

National Knowledge Commission

Compilation of
Recommendations on Education

NKC Snapshot November 2007

Recommendations Submitted

Till November 2007

- Libraries
- Translation
- Language
- Knowledge Network
- Right to Education
- Health Information Network
- Portals (Water, Energy)
- Vocational Education
- Higher Education
- Legal Education
- Medical Education
- Management Education
- Open and Distance Education
- Open Educational Courseware
- National Science and Social Science Foundation
- Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
- Innovation
- E-governance

Works In Process

- Portals (Biodiversity & Teacher Training)
- School Education
- Technical Education
- More Students in Science and Maths
- Entrepreneurship
- Science and Technology
- Agriculture
- Traditional Knowledge

Foreword

The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) is pleased to present a compilation of its recommendations on education to coincide with the final deliberations on the XIth Plan document. It consolidates a set of recommendations that the Commission made on Right to Education, English Language, National Knowledge Network, Vocational Education and Higher Education as part of its first Report to the Nation along with some new ones on Legal, Medical, Management and Open and Distance Education, Open Access and Open Educational Resources. Recommendations on School Education and Technical Education are important and are in the process of being finalized.

We believe that the XIth Plan document's focus on education and the proposal to allocate Rs 2.5 trillion, a four-fold increase in the allocation for education over the Xth Plan, make the NKC recommendations particularly useful and timely. The share of education in the total plan will accordingly increase from 7.7 per cent to 19 per cent. According the highest priority to education and availability of such a large quantum of financial resources presents a historic opportunity for transforming the entire framework for education, institutions and infrastructure. In the Commission's judgment appropriate reforms in education at this stage will have far reaching implications for the future of the country as it positions itself as a knowledge hub for the world. It will also have far reaching implications on disparity, development, demography and growth.

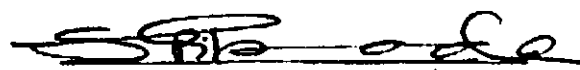
The first Report of NKC to the Nation made nine sets of recommendations with a focus on Access, Concepts, Creation, Application and Services. Six of the recommendations related directly to Access to Knowledge, which is essential if we are to build a knowledge society with equity and opportunity for all. With this overarching focus, the NKC has been deliberating on various aspects of the overall education system. In our recommendations, we have highlighted the significance of making the right to education a reality, on redefining the critical elements of vocational education and training as well as access to the English language at the school level. We have also stressed on expansion, excellence and access in the Higher Education system with a focus on reforms in the governance structures, leveraging information and communication technology (ICT) to create dedicated research and education networks, and the need for making our professional education streams more responsive to national realities as well as global competitive challenges.

The key to realizing these objectives is to set up new institutions based on norms, upgrade and reform existing institutions and ensure accreditation to provide benchmarks for quality. Other measures to ensure quality would include stringent information disclosure norms for all educational institutions such as their financial situation, physical assets, admissions criteria, faculty positions, academic curricula, level of accreditation, etc. There must be focus on upgrading infrastructure, improving the training of teachers and continuous assessment of syllabi and the examination systems. The system of education must recognize that there is bound to be diversity and pluralism and avoid a uniform one-size-fits-all approach. In our endeavour to expand educational opportunities and create excellence through competition and transparency we need to forge appropriate public-private partnerships and increase research at universities. The government will also need to create governance models that facilitate speedy decisions based on stakeholder participation.

In order to focus on expansion, excellence and access for all, which are inextricably connected, it is essential that we rethink the way we look at the present education system. The world is now well and truly in the midst of the information age. Advances in ICT have had a profound impact on all areas of human pursuit including

education. As a result, the concept of a classroom as learning environment with chalk, blackboard, duster, textbook, homework, exams, grades etc. will change as new methods of learning evolve. We believe we have a historic opportunity to capitalize on some of these trends and technologies to benefit teachers and students.

As the XIth Plan document approaches its final round of deliberations and the stage is set for its implementation, a compilation of NKC recommendations on education will, we believe, provide a set of inputs and ideas for discussion, debate and implementation and enable formulation of specific schemes and programmes. We look forward to working with diverse stakeholders, including the central and state governments, for providing more detailed inputs to facilitate and drive implementation.



Sam Pitroda

Chairman

National Knowledge Commission

6 November 2007

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