

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

Various steps have been taken to improve the quality of higher educationNew Delhi, July 23rd, 2018

The Ministry has prepared a draft Higher Education Commission of India Bill, 2018 to repeal of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956 and for establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) for promoting the quality of academic instruction, maintenance of academic standards and autonomy of higher educational institutions for free pursuit of knowledge, innovation, incubation, skills and entrepreneurship, and for facilitating access, inclusion and opportunities to all, and providing for comprehensive and holistic growth of higher education and research in a competitive global environment.

There is no proposal under consideration of the Government to scrap the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

The grant disbursement function to Universities and Colleges is now proposed to be located in an entity which works in a transparent, merit-based approach through an ICT enabled platform.

NITI Aayog has recommended for restructuring of the University Grants Commission. Accordingly, the Ministry has prepared a draft Higher Education Commission of India Bill, 2018 to repeal of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956 and for establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI).

The draft Higher Education Commission of India Bill, 2018 has been put in public domain on 27.06.2018 for seeking comments and suggestions from educationists, stakeholders and general public before 20.07.2018. As on 19.07.2018, the Ministry has received 9,926 suggestions/comments covering Members of Parliament, State Governments, academicians, teacher unions, Chambers of Commerce, students etc. and appropriate changes are being made in the draft Bill based on the public feedback.

The Government has taken several major initiatives in the Higher Education Sector during the last two years. Substantive changes have been made in the basic regulations of the University Grants Commission (UGC). With a view to provide autonomy, promote quality and create an enabling environment whereby Higher Educational Institutions can become institutions of global excellence, UGC has taken several initiatives in the form of Regulations i.e. (i) UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of M.PHIL./PH.D Degrees) Regulations, 2016, (ii) UGC (Open and Distance Learning) Regulations, 2017; (iii) UGC (Promotion and Maintenance of Standards of Academic Collaboration between Indian and Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2016; (iv) UGC (Institutions of Eminence Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2017; (v) UGC (Categorization of Universities (only) for Grant of Graded Autonomy) Regulations, 2018 and (vi) the UGC (Conferment of Autonomous Status upon Colleges and Measures for Maintenance of Standards in Autonomous colleges)

Regulations, 2018. These regulations are available on the UGC's website at www.ugc.ac.in.

With a view to encourage research and development in the country, UGC is implementing schemes, awards, fellowships, chairs and programmes under which financial assistance is provided to institutions of higher education as well as faculty members working therein to undertake quality research covering areas of knowledge across disciplines. The Government has also undertaken reforms in National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). Further, the Government has established an online storehouse of academic awards (degrees, diplomas, certificates, mark-sheets etc.) namely National Academic Depository (NAD) for making available academic awards 24x7 in online mode.

This information was given by the Minister of State (HRD), Dr. Satya Pal Singh today in a written reply to a Lok Sabha question.

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