Minutes of the RUSA Mission Authority Meeting held on 8th January 2014

The first meeting of the RUSA Mission Authority was held on 8th January, 2014 at 11am under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Human Resource Minister, Dr. M.M. Pallam Raju. Dr. Narendra Jadhav, Member, Planning Commission, also attended the meeting. The list of participants who attended the meeting is placed at **Annexure.**

1. OPENING SESSION

1.1 Shri. Ashok Thakur, Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the RUSA Mission Authority. He underlined the importance of RUSA in reinvigorating the State higher education system in the country by linking funding of institutions with the institutions' willingness to implement academic and governance reforms. He pointed out that since the share of State government's Plan investment in higher education has been decreasing over the years there is a need to incentivise the States to increase their investment. He emphasised that UGC and AICTE must also play an important role in this process by re-strategising their approach and working with the State governments to fulfil the national objectives.

1.2 The Hon'ble Human Resource Minister in his address said that RUSA heralds a new era in the country's higher education system with more focus on access, expansion, excellence and accountability through strategic planning. He added that this umbrella scheme under mission mode would be spread over the 12th and 13th Five Year Plan period. The financial assistance of the Centre would be based on certain preconditions and provided only to government and government-aided institutions. He said that accreditation would be mandatory under RUSA for improving the quality of higher education. RUSA would address regional and social imbalances in access to

higher education by setting up new institutions in underserved and unserved areas of the country. The total central contribution for RUSA during the 12th and 13th Five Year Plan period would be Rs.69,675 crores. The corresponding contribution by the States would be Rs.28,459 crores. During the 12th Plan period alone the Cental contribution would be Rs.16,227 crores while the State contribution would be Rs.6,628 crore. Apart from major components like creation of new universities through clustering of institutions and upgradation of autonomous colleges, existing schemes such as the Model Degree College in 374 Educationally Backward Districts and the sub-mission on polytechnics would be subsumed under RUSA. He also emphasised the importance of conducting familiarisation programmes on RUSA in various parts of the country.

1.3 In his opening remarks, Member, Planning Commission emphasised the importance of harnessing the country's demographic dividend through various schemes that promote higher education and skill development. He said that RUSA represents a paradigm shift in the funding of the State higher education system and it was important to consolidate the country's achievements through policies that focus on equity, excellence and expansion in order to address various issues such as quality of higher educational institutions, shortage of faculty, low GER, etc. He also flagged the importance of having a robust implementation mechanism under the RUSA.

1.4 DISCUSSIONS

1.4.1 The Hon'ble Minister then invited the members to share their views and observations on RUSA. The Education Minister of Manipur Shri. M. Okendro highlighted the various challenges faced by the State in the higher education sector. He highlighted the various structural reforms initiated in the sector during the past one year. He sought support under various components of RUSA, especially the urgent intervention of the

Mission Authority in sanctioning four new Model Degree Colleges, infrastructural support and faculty recruitment support etc.

1.4.2 The Parliamentary Secretary in charge of Education, Nagaland Shri Deo Nukhu, sought the Mission Authority's help for upgrading some of the colleges in the State to universities. He also said that Nagaland did not have a single engineering college or medical college and the opportunities for higher education under science streams were very poor in the State. He also sought financial support for private colleges under the RUSA.

1.4.3 Dr. Deepak Pental said that achieving minimum standards in higher education would be the biggest challenge while implementing RUSA. He added that RUSA follows a bureaucratic strategy for achieving the objectives and many of its recommendations were neither university-centric nor faculty centric. He said that improving faculty standards would be a major challenge. He also suggested that there must be greater interface between ministries such as the Ministry of HRD and Department of Science & Technology. Lastly he suggested a competitive grants system which could ensure flow of funds directly to researchers.

1.4.4 The Commissioner and Secretary for Education of the State of Manipur said that the role of the State Higher Education Council (SHEC) would be crucial in overseeing the implementation of RUSA. He also sought need-based funding for colleges located in remote areas of the State.

1.4.5 The State Nodal Officer of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands said that due to the Island's remote location and that too in a seismic prone zone, the cost ceiling for construction should be raised.

1.4.6 The Principal Secretary, Higher Eucation, West Bengal said that after the enactment of the new Land Acquistion Act , acquiring necessary land for new projects was a big issue which needed to be addressed. Although two autonomous colleges from the State have sought university status under RUSA, they do not want to become affiliating universities. He also sought

more flexibility for the States in utilisation of funds under the various components of RUSA, within the overall outlay for the State.

1.4.7 The Nodal Officer, Himachal Pradesh said that there are only two EBDs in the State and therefore, the State's request to open more new Model Degree Colleges should be considered under RUSA. He also sought the support of RUSA in filling the vacancies in the undergraduate colleges of the State.

1.4.8 The Nodal Officer, Karnataka sought special assistance for upgrading Visvesvaraya College of Engineering (UVCE) in Bangalore. He sought clarification on whether RUSA would support setting up of State-level accrediting bodies during the 12th Plan period. He also sought assistance for autonomous institutions in the State like the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) under the RUSA.

1.4.9 The Nodal Officer, U.T Government, Chandigarh requested that a model Institutional Development Plan (IDP) and State Higher Education Plan (SHEP) on the website of the MHRD as there was confusion on the contents and form of IDP and SHEP. He also sought more clarification on the composition of the TSG, inclusion of medical and engineering colleges, and funding to government aided institutions under RUSA.

1.4.10 The Nodal Officer, Uttarakhand sought help from the TSG at the Centre for finalising the SHEP of the State.

1.4.11 The Secretary, Higher Education, Jammu and Kashmir sought exemption for the State with regard to 20:1 student-teacher ratio.

2. PRESENTATION ON RUSA

2.1 Shri. R.P. Sisodia, National Mission Director, RUSA and Joint Secretary, MHRD made a presentation on RUSA. The presentation highlighted the rationale of RUSA; the salient aspects of the Scheme; role of the Mission Authority and; progress made with regard to the implementation

of the Scheme. He emphasised the need to have an organic link between the State government and the SHEC while formulating SHEPs and implementing RUSA.

2.2 Responding to this presentation, Dr. Keshav Desiraju, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India underlined the importance of improving the quality of classroom transactions under RUSA. Besides policies focussing on increasing access and infrastructure, it was highly important to improve the quality of teaching in colleges and universities.

2.3 The Principal Secretary for Higher Education, Uttar Pradesh said that that the SHEC would create an additional layer in the implementation structure and fund flow mechanism proposed in the RUSA. He favoured only an academic role to the SHEC. He also said that the funds to the institutions should be released to them by the State government.

2.4 The Mission Director informed that the entire Central funds to the States will be released only through the Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System (CPSMS) and these issues could be discussed in the next Project Approval Board meeting.

2.5 With regard to the SHEP, the Principal Secretary, Higher Education of Punjab wanted to know if the State should plan only for the remaining three years during the 12th Five Year Plan period.

2.6 The Mission Director clarified that the State Perspective Plan should focus on the next eight years under the 12th and 13th Five Year Plan period.

2.7 The Chairperson of the SHEC of Andhra Pradesh said that many autonomous colleges in the State were seeking university status. He wanted to know whether private colleges could be affiliated to such universities. He sought more clarification regarding the role of the State Project Director and the State Nodal Officer. He further sought the approval of the Mission

Authority for filling up the faculty positions in the universities through a State-level centralised mechanism.

2.8 The Mission Director clarified that the Cabinet decision is to allocate public funds only to public institutions under the RUSA. With regard to the affiliating/unitary nature of the new universities and filling up of faculty positions through a centralised mechanism, it was clarified that the State government could take a final decision in the matter.

2.9 The Chairperson of the West Bengal State Higher Education Council said that the per unit allocation of Rs.55 crore each for the universities created by conversion of colleges in a cluster and through upgradation of existing autonomous colleges should be reduced so that more institutions could be covered under the scheme in the State.

2.10 The Mission Director clarified that Rs.55 crore is only the upper limit with regard to allocation of funds under these components. However, it must be ensured that the minimum facilities required for a university must be made available.

3. PRESENTATION ON NQRI

3.1 Following the above discussions, Dr. A.N. Rai, Director, NAAC made a presentation on "National Quality Renaissance Initiative" to be undertaken under RUSA. He explained in detail the proposed activities of NAAC under this initiative that are focussed on popularisation and promotion of quality assurance programmes, quality sustenance and enhancement initiatives, establishment of internal quality assurance cells in institutions, etc.

3.2 The Director, Higher Education, Himachal Pradesh suggested that instead of setting up State-level accreditation bodies, NAAC should create more regional centres.

3.3 Secretary, Department of Higher Education added that the 'National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions' Bill introduced in Parliament envisages mandatory accreditation for all institutions. Once cleared, NARA will set standards for the process of assessment and accreditation for the various existing accrediting bodies like NAAC, NBA, etc. and the proposed State-level accreditation councils.

3.4 Director, NAAC said that NAAC would be creating more regional offices in various parts of the country shortly.

4. PRESENTATION ON NEED ASESSMENT AND STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR LEADERSHIP IN RUSA

4.1 Prof. S. Parasuraman, Director TISS made a presentation on "Need Assessment and Strategic Planning for Leadership in RUSA". He touched upon the major challenges faced by the India's State university system and underlined the importance of adopting a four-stage strategic approach in leadership development programmes that are relevant for capacity building. The four-stage process involves scoping and review for developing leadership standards, programme design, content creation and delivery mechanisms, capacity building and pilot implementation, and national-level implementation. He said that such an initiative is essential for establishing an efficient and transparent institutional governance system in higher educational institutions.

5. AGENDA ITEMS

The National Mission Director & Joint Secretary, Higher Education then sought the approval of the Chair to take up the items on the agenda for the approval of the Mission Authority.

5.1 ITEMS FOR DECISION OF THE MISSION AUTHORITY

5.1.1 Approval of RUSA Guidelines including programmatic norms and equalization formula.

The Mission Director informed the house that consequent upon the approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) for the new Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in its meeting held on 3rd October, 2013, the draft guidelines detailing the programmatic and financial norms of the various components under RUSA were posted on the website of the MHRD and the States were asked to send their observations and suggestions by 4th November 2013. He added that the Ministry has taken into account all the relevant suggestions of the States while drafting the new version placed before the meeting.

Decision of the Mission Authority

The Mission Authority approved the draft RUSA guidelines placed before meeting including the programmatic norms and equalization formula.

5.1.2 Consideration of applications from states for participation after the deadline of 31st October 2013

The Mission Director informed the house that the first Project Approval Board considered proposals sent by States up to the 31st of October, 2013 which was the deadline for submission. Allocations were made to the States that were found to be eligible by way of fulfilling all the prerequisites. The States of Goa, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh had applied after the deadline of 31st of October, 2013 for participation in RUSA, with the requisite documents. In addition, the two poll-bound States, Mizoram and Chhattisgarh had also submitted the required documents after 31st October 2013.

Decision of the Mission Authority

The Mission Authority gave its in-principle approval for the inclusion of Goa, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Tripura, Mizoram and Chhattisgarh in RUSA and their consideration by the PAB in its next meeting.

5.1.3 Logo for RUSA

The Mission Director presented before the house some designs for the logo that have been received at the Ministry and sought the opinion of the members.

Decision of the Mission Authority

The Mission Authority decided to re-work certain elements of the logos received.

5.1.4 Extension of deadline for the submission of State Higher Education Plan (SHEP)

The Principal Secretary, Higher Education, Andhra Pradesh sought extension of the deadline for the submission of the SHEP by another three weeks. The Principal Secretary, Higher Education Punjab also sought an extension of the deadline for the submission of SHEP.

Decision of the Mission Authority

The Mission Authority has decided to extend the submission deadline of the SHEPs to MHRD to 31st January 2014.

5.2 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OF MISSION AUTHORITY

The following were placed before the house for its information.

5.2.1 Constitution of Mission Authority

The National Mission Authority for RUSA was notified vide Resolution dated 1st November 2013. It would be an independent and autonomous wing of the

Ministry of Human Resource Development with the Union Human Resource Development Minister as the Chairperson. The Mission Authority will be empowered to fix and alter the programmatic norms of RUSA within the overall framework of the scheme from time to time. It will delineate the overall policy and planning and will be empowered to make necessary changes in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation parameters so as to enable the national and State level implementing bodies to implement the Scheme efficiently and effectively.

5.2.2 PAB'S Decisions

The first meeting of the RUSA Project Approval Board (PAB) was held on 6th November, 2013. The meeting approved the proposal to subsume the ongoing Model College Scheme of the UGC into RUSA. It also approved the release of the second installment amounting to Rs.49.365 crores to 31 institutions under old norms and Rs 218.40 crores to 56 model colleges located in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh under new norms. The meeting also approved the release of the first installment of funds, amounting to Rs. 43.8 crores, as Central share for 13 States and 04 UTs. The PAB approved the proposal to fund the capacity building and leadership development activities as part of the preparatory exercise, and had approved the sanctioning of Rs.2.03 crore with an advance of Rs.1 crore as first installment to Tata Institute of Social Sciences. The meeting also approved the MoA with TISS for setting up the RRC, for three months, extendable by another three months. Also the PAB approved monthly expenditure of Rs.15 lakhs to be incurred on the RRC. The amount would be sanctioned to TISS out of MMER funds. The PAB approved an allocation of Rs. 17 crores during the current Plan period and an amount of Rs. 4 crores for the current year to NAAC for the National Quality Renaissance Initiative**.** The PAB also approved release of MMER funds @ of 1% of the total amount

released to States by the Centre. The PAB also approved the proposal of the NIC for the preparation of a DPR for an MIS for RUSA, which would cost 16.85 lakhs.

5.2.3 Progress on PAB Decisions

The Mission Director informed the house that Rs.4 crores has been released to NAAC for the National Quality Renaissance Initiative and Rs.1 crore has been released to TISS for implementing Capacity Building and Leadership Development programmes under RUSA. He also informed that utilisation certificates on first instalment under MDC scheme from the States are awaited. The Ministry has already taken steps to release preparatory grants and funds for new Model Degree Colleges. The relevant head of account for release of funds to States is under creation.

6. In his closing remarks, Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development said that all the concerns of the members will be considered. The Centre would accord top priority towards ensuring quality higher education under the RUSA. All the initiatives under RUSA would be in tandem with the various UGC programmes and the initiatives under the National Mission on Teachers and Training to enhance the quality and relevance of the higher education system in the country. He also requested all States to strictly adhere to the deadlines. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks.

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Annexure

List of Participants

Sl. No.	Name	Designation	Dept./Ministry
1	Dr. M. M. Pallam Raju	Minister of Human Resource Development	MHRD
2	Mr. Ashok Thakur	Secretary	MHRD
3	Mr. Keshav Desiraju	Secretary	Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
4	Mr. M. Okendro	Minister, Higher Education	Govt. of Manipur
5	Mr. Deo Nukhu	Parliament Secretary (Hr. Edn) & Chairman SHEC	Govt. of Nagaland
6	Shri. R.P.Sisiodia	Joint Secretary and Mission Director, RUSA	MHRD
7	Mr. L Venugopal Reddy	Chairman	SHEC, Andhra Pradesh
8	Dr. Malayendu Saha	Vice- Chairman	SHEC, West Bengal
9	Mr. Vivek Kumar	Secretary, Dept. of Higher Education	Govt. of West Bengal
10	Mr. Ajay Misra	Principal Secretary, Higher Education	Govt. of Andhra Pradesh
11	Mr. P Vaiphei	Commissioner & Secretary, Hr. & Tech. Education	Govt. of Manipur
12	Mr. H.R. Srinivasa	Special Secretary, Education	Govt. of Bihar
13	Mr. H.K. Sharma	Commissioner & Secretary, Higher & Technical Education	Govt. of Assam
14	Mr. F P Solo	Commissioner &	Govt. of Nagaland

		Secretary, Hr. & Tech. Education	
15	Dr. Roshan Sunkaria	Principal Secretary, Higher Education	Govt. of Punjab
16	Mr. N.K.Gupta	Principal Secretary, Higher Education	Govt. of Uttar Pradesh
17	Mr. Sheikh Mushtaq Ahmad	Secretary, Higher Education	Govt. of J&K
18	Dr. Sheikh Bashir Ahmad	Advisor, Higher Education	Govt. of J&K
19	Mr. Dinkar Burathoki	Director, Higher Education	Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
20	Mr. S.B. Sekhri	Member Secretary (SHEC) & Addl. Director, Higher Education	Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
21	Mr. C.R. Francis	Nodal Officer, RUSA	Govt. of Karnataka
22	Ms. Sucharita Sarangi	OSD, Office of the Principal Resident Commissioner	Govt. of Odisha
23	Dr. Satpal Singh Sahni	Nodal Officer, RUSA	Govt. of Uttarakhand
24	Mr. M.H. Khumar	I/c of Jt. Secretary, Higher Education	Govt. of Gujarat
25	Dr. Vedant Pandya	Jt. CEO/Director (Research),	Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat
26	Mr. Pratap Singh	Dy. Secretary (Finance)	MHRD
27	Dr. Dilip Kumar	Dept. Higher Education	Chandigarh(UT)
28	Mr. Arjun Dev	Registrar Education (c)	Chandigarh (UT)
29	Dr. Norbert Noraho	Addl. Director,	Govt. of Nagaland

		Higher Education	
30	Dr. Akhilesh Gupta	Adviser	Dept. of Science & Technology
31	Prof. Deepak Pental	Professor	University of Delhi
32	Dr. S. Parasuraman	Director	TISS
33	Mr. S.R. Mehar	Dy. Secretary, D/o of Financial Services	Ministry of Finance
34	Dr. Y.R. Meena	Addl. Commissioner (Extension)	Ministry of Agriculture
35	Mr. Avinash S Pant	Vice-Chairman	AICTE
36	Dr. H. Devaraj	Vice-Chairman	UGC
37	Mr. Pramod Jain	Jt. Secretary	Ministry of Culture
38	Mr. S.L. Bhojegowda	Member	Bar Council of India
39	Mr. J.R. Sharma	Secretary	Bar Council of India
40	Mr. Yogendra Tripathi	Jt. Secretary & Financial Advisor	MHRD
41	Prof. A.N. Rai	Director	NAAC
42	Dr. R Dev Das	Director, State Institute of Education- Cum Nodal Officer (RUSA)	A&N Islands
43	Shri. Harpreet Singh	Director(HE)	MHRD
44	Prof. B. Venkatesh Kumar	Head, RUSA Resource Centre	TISS
45	Mr. B S. Ponmudiraj	Asst. Director	NAAC