAHE will be responsible for maintaining quality, standards and accreditation in education.

The Autonomous Standing Committees of IRAHE will look after education in various areas.

Action Taken - updated status

The UGC / AICTE Review Committee now named as Committee for Rejuvenation and Renovation of Higher Education is examining the regulatory set up for Higher Education. The report is awaited.

VIII. Medical Education

Recommendations of NKC:

Only one All India Common Entrance Test for students seeking admission in self-financing medical colleges.

An independent and standardized National EXIT exam at the end of four and half years of study to conduct national assessment of skills and knowledge.

PG admission to be based on credits received in national EXIT examination.

Additional capacity for nursing staff to be created. Every district hospital should have attached nursing school offering diploma

Para-medical Council should be set up to look into quality of paramedics such as compounders, lab technicians and health workers

Pharmacy education must be encouraged

ASHA must be viewed as an accessible and effective health workers. Their training working conditions and pay should be improved.

Action Taken - updated status

MOHFW has stated that at the apex level, regulation of medical education may be done by MOHFW. If needed the IMC Act will be suitably amended and the functions of the MCI refined to accommodate views of the NKC. Setting up an Inter-Ministerial Consultation Group may be considered to achieve uniformity and higher standards across all educational institutions. Proposal is under consideration of MOHFW to enact a Central legislation for regulating fee and admission in private medical institutions. Regulations relating to UG/PG medical education, minimum standard requirements for medical colleges including teachers eligibility qualifications etc. are under review for carrying out suitable amendments.

IX. Higher Education

Recommendations of NKC :

NKC has proposed a series of initiatives for expansion, excellence, and greater access in Higher education covering regulation, accreditation, governance, curriculum, research, faculty development, financing, asset management, affirmative actions.

Some specific recommendations are:

Create 1500 universities for a GER of at least 15 per cent by 2015.

Increase public spending; diversify sources of financing for raising funds through fees, land utilization, philanthropic contributions and private investment

Establish 50 National Universities as exemplars offering a variety of disciplines and students on an all India basis.

Reform universities: curricula revisions, course credit system, internal assessment, governance, accountability etc.

Restructure the system of affiliated undergraduate colleges-issue of autonomy

Promote enhanced quality through faculty development, salary differentials and promotion of research.

Ensure access for all deserving students through well funded scholarships, and affirmative action that takes into account multi dimensionality of deprivation

Action Taken - updated status

Various committees have been set up by the UGC and the DHE on reforms including one for review of UGC / AICTE now named as Committee for Rejuvenation and Renovation of Higher Education. The reports of these committees are awaited.

X. Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Recommendation of NKC: a major expansion, redesign and quality enhancement of VET.

Action Taken - updated status

A three tier structure has been constituted in July 2008 consisting of (a) National Council on Skill Development, (b) National Skill Development Corporation, and (c) National Skill Development Coordination Board.

(a) The functions of the National Council on Skill Development under the Prime Minister would be to lay down policy objectives, strategies, financing and governance model to promote skill development.

(b) The National Skill Development Coordination Board shall enumerate strategies to implement decisions of the Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development. It would develop operational guidelines and instructions for meeting larger objectives of skill development needs of the country and also make appropriate practical solutions and strategies to adopted by the union and state governments.

(c) The National Skill Development Corporation will develop a system of institutionalizing measures to this end.

XI. E-governance

Recommendations of NKC -

A set of initiatives to ensure that the Government makes the most optimum and effective use of ICT in the service of citizens.

Action Taken - updated status

The Plan envisages creation of core infrastructure like SWAN, CSCs and State Data Centres. The updated status from DIT in the context of following NeGP initiatives is as follows:

Till date SDCs approved for 26 States (50% of DIT share for the first year released).

Under approved CSC scheme which envisages establishing 100000 + CSCs across India (@ 1 CSC per 6 villages) Till date 20,558 CSCs rolled out. Process of roll out started for another 250968 CSCs.

XII. Legal Education

Recommendations of NKC

A package of reforms covering regulation, curriculum, examination, research, faculty development etc. Some specific recommendations are: setting up IRAHE to deal with all aspects of Legal Education; give autonomy to National Law Schools to decide core and optional courses and level of fees; have independent rating system to assess institutions teaching law; set up CALSARs in four regions for cutting edge research in Legal Education;

Action Taken - updated status

The Ministry of Law and Justice has conveyed in principle approval on the following: Standing Committee on Legal Education under IRAHE and consequent changes in role of BCI, curriculum development, developing research tradition in law schools / universities.

MHRD does not support IRAHE and is of the view that professional councils (MCI, BCI, AICTE, DCI, etc.) should be responsible for that part of the standard of education that they deal with. The role of the BCI can be redefined- BCI can be asked to conduct examination for granting licenses to practice.

The 7 National Law Schools established at Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Jodhpur, Bhopal, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Raipur are deemed universities under the UGC purview.

These National Law Schools and other law institutions already have autonomy in designing their curricula. The curricula and syllabi determined by the Bar Council are the basic minimum to be met. Each school is free to go beyond the BCI determined syllabus. UGC committee is designing model curriculum for various subjects including Law.

MHRD does not support the setting up of CALSARs. "as this may result in a disconnect between research pursuits and the university system. Instead the National Law Schools should be encouraged to strengthen LLM and research programmes, in addition to undergraduate teaching. The concept of CALSAR may not be relevant as all that it would do, is to wean away a few of legal researchers in each national law school or university, depriving the existing institutions of the modicum of research ambience and enthusiasm that exist in the university system". Further, The MHRD is of the opinion that the present Indian Law Institute (ILI) can be strengthened instead as it performs the same functions of the proposed CALSARs. Proposal for setting up CALSAR for the northern region at Manesar (Gurgaon) was submitted by the Dept. of Legal Affairs to Planning Commission. The Dept. has been advised to make budget provision for the scheme of CALSARs in the 11th Plan.

XIII. Open and Distance Education (ODE)

Recommendations of NKC

A package of initiatives covering regulation, quality, use of ICT, use of open courseware, convergence with conventional universities etc.

Action Taken - updated status

The ODL System which includes IGNOU, 13 SOUs, and 119 correspondence course institutes has considerably expanded in recent years. The cumulative enrolment of the students at IGNOU is over 1.48 million as on January 2007. The student support system network of IGNOU consists of 60 regional centres, 7 sub-regional centres and 1409 study centres.

In principle approval has been given for new activities of IGNOU namely –

- (i) IGNOU -skill development programme,
- (ii) New community colleges – skill development for through ICT.

The proposal for establishment of DEC under Act of Parliament as an independent statutory authority has been referred to GOM.

XIV Open Educational Resources (OER)

Recommendations of NKC

A series of initiatives for encouraging the development and use of open educational resources.

Some specific recommendations are:

Support production of quality content by a select set of Indian institutions.

Leverage global open educational resources

Encourage open access

Create faculty and institutional development programme to realize the benefits of extended access and improved quality through OER

Action Taken - updated status

Comments awaited from MHRD.

XV. Management Education

Recommendations of NKC

A package of reforms covering regulation, quality, accreditation, and rating, quality, governance, access, social relevance etc.

Some specific recommendations are:

Mushrooming private Management Educational Entities (MEEs) necessitate a reliable rating system to help market function better and enable students and employers to compare different MEEs

Two stage rating process recommended

Grading norms should be established with experts like CRISIL and ICRA

Widen the scope of management studies, enhance relevance in the social context

Mentoring - to achieve excellence leading management institutions must adopt 3-5 MEEs

Promote faculty development

Governance: Board of Governors for all MEEs should consist of 50% independent members

Action Taken - updated status

Comments awaited from MHRD.

XVI. Health Information Network

Recommendations of NKC

Promote use of ICT in health services such as connecting all health care establishments in both private and public sector, establishing national standards for clinical terminology and health informatics and creating a common electronic health record.

Action Taken - updated status

Committee set up under MoHFW. DIT, DOT and MHRD are represented on this Committee. Report is awaited.

XVII. National Science and Social Science Foundation (NS3F)

Recommendations of NKC :

Set up National Science and Social Science Foundation (NS3F) to look at knowledge as one seamless entity.

The foundation will suggest policy initiative to make India a leader in the creation and use of Knowledge, to ensure that science and technology are maximally used for the betterment of the lives of people, and to develop the scientific temper in the country.

Action Taken - updated status

MHRD is of the view that NS3F not necessary. There are various institutions in government and private engaged in R & D activities like ICAR, ICMR, CSIR, etc. An umbrella NS3F will have adverse effects on their autonomy. Further, freedom of universities/institutions like IITs engaged in research in emerging areas will be curbed.

DST generally supports this foundation without duplication of effort with National Science and Engineering Research Board. (It may be stated that "The Science and Engineering Research Board Bill 2008" has been introduced in Parliament).

Comments from DBT awaited.

XVIII. Legal Framework on Public Funded Research

Recommendations of NKC

A legislation to give universities and research institutions ownership and patent rights over inventions arising out of government funded research to create an enabling environment for commercialization.

Action Taken - updated status

Draft Bill on the subject supported by Planning Commission.

XIX. Intellectual Property Rights

Recommendations of NKC

A package for scaling up the efforts of creating a world class IPR infrastructure, covering infrastructure, HRD and processes.

Action Taken - updated status

Transparency and accessibility (with stakeholder participation). IP Office has put on its website, the relevant acts, rules, manuals etc. There is no restriction on access to these materials.

National patent database needs to make available online all decisions, applications

(including complete claims and specifications) etc. Digitization of all patent records underway. 45,000 patent records already on IPO website.

National Institute of Intellectual Property Management (NIIPM) to be set up at Nagpur

IPR Tribunal on all aspects of IPR. An IP Appellate Board already set up for trademarks, geographical indications and patents. The extension of the scope of the Board to designs requires amendment to the Designs Act which is under examination.

The issue of sui-generic legislation for protection of traditional knowledge. DIPP examining the issue. Chairman desired a note on the issue to be sent to Department of AYUSH with copy to Planning Commission.

The Patent Office already requested Department of AYUSH for allowing access to the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL). Department of AYUSH stated that once the agreements with the USPTO and the EPO are finalized they could consider providing access to the TKDL to the Patent Office.

XX. Traditional Health Systems (THS)

Recommendations of NKC

A set of initiatives to promote THS covering education, research, pharmacopoeias, clinical trials, knowledge protection etc.

Action Taken - updated status

AYUSH industry be given higher subsidy for quality control.

100 clusters of AYUSH industry sanctioned.

XXI School Education

Recommendations of NKC

Some specific recommendations include: Reorient SSA bringing in a strong rights focus to make Right to Education a reality: ensure basic learning condition; special focus on Math., Science and English; Common Syllabi and Curriculum & Pedagogy.

Gradually reduce Central Govts. funding over the Plan period rather than move immediately to 50:50.

Ensure minimum standards for norms in public and private schools and address systemic issues of accountability, decentralization of decision making, teacher recruitment, teacher training.

Recognise and encourage role of private providers.

Special focus on disadvantaged groups and educationally backward areas.

Strengthened teacher training.

Use ICT based Pedagogy and learning aids.

Action Taken - updated status

Comments awaited from Dept. of school Education and Literacy, MHRD.

XXII. Attracting Talented Students to Maths and Science

The recommendations cover different aspects of strengthening Science and Mathematics in Schools as well as in colleges and universities such as infrastructure expansion, curriculum changes and reforms, faculty improvement, Science Outreach Programmes, Industry Participation, etc.

Action Taken - updated status

Comments have been solicited from Dept.of School Education and Literacy and Dept.of Higher Education.These are awaited.

XXIII. Innovations

Recommendations:

Put in place a National Innovation Policy which encourages competition among enterprises,greater diffusion of knowledge and increased support to early stage technology development initiatives and grass-root level innovators.

Foster increased collaboration among the R&D institute, universities and private sector enterprises and leverage upon their cumulative strengths in designing and implementing various innovation programmes.

Create new interface structures to forge partnership between academia and industry.

Action Taken - updated status

Comments have been sought from Ministries / Depts. of Heavy Industries, SME, Textiles, Food Processing, Labour, DST, DBT, DIPP. These are awaited.

XXIV Attracting More Quality PhDs.

Recommendations:

NKC has recommended steps to improve the quality of PhDs.These include massive investment in education and research at all levels,together with renovation and reform of the university system and the fostering of a global outlook in research.Further steps have to be taken to rejuvenate the doctoral programme across disciplines and develop vigorous industry - academia interaction.

Action Taken - updated status

DST is being requested to expedite the National Research Mission under the National Science and Engineering Research Board.The Bill to set up Science Engineering and Research Board has been introduced in the Parliament.Recommendations of NKC are being forwarded to State Govts. for favour of implementation in universities and other academic institutions in their jurisdiction. Recommendations being forwarded to MHRD with the request to implement the same on a priority basis by leveraging 11th Plan outlays for Higher Education.

XXV Engineering Education

Recommendations:

Proposed a series of initiatives for improving quality, regulation and governance of engineering education.

Some specific recommendations for engineering education are:

Reforming the Regulatory Framework:(IRAHE to decide entry of institutions, admission, standards and other criteria).

Improving Governance of Institutions

Attracting and Retaining Faculty: Incentives like better salary, modern infrastructure; professional development; use of ICTs to overcome shortage of faculty.

Curriculum Reform to provide greater flexibility; inter-disciplinary perspective and choice of electives; laboratory courses to be revamped.

Integrating Science and Engineering Education

Encouraging Research

Industry-academia interaction

Improve Access

Mentoring of State engineering colleges by NITs and RECs

Action Taken - updated status

Comments have been solicited from MHRD.These are awaited.