

SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

3rd Six Monthly Report (15 Oct 2013-14 April 2014)

1. An MoU was signed with Maulana Azad Kalam Institute of Asian Studies (MAKIAS), Kolkata for establishment of a Maulana Azad Centre for Studies in Northeast India in Sikkim University, which is fully funded by MAKIAS whereas administrative and infrastructure support is provided by Sikkim University.
2. An MoU was also signed with the Commonwealth Agriculture Bureau International (CABI), Surrey, UK for funding a research project in the Department of Horticulture, Sikkim University.
3. Sri T. K. Kaul, Deputy Registrar at the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi joined the University as the First Registrar on 7th November 2013. The University is also taking initiatives to fill up the other statutory posts, which are currently managed by retired personnel from other central universities.
4. The constitution of the First College Development Council by the Visitor was notified. The first meeting of the Council is being convened in the 3rd week of May 2014 to discuss the recommendations of a committee constituted by the Vice-Chancellor to review of the undergraduate education policy in Sikkim. The ToR for the review committee includes, among others, consideration of subjects like disaster management, gender studies and public administration besides the new subjects started by the CBSE for the colleges affiliated to Sikkim University and introduction of B.Voc under National Vocational Education Framework.
5. The revision/drafting of the syllabi of all the 29 post graduate departments was completed during the Odd Semester 2013 and the revision and standardization of the syllabi of all the 33 subjects taught at the undergraduate level are in progress during the current Even Semester 2014. The six Deans of Schools have been entrusted with the responsibility of the revision of the syllabi in subjects under their respective Schools. The University plans to upload its syllabus in its website and publish the same during the Even Semester 2014.
6. The University has applied for assessment and accreditation by NAAC, Bangalore and is currently preparing the Self Study Report with the help of various sub-committees coordinated by Dr. Sohel Firdos, Dean of the School of Human Sciences.
7. The 2nd Convocation of the University was held on Sunday, 9th March 2014 at Manan Bhawan, Gangtok. Padma Bhushan Professor Mrinal Miri, Rajya Sabha Member and Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University delivered the Convocation Address on “Idea of a University” and Justice (Mrs) Ruma Pal, the Chancellor presided over the function and conferred the degrees on the students who passed in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013. The convocation was also attended by Hon’ble Governor of Sikkim & the Chief Rector of Sikkim University, Sri Shriniwas Patil. The University will henceforth endeavour to hold the convocation every year in the month of November.
8. The Visitor’s nominees for selection committees were received on 13th January 2014. Although the University had advertised for 132 vacant posts of XI Plan period, it

could hold interviews for 90 posts and select 62 candidates only. In case of 28 posts no one was found suitable. Whereas the number of applicants for the posts of Assistant Professors was phenomenal there were very few eligible candidates for Associate Professor and even fewer for the posts of Professor. The interviews started from 19th of February and ended on 27th of March with four days' break on account of the 2nd Convocation of the University. The selection of 62 candidates was approved by the Executive Council in its meeting held on 31st March 2014. If all the selected candidates join the percentage of filled-in positions will increase from the existing 35 to 65 per cent of the posts sanctioned under XI Plan. The next round of interviews will be held within a couple of months and it is hoped that we will be able to fill up about 90% of the faculty position by the end of the current semester.

9. The University has learnt several lessons from the experience of holding interviews from 19th February to 27th March 2014. We now plan to reach out to the potential candidates not only through newspapers and website but also by writing to concerned individuals and institutions soliciting their cooperation in encouraging eligible candidates to apply. We also plan to ask the shortlisted candidates to do classroom teaching and participate in group discussion on the first day and attend the interview the next day, thereby involving the students and teachers of the departments concerned in the selection of teachers. We also hope to select better candidates by doing so.
10. We are happy to report that we could hugely diversify the intellectual and regional bases of the faculty members selected this time. While an overwhelming majority of faculty members selected during 2007-12 was from JNU, which is undoubtedly one of the best universities in India, we selected the faculty members this time from more than 40 universities and colleges of India representing almost every region of India. We expect a truly national character of the University to emerge and evolve in future through this highly diverse intellectual base of our faculty members.
11. On campus development, construction of the boundary wall has started by the Building and Housing Department of the Government of Sikkim and is making steady progress. The University has constituted a committee chaired by the Registrar to monitor the progress of construction and quality of materials used in the boundary wall. This committee visits the site and reports to the Vice-Chancellor at least once in a month. The Vice-Chancellor also makes frequent visits to the construction site to satisfy himself about the progress and quality of boundary wall.
12. The selection of architectural firm for preparing the master plan of the campus and designing the buildings is at the final stage. The planning and designing of the campus may take about 4 months. If funds are made available by the UGC construction of the roads and buildings inside the campus may start from November 2014. The 18 kms long road connecting the campus with the main road is almost ready. The electrical connection is already being drawn. The only problem is the distance of about 50 kms for drawing water from a perennial source using the principle of gravitation. It may be difficult to maintain such a long pipeline passing through a wildlife protected forest, but there is no alternative perennial and viable source for a projected 10 thousand population on campus in the next 50 years.

13. The Vice-Chancellor of the University has been appointed as a member of the Committee on National Integration constituted by the Indian Council of Social Research (ICSSR), New Delhi. He has also been appointed as a member of Advisory Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage constituted by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), New Delhi.
14. We are glad to inform that the UGC has accepted our proposal to establish a Centre for Endangered Languages of Sikkim and North Bengal and provisionally granted us Rs.1.80 crores, which may be enhanced after a review of the functioning of the Centre.
15. Finally, we are happy to report that we have started drafting various Regulations for day to day functioning of the University, which are being circulated to all stakeholders for their feedback. After incorporating their suggestions we place them before the Authorities for their consideration of approval. One such Regulation on Conduct of Examinations is already approved by the Authorities and the ones on Admission and Recruitment of Teachers are receiving the comments of faculty members.

In this manner, the University seeks to make its governance as participatory and transparent as possible.

T. B. Subba
Vice-Chancellor, Sikkim University