

Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of Higher Education

MONTHLY SUMMARY FOR THE CABINET FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, 2020:

1. Important Policy Decisions Taken and Major Achievements During December, 2020

A. Important Events

- i. **On 24th December, Prime Minister addressed the centenary celebrations of Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, West Bengal through video conferencing.** The Education Minister and Governor of West Bengal were also present at the event Founded by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore in 1921, In May 1951, Visva-Bharati was declared to be a Central University.
- ii. **On 22nd December, Prime Minister addressed the centenary celebrations of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) through video conferencing.** This is the first time in five decades that a prime minister attended an AMU event. During the event, PM released postal stamps commemorating the event. Education Minister also joined the event via videoconferencing.
- iii. **On 21st December, Education Minister laid the foundation stone of permanent campus of IIT Bhagalpur through virtual mode:** As per planning, at IIT Bhagalpur, there will be an academic block, administrative block, lecture halls, computer centre and library block, workshop cum incubation centre, girls' and boys' hostel, and faculty residence in the new campus. The building built by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) will have accommodation for more than 600 students. The total area of construction will be 25000 metre square. The institute will start new programs in emerging areas such as Data Science, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Electric Vehicle Technology, and Information and Communication Technology

Speaking on the occasion, Education Minister praised institute's initiative of adopting 4-5 nearby villages for providing technical knowledge.

- iv. **Union Minister of Education holds a virtual bilateral meeting with H.E Hussain bin Ibrahim Al Hammadi, Minister of Education, the United Arab Emirates to strengthen educational cooperation and to further deepen the relations especially in the field of education by way of continuous dialogue and by enhancing active, interactive and long term collaborations at various levels,** The Minister invited students from UAE to India under our Study in India Programme and invited more number of faculties to India for taking short-term courses in Indian universities under GIAN programme.

v. **India and UK to strengthen education collaboration:** (a) In a bilateral meeting between Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' and Foreign Secretary of UK Rt. Hon. Dominic Raab , the two countries agreed to deepen their engagement in the field of education and research, and work collaboratively on mutual recognition of academic qualifications over the next year.

(b) India and UK have agreed to set up a joint Task Force consisting of designated higher education organizations from both countries to work towards mutual recognition of academic qualifications. This will support India's agenda for internationalization of higher education.

B. Announcements on JEE (Main) Examination-2021

JEE (Main) Examination- 2021 to be conducted in four sessions in the month of February, March, April and May 2021. The first session of JEE (Main) 2021 will be held from February 23rd - 26th, 2021. Conducting JEE (Main) Examination-2021 in four sessions will give multiple opportunities to the candidates to improve their scores in the examination. If a candidate appears in more than one session then his/her best of the 2021 JEE scores will be considered for preparation of merit list/ ranking

Drawing from the National Education Policy (NEP), for the first time ever JEE (Main) Examination-2021 will be conducted in 13 languages- Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu , Hindi, English and Gujarati.

C. ISRO to Set up a Regional Academic Centre for Space at IIT-BHU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will set up its Regional Academic Centre for Space (RAC-S) at IIT-BHU. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been signed virtually between IIT-BHU and ISRO which will pave the way for advanced research in the future technology of the Indian space programme.

With the help of the RAC-S, IIT-BHU will leverage research in space science and space technology, space application, agriculture, telecommunications, meteorology, and water resources to design developmental models for effective natural resource management.

D. IITs, NITs and reputed technical institutes to adopt stretches of national highway

Reputed technical institutes across the country including IITs, NITs and other AICTE approved engineering colleges, have associated with the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) to adopt nearby stretches of the national highway on voluntary basis. The adopted stretches will be used as a field of study for the faculty, researchers and familiarize students of the Institute with the latest trends in industry.

These initiatives are expected to create a bridge between the Institutes and the Industry and will also lead to mutual cooperation between the Institutes and the NHAI for

dissemination of respective expertise on the field of Civil/highway engineering on National Highway projects.

E. AICTE extends support to J&K and Ladakh students by releasing Rs 20,000 as maintenance allowance under Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS)

Extending support to J&K and Ladakh students, AICTE has decided to release the instalment of Rs. 20,000/- as maintenance allowance under Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS). The decision has been taken to support & empower students for completing their online studies.

Under the PMSSS Scheme, the youths of J&K and Ladakh are supported by way of scholarship in two parts namely the academic fee & maintenance allowance. AICTE has already released the entire academic fee for the year 2020-21 to all the institutions. The maintenance allowance had been fully released as per scheme guidelines till the end of last academic year 2019-20. Subsequently due to COVID-19, the academic institutions across India were closed and only online classes are going on. Since there is no hostel & mess expenditure involved, the maintenance allowance was suspended, till such time students physically join the institutes. However, in order to support & empower students for completing online studies, it has been decided to release the instalment of Rs. 20,000/-. The amount will be released to all the beneficiaries pursuing classes in Odd Semester (July-December 20). The subsequent instalments shall be released once the students shall join physically at their respective institutions based on the verification of continuation certificate issued by the Institution.