

Report of the Meeting

RUSA Southern Regional Conference

(Organized by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India)

Venue: Hotel Samudra, Kovalam, Thiruvananthapuram

July 14, 2015

Members Present:

MHRD

Ms. Ishita Roy, Joint Secretary H.Edn and National Mission Director (RUSA)
Mr. Harpreet Singh, Director, MHRD
Prof.B.Venkatesh Kumar, TISS, Mumbai
Mr. Sanjeev Narayan, Under Secretary, MHRD
Dr. VivekNagpal, Sr. Consultant, MHRD
Mr. Rohit, Consultant, MHRD
Mr. Saravanan, Consultant, MHRD
Ms. Suman Shukla, Consultant, MHRD
Ms. Julie Singh, Consultant, MHRD
Ms. Sugandha Gupta, Consultant, MHRD

ANDHRAPRADESH

Prof.P. Vijaya Prakash, Vice Chairman, Higher Education Council
Prof. P.Narasimha Rao, Vice Chairman, Higher Education Council
Smt. B. Udaya Lakshmi, Commissioner, Technical and Collegiate Education
Smt. C.H..Tulasi, Academic Officer, Collegiate Education
R.David Kumar, Academic Guidance officer
Dr.K.Padmavati, Principal, Govt., Degree College (W), Begumpet, Hyderabad
Dr.C.Manjulatha, Principal, Govt., City College, Nayapul, Hyderabad
Dr.Mastanaiah, Principal, Govt. Arts College (A), Rajmundry, East Godavari

GOA

Mr. Bhasker G Nayak, Director, Higher Education
Dr. Anil S Dinge, Principal, PESs Shri Ravi SitaramNaik College, Farmagudi
Mr. PravinBhende, Principal, G.V.M's G.G. P.R. College of Commerce& Economics
Mr. Sudarsan P K, Professor, Goa University, Taleigao Plateau

KARNATAKA

Mr. Bharat Lal Meena IAS, Principal Secretary, Higher Education
Mr. Chakravarthi Mohan IAS, Commissioner, Dept. of Collegiate Education
Dr. S.A. Kori, Executive Director, Higher Education Council

KERALA

Amb.(Rtd) T.P. Sreenivasan, Executive Vice Chairman, KSHEC
Mr. B. Srinivas IAS, Secretary, Department of Higher Education
Dr. P. Anvar, Member Secretary, KSHEC
Dr. Dileep Kumar, Vice Chancellor, Sanskrit University, Kalady
Dr. Thankamani M.K, Principal, University College
Mr. Finny Zacharia, Additional Secretary, Higher Education
Mr. Shijulal, Under Secretary, Higher Education
Mr. Christy Clement, Research Officer, KSHEC

PUDUCHERRY

Mr. T. Karikalan, Special Secretary to Govt. & State Project Director (RUSA)
Dr. S. Mohandoss, Member Secretary - RUSA
Dr. V. Ramaswami, Principal, Govt. College, Puduchery
Dr. N. Sreenath, Dean, Govt. Engg. College, Puduchery
Dr. S. Udhayakumar, Pricipal, Mothilal Nehru Govt. Polytechnic College, Puduchery

TAMILNADU

Apurva IAS, Higher Education Secretary,
Prof. Dr. Karu. Nagarajan, Member Secretary
Amutha Pandiyan, Research Officer

TELANGANA

A. Vani Prasad I.A.S, State Project Director RUSA
Mr. T. Vijaya Kumar I.A.S, Joint Secretary, Education Telangana
Prof. K. Venkata Chalam, Vice Chairman HEC, Telangana
Dr. K. Padmavati, Principal, GDC (W), Begumpet (Autonomous), Hyderabad
Mr. B. Kanakachary, Academic Guidance Officer, Collegiate Education
Dr. C. Manjulatha, Principal, City College (Autonomous), Hyderabad
K. Srinivas, Project Officer RUSA
Moria Eunice, Special Officer, Collegiate Education

The RUSA Southern Regional Conference was meant for the states to share their best practices and the problems faced by them regarding the implementation of the RUSA programme. The conference was attended by the representatives from MHRD, representatives from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Goa, Karnataka, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Amb(Rtd). T.P. Sreenivasan , Vice Chairman , KSHEC welcomed the gathering and thanked MHRD for selecting Kerala not only as the venue to host the regional conference but

also as the front runner state under RUSA. He said that the Kerala State Higher Education Council, one of the oldest higher education councils had done remarkable work and had initiated several innovate programmes/ recommendations to achieve excellence in higher education in the state. The Council has focused on seven areas-infrastructure, teachers training, technology based training, research, autonomy, skills development and internationalization. He mentioned that these packages of reforms submitted, if implemented would change the face of education in Kerala. The main problems affecting the implementation were the conventional mindset and the dearth of money. He expressed concerns that several ambitious proposals like an Innovation University, Assessment and Accreditation Council, Faculty Training Academy were not considered by RUSA. He hoped that RUSA would blossom into a truly innovative mechanism as originally envisaged and work with the academia through the Council.

The Hon'ble Minister of Education, Govt. of Kerala, Shri Abdu Rabb mentioned that RUSA is a milestone in the Higher education scenario and the deliberations with the other states and MHRD will help strengthen the higher education in the states and in the country as a whole.

Ms. Ishita Roy, Joint Secretary (JS), MHRD said that RUSA is the flagship programme of MHRD and allayed fears by saying that MHRD is very much committed to RUSA. Since it is a bottom up programme, it will have its challenges and is not a strait jacket programme as each state will have its own nuances. The RUSA programme now having completed 1 1/2 years has crossed its infancy stage and the progress attained needs to be looked into. She further said that states need to have reached atleast 1.5% of GSDP

The objective of this meeting was to look into the existing issues between the state governments and the state higher education Councils, how to help states implement the plans, look into the functional autonomy, what specific reforms have taken place in the following - affiliation reforms; academic reforms and government reforms, share the best practices .The most important issue to be looked into was the ban on recruitment as 40% of faculty positions remain vacant. She remarked that there were not much concerns in the areas of equity and access in the southern region when compared to the Eastern region. A road map is needed before the xiith plan comes to an end.

The states were asked to present their concerns, the progress attained in implementing the RUSA programme and the fund utilization. The states said that they were committed to the academic, affiliation reforms as most of them had conducted capacity building seminars/workshops, introduced semesterization at UG/PG levels, introduced exam reforms etc. Goa mentioned that they had filled up all the faculty positions.

Initiatives / Issues of the states:

Andhra Pradesh

- Submitted State Higher Education Plans
- Knowledge Advisory Board
- Held conferences on how to improve quality; capacity building seminars/workshops
- Common University Acts in the pipeline
- Looking for Public Private Partnership in Higher Education

- State Accreditation Council is being proposed
- CBCS made mandatory at UG/PG levels; revamped curriculum; several combinations of courses in arts, sciences and commerce. From 3rd semester onwards, module based system
- Online teaching/MOOCs made use of for shortage of faculty. Smart Class rooms being set up in colleges/universities. It is proposed to make at least four credits through MOOCs.
- Workshops to enhance entrepreneurship. Incubation centres in universities. Internship programs for students in final semester linking up with industries
- Special training programmes in pedagogical skills.
- WiFi connectivity in most universities
- No meeting of Vice Chancellors at Governor level.
- Faculty positions to be filled up
- Utilization certificates to be produced.

Tamil Nadu

- The utilization certificate would be submitted by Oct/Nov
- Faculty recruitment being done through Teacher Recruitment Board
- Several universities have tied up with universities in Australia
- Interim Board to evaluate various degrees

Karnataka

- CBCSS introduced at UG/PG levels
- Faculty positions to be filled up
- Conference of Vice Chancellors is held.
- Sharing of e content-teaching material through a common portal in both English and regional language
- All universities are internally and externally connected i.e. a professor of a university can interact with students of another university
- Individual laptops to teachers
- Students' feedback about the teachers is communicated to the portal and is available at the university level. This facility is made available at all Govt. Colleges
- Admission is online

Puducherry

- Higher Education Plan prepared and sent in the month of April
- Received the preparatory grant.
- UC will be furnished in three weeks
- Doesn't have a state university
- Only one University- Pondicherry University and it is a Central University
- All the arts and Science, Engineering colleges are affiliated to the Central University
- Accreditation Process actively followed
- Accreditation reforms, semester system, CBCSS
- Upgradation of an engineering college to a Technical University

- Proposal for faculty training academy, only one academic Staff College
- Faculty vacancies will be filled shortly
- Revised plan submitted

Kerala

- RUSA was unable to fund any of our reform programmes because of new criteria given to us after the first plan was submitted
- Reform proposals approved by State Govt. but not able to implement it because of shortage of funds
- Our expectation was RUSA would fund innovative proposals.
- RUSA should have a broader outlook
- Affiliation reforms-cluster of colleges in order to decentralize; technical university-various specialized universities- now we are thinking of private universities that can be effectively sanctioned. We have autonomous colleges-improved admissions-results published readily-exam reforms- medical university exams unique in the world- results published immediately online within a few days after the exam.
- Noted the informal advice of Sri. Harpreet that we could use MMER for some of the studies launched to achieve excellence.
- We are allotted 110crores but no money has been received and Mr. Harpreet says the money will be allotted soon.
- May not be able to spend the allocation by the end of this year because of cumbersome procedure.
- We are delighted to know that you are considering additional projects even during the current financial year and we would like to revive some of the proposals such as innovation and research University, KSAAC, Faculty Academy, FLAIR and ASAP.
- **Workshops and Seminars conducted for RUSA**
- Conducted a RUSA Round Table Conference for all the Councils. Twelve councils took part in the session.
- A three day seminar was organized for Principals, Vice chancellors, Deans and Professors to make them aware of how to prepare Institutional Development Plans.
- A one day seminar organized for Principals and RUSA Co-ordinators on how to prepare Detailed Project Reports.
- The present Southern Regional Conference organized at Kovalam, Trivandrum.

Goa

- One single University in the state.
- Accreditation process started
- Reforms- Semester system followed
- Continuous evaluation and internal assessment as well as external Assessment positively carried out.
- Periodic revision of syllabus done.
- CBCSS introduced from 2016-17
- No ban on recruitment

- ₹.30000 given for contract lecturers which is the highest in the country, ₹45, 000 for qualified NET candidates
- University 100% autonomous- colleges are also there
- Educational destination for India
- Started Academic Staff College
- Not appointed any consultants
- Delay in release of funds from Govt.
- Even C grade colleges should be considered

Telangana

- UC will be submitted within 15 days
- A district with no engineering colleges is there.
- Vacancies will be filled. 86% in place
- Workshops conducted
- VC's i/c. VCs will be appointed- IAS officer and academicians appointed as present VCs. Regular VCs will be appointed soon.
- Governance reforms: University Act at the preparatory stage
- Karnataka Model of Edusat and smart class rooms initiated.
- Exams- online exams considered. Affiliation harsh and strict.

The consultants for each state mentioned the amount of fund spent.

The Joint Secretary(JS) said MHRD could look into what intervention was needed regarding semesterization in colleges. There is also a major need to remove the ban on recruitment, understand the sanctioned faculty strength in the states. The large no. of affiliating colleges under some universities should be cut down as was done in the case of Bangalore University which has been divided into four zones.

Cluster of colleges to be formed where they do not exist

The JS said that the major hurdles regarding the implementation of the RUSA programme was the non presentation of the utilization certificates (UC) on the funds already granted. She said that the 60-70% of the amount needs to be spent by September.No expenditure would be allowed beyond Nov/Dec and it is essential that a calendar of events be prepared to make use of these funds.

There would be no compromise on the qualifications of the faculty. The JS further said that MOOCS and online teaching could supplement the teaching process and should not be a substitute for the physical presence of a teacher.

Research and innovative component of RUSA should be taken as a whole for the State.

In reply to the queries/concerns from the states regarding the accreditation of colleges with C grade, MHRD said that there would be a discussion with PAB regarding the upliftment of these C grade colleges.

Summarizing the issues of the different states, it was stressed upon that the

- Appointment of Vice Chancellors be done
- Faculty positions to be filled up (guest faculty would affect the quality of HE)
- Functional autonomy to be given to institutions, putting in elements of accountability
- Plans beyond infrastructure
- Suggest improvements in research in colleges/universities

Sri. Harpreet Singh, Director, MHRD commented that it is difficult to grant funds if the DPRs do not come in time, if there is a mismatch and also if the UCs are not presented in time. Visits to certain states could be conducted to apprise if certain targets have achieved, if faculty positions have been improved and a report card would be issued by the end of the year. In most states, the contribution of the state to the RUSA fund remains a big question and measures need to be taken to see the proper flow of fund to the RUSA account. The MHRD would be updating RUSA guidelines and releasing a handbook.

The next PAB would be in August engaging the World Bank too. The MHRD officials proposed exposure visits to World Class Universities if necessary.

The conference ended with the vote of thanks given by Ms. Ishita Roy, JS, MHRD.