IGNOU

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING (URGENT MEETING) OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL OF THE INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 20, 1999 AT 11.00 A.M. IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM, BLOCK - 8, IGNOU CAMPUS, MAIDAN GARHI, NEW DELHI - 110 068.

The following were present:

1. Prof. Abdul W. Khan, Vice-Chancellor   —   Chairman
2. Prof. V.S. Prasad
3. Prof. K.N. Tripathi
4. Prof. V.R. Jagannathan
5. Prof. Shobita Jain
6. Prof. V.V. Mandke
7. Prof. A.K. Agarwal
8. Prof. M.M. Pant
9. Prof. B.S. Saraswat
10. Prof. Rakesh Khurana
11. Dr. A.R. Khan
12. Dr. Neela Jagannathan
13. Dr. R. Sreedher
14. Dr. P.K. Mehta
15. Dr. R.R. Rausaria
16. Ms. Kameshwari Murthy
17. Dr. Ruchika Kuba
18. Prof. Prabha Chawla
19. Prof. S.C. Garg
20. Dr. M.V. Lakshmi Reddy
21. Dr. Anita Dighe
22. Prof. D.K. Dasgupta
23. Prof. P.V. Indiresan
24. Prof. D.C. Surana
25. Shri P.R. Swarup
26. Shri K.K. Muthu
27. Dr. P.N. Pandit
28. Dr. Subhasis Maji
29. Prof. C.D. Narasimhaiah
30. Shri P.V. Suresh
31. Shri K.J.S. Prasada Rao, Registrar   —   Member-Secretary

Prof. M. Aslam, Prof. (Mrs.) Madhulika Kaushik, Ms. Kumud Sharma, Dr. S. Ramani, Dr. N.H. Antia, Dr. J.S. Yadava, Dr. Gerson da Cunha, Prof. Krishna Kumar and Prof. K.N. Panikkar could not attend the meeting.

Shri D. Deb, Assistant Registrar (Governance), was present to assist the Council.

Before the items of agenda were taken up, Prof. V.S. Prasad, Pro Vice-Chancellor, with the permission of the Chair, informed the Academic Council of the sad and sudden demise of Mrs. Khan.

wife of Prof. Abdul W. Khan, on April 07, 1999. The Council expressed its profound sorrow and conveyed its condolences to Prof. A.W. Khan and other members of the bereaved family.

Prof. Khan expressed his gratitude to the Council members for the kind sentiments expressed.

The Vice-Chancellor on behalf of the Academic Council, placed on record the appreciation of the Council for the contributions made by the following members whose membership of the Academic Council ended:

1. Prof. Pandav Nayak
2. Prof. Pradeep Sahni
3. Dr. G. Thomas
4. Dr. S. Kannan
5. Dr. B.B. Khanna
6. Shri D.W.F. Raja Singh
7. Ms. Rita Sarkar
8. Ms. Poonam Bhushan
9. Shri D.C. Pant
10. Prof. Ram Pratap
11. Dr. C.K. Ghosh
12. Dr. Asad Nizam

The Vice-Chancellor also extended a warm welcome to the following new members:

1. Prof. Rakesh Khurana
2. Prof. (Mrs.) Prabha Chawla
3. Prof. S.C. Garg
4. Dr. R. Sreedher
5. Dr. Anita Dighe
6. Dr. A.R. Khan
7. Dr. Subhasis Maji
8. Dr. P.N. Pandit
9. Dr. R.R. Rausaria
10. Dr.(Mrs.) Ruchika Kuba
11. Dr. M.V. Laxmi Reddy
12. Shri P.V. Suresh
13. Smt. Kameshwari Murthy

The following items were taken up:

ITEM NO. 1   TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE 20TH MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 1999 AND TO NOTE THE ACTION TAKEN THEREON.

AC 21.1.1   When the Item was considered, the Vice-Chancellor stated that some comments were received from some of the members and as desired by the Chairman, the Member-Secretary read out those comments. The

comments were considered and the following corrections/modifications are made to the Minutes of the 20th Meeting of the Academic Council held on February 17, 1999:

(i) Resolution No. AC 20.1.2 - The words "may be considered" appearing in the 14th line be deleted.

The Resolution after the correction will read as below:

"AC 20.1.2 - In reference to the comments of a member on the decision vide Resolution No.AC 19.11.1, the Vice-Chancellor clarified that the recording of Resolution No.AC 19.11.1 was as per the decision of the Council and needs no revision. However, if the School of Health Sciences is of the view that entrance test is not necessary in view of limited number of applicants, a decision to this effect can be considered by the Academic Council afresh. Prof. Agarwal stated that due to problems of logistics and cost, etc. vis-a-vis the number of students for B.Sc. (Nursing) Entrance Test, it would be appropriate to have screening of student applications as a criteria for admission by dropping the idea of holding an entrance test. The Academic Council, accordingly, accepted the suggestion not to have entrance test for admission to B.Sc. (Nursing) Programme."

(ii) Resolution No. AC 20.2.3 - The word "education" in the last line be replaced with "school mathematics", so as to read "teaching of primary school mathematics".

(iii) Resolution No. AC 20.4.1 - The existing Resolution AC 20.4.1 be read as below:

"The Council ratified the action taken by the Vice-Chancellor in approving evaluation methodology for Bachelor in Tourism Studies as proposed in the Agenda Note.

(iv) Resolution No. AC 20.9.1 - The word "for" appearing in the 3rd line be replaced by the words "beginning from". With this

addition, the Resolution will read as below:

"The Council ratified the action taken by the Vice-Chancellor in approving the proposal for changing over to academic gowns beginning from the 10th Convocation to be held on Sunday, March 14, 1999."

(v) Resolution No. AC 20..12.1 - The Resolution relates to the Management Programme and since no comments were received from the School of Management Studies, it was decided that no change need to be made in the Resolution.

(vi) Resolution No. AC 20.13.2 - The word "it" be inserted between the words "otherwise" and "should" in the 5th line.

The Resolution after the correction will read as below:

"AC 20.13.2 - It was informed by Registrar that the Research Council was constituted but the Council has not been made operational. The Vice-Chancellor was emphatic on the point that any Programme, be it research oriented or otherwise, it should be ensured that all information relating to the Programme be made available with the concerned School so that the decision taken is sound before launching of the Programme. He further stressed that the Schools should weigh its faculty capabilities in order that any course/programme can go through each stage of its launching in a time bound and effective way."

(vii) Resolution Nos. AC 20.14.3 & AC 20.14.4 - It was felt that the Resolution as recorded under these two Resolutions is correct and that no change is needed.

AC 21.1.2   With the above corrections/modifications, the Academic Council confirmed the Minutes of its 20th meeting held on February 17, 1999. The Council also noted the action taken thereon.

ITEM NO. 2   TO REPORT ON THE TENTH CONVOCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY.

AC 21.2.1   The Academic Council noted that Tenth Convocation was held on March 14, 1999 as scheduled. Smt. Mahasveta Devi, Eminent Writer and Social Worker was awarded the Degree of D.Lit. (Honoris Causa). Dr. Karan Singh, Member, Rajya Sabha was the Chief Guest who delivered the Convocation Address. The Council noted that 21,780 students received Diplomas and Degrees. The total number of candidates who qualified including those who qualified for Certificate Programmes, comes to 33,119. A Statement giving the details is placed at Appendix − 1.

ITEM NO. 3   TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE PROGRAMMES IDENTIFIED FOR THE VIRTUAL CAMPUS INITIATIVE.

AC 21.3.1   (1)   The Board considered the Programmes identified for the Virtual Campus Initiative. Prof. M.M. Pant, Director, School of Computer & Information Sciences (SOCIS), IGNOU, initiated detailed deliberations on the proposals. In his summary presentation to the members through visual representations of the Virtual Campus Initiative, he informed that the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has recognised the potential of IGNOU for launching programmes in Internet and Satellite communication technologies as also in the creation of virtual institutions and for meeting these challenges that come along with the virtual institutions.

(2)   The members congratulated the Vice-Chancellor for securing the fund for the development of a one year course from the Department of Electronics, MHRD in the field of IT Programmes.

(3)   Prof. Pant informed the members that the SOCIS is building upon its experience and competency of TV/Radio and Satellite based learning. Its recent experience in internet based delivery of courses, is causing an impetus for the development of the virtual campus. The members were informed that this approach of the Virtual Campus Initiative on computer and information

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technology is also in part a fulfilment of the recent policies of the Government of India as reflected in the recommendations of the National Task Force (NTF) for Information Technology (IT) and Software Development. In one of its major recommendations in supporting this approach, the Government of India has envisaged that `Virtual Institutions in different parts of the country shall be set up to achieve excellence in distance education'. While referring to the background and transition to network based learning, Prof. Pant said that the transition to network based education requires appropriate change in the attitude and skills of the teachers, learners and the administrators. Towards this end, the SOCIS has been already organising occasional on-site programmes in areas such as use of computers and internet in education. These were done in collaborations with CEMCA, CSI, USEFI, etc. On the basis of the experience gathered in the last couple of years, it is now possible to have a practically implementable plan for offering courses in a virtual mode. IGNOU, with its large storehouse of academic knowledge and distance education and educational technology expertise, is in a key position to leverage its strength to be able to emerge as a global player in course delivery and development of learning resources for virtual mode of education.

(4)   The Virtual Campus Initiative seeks to set in place the appropriate infrastructure required at the development end, the learner end and the network to create a scalable model for higher-end IT training conforming to international standards. The main asset of the Virtual Campus is its intellectual capital and it would assiduously create a framework for protecting and fully utilizing the intellectual property generated or acquired by it. Schematic representations given by Prof. M.M. Pant is appended at Appendix – 2.

(5)   Prof. Pant, having introduced the proposals for Programmes identified under Virtual Campus Initiative, the Chairman called for detailed discussions on the proposals.

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AC 21.3.2   In the course of detailed deliberations, the
following views/issues were expressed/raised:

(i)   At present, the University is running its
computer based courses where there are
large number of students at different
stages of registration/evaluation. Some
members wanted to know whether steps have
been taken to allay any fear that may
give rise in the minds of the enrolled
students in anticipation of the proposed
programmes being more flexible, superior
and globally competitive in nature.

(ii)   Whether the various operational Divisions
like the Regional Services Division
(RSD), Regional Centres and Student
Registration & Evaluation (SR&E) Division
are ready to shoulder these additional
operations in terms of manpower,
infrastructure and other requirements.

(iii)   Whether the existing semester system
passed by the Academic Council will be
affected by the introduction of the
trimester system in the proposed
programmes.

(iv)   Whether the curriculum and syllabus of
the programmes will be designed by the
University or by Ed Excel.

AC 21.3.3   Prof. M.M. Pant, in his clarifications to the
points/issues raised, stated that :

(i)   The proposed programmes will not cause any
set back for the existing students of
computer programmes; rather, these will
supplement the existing programmes through
improved version of globally competitive
and technologically innovative IT
Programmes.

(ii)   Student Registration and Evaluation
Division will be the nodal point for
entrance and all other examinations. No
other agency will conduct any examination.

(iii)   Regional Services Division will continue to
give Student Support but in an electronic
environment.

(iv) Trimester System is being experimented to distinguish it from normal University Programme for the time being. Later it may be reviewed if necessary.

(v) Curriculum and Syllabus was considered and approved by the School Board for all Programmes. The Ed Excel Syllabus was a starting point and some part of it has been included as per IGNOU's needs.

(vi) The learning materials are being developed entirely by School of Computer & Information Science and the University being paid for this.

AC 21.3.4   Prof. Pant further mentioned that the legal agreements between the parties such as, IGNOU and Ed Excel, operational responsibilities, various academic aspects relating to the launching of the programmes vis-a-vis the requirements of the operational divisions were taken care of.

AC 21.3.5   Prof. Pant reiterated that so far as the individual success or failure in any particular programme is concerned, it depends upon individual effort and value addition by the students so far as the ability is concerned. He said that in the evaluation of IT professional courses/curriculum, it has to be measured against international standards. Prof. Pant candidly shared with the members that it is a high risk project and in the course of running of the programmes, he asserted that there will be continuous and sustained monitoring and evaluation of the Programme right from its launching. He further assured the Academic Council that the degree of B.I.T is entirely an IGNOU Qualification.

AC 21.3.6   The Vice-Chancellor observed that the quality of interventions by the members of the Council has been of high standard touching every aspect of the proposed programmes. He was also happy to note that for the first time only one agenda item has been brought to the Council and discussed threadbare.

AC 21.3.7   The Vice-Chancellor informed the members that the
             University in the course of its growth in the
             distance education has developed certain
             infrastructure with which the IGNOU is capable of
             delivering this type of programmes. He was of the
             view that the society at large has already
             benefitted by the programmes of the University in
             diverse fields and spheres. IGNOU students look
             forward for innovative programmes in line with
             the technological innovations and development.
             This was properly articulated by the University in
             its presentation to the Department of Electronics
             at the time of discussion between the Secretary,
             Department of Electronics, officials of MHRD and
             Directors of Institutions like IITs and RECs who
             are also called to present their proposals. He
             stressed that IGNOU should not only cater to the
             population of the country but also should make an
             effort to cross the frontiers and compete globally
             in the sector of education. The strength of the
             distance education system lies in its innovations
             and flexibility, he asserted.

AC 21.3.8   In response to the concern shown by the members
             on the operational aspect of the proposed
             programmes, the Vice-Chancellor mentioned that he
             will constitute a Monitoring Group to follow
             through the preparedness of the University vis-a-
             vis the School of Computer and Information
             Sciences in launching the programme. The time
             frame fixed for establishing this Monitoring Group
             is July, 1999.

AC 21.3.9   The Vice-Chancellor has urged the Director (SOCIS)
             to consider the various points raised by the
             members of the Council while implementing the
             programme and also refer this to the Monitoring
             Group for its consideration.

AC 21.3.10   Having considered the course contents, duration,
             etc., the members agreed that PG Diploma in
             Information Technology should be changed to be
             called as "Advanced Diploma in Information
             Technology".

AC 21.3.11   With the above observations/modifications, the Council approved the Detailed Programme Report (DPR) Form (Phase-3) of the following programmes as proposed in the agenda note:

    (i)   Bachelor in Information Technology (BIT)

    (ii)   Advanced Diploma in Information Technology

    (iii)   Diploma in System Engineering

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

(ABDUL W. KHAN)
Vice-Chancellor