



DECEMBER 2008

Welcome to the National Knowledge Commission's newsletter. While giving updates on recent events, this issue also takes us back to the launch of the National Knowledge Commission and the impact it has had since then as reflected in the Eleventh Plan.

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The National Knowledge Commission, the first of its kind in the world, has been successful in bringing the education debate to the center-stage of policy deliberations in the country. Over the past three years we have prepared a blueprint for reform of the knowledge sector. We have given over 250 recommendations on a range of areas of the knowledge paradigm and have tried to bring about a systemic change.

Our vision has been endorsed by the Government which is evident in the five fold increase in the outlay for education in the XIth Five Year Plan. We now hope to engage stakeholders in this process of reform.

~ Sam Pitroda, Chairman, National Knowledge Commission

NKC Recommends National Research Mission to the PM



It is widely recognised that a nation's transformation into a knowledge and skills economy is critically dependent on the original research and development taking place within the country. If India is to make the transition to a knowledge economy, it is vital that research and development within the country be dramatically improved. There is ample evidence that India is not well-placed for this future transformation. For example, in many disciplines, there is already a severe shortage of well-trained young doctorates to fill in existing posts in research institutes and universities. This problem is likely to

be even more acute in the envisaged new universities. The growth in the number of doctorates has only been 20 per cent in India in the period 1991-2001 compared to 85 per cent in China. Not more than 1 per cent of those completing undergraduate degrees currently opt for doctoral studies in India, and a substantial number of students prefer to go abroad. To address these problems, there is a pressing need for urgent government policy interventions, including high priority initiatives to attract, nurture, and retain the country's best young minds in academia and research.

Click [here](#) to read the complete recommendations by NKC on More Quality Ph.Ds.



Dr. Sujatha Ramdorai, Member, NKC talks about the need for more quality Ph.Ds in India

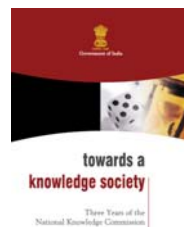
Media Reports:

[NKC says govt. interventions needed in research sector](#)

[Stimulating news for India's research scenario](#)

[Set up national research mission: Pitroda to PM](#)

Towards a Knowledge Society: Compilation of NKC's Recommendations on Education



The National Knowledge Commission recently came out with its book *Towards a Knowledge Society*. The book is a compilation of NKC's recommendations on education, focusing on three objectives: Realising Demographic Dividend, Reducing Social Disparities and Sustaining Economic Development.

To access the book, click [here](#).

India Water Portal Launched in Hindi

November 2008

The India Water Portal, developed by the Arghyam Trust and supported by the National Knowledge Commission will now be available in Hindi, in addition to English and Kannada. The Hindi portal was launched by Shri J.P. Yadav, Minister of State for Water Resources, along with Ms. Rohini Nilekani, Chairperson of Arghyam. The objective of the portal is to address equity and sustainability issues in the water sector.



Visit the portal at <http://hindi.indiawaterportal.org/>

NKC Outreach: Conferences on Education in Mumbai and Delhi

October 2008

As part of the All India Management Association (AIMA) and National Knowledge Commission (NKC) Education Series on the theme 'Demography, Disparity and Development', two seminars were held in Mumbai and New Delhi. The aim of these events was to disseminate and discuss NKC's recommendations.

In Mumbai, NKC Chairman Sam Pitroda along with other NKC members — Dr. Ashok Ganguly, Dr. Sujatha Ramdorai and Prof. Amitabh Mattoo, addressed a gathering of corporates and academics. The event also saw the launch of NKC's book 'Towards a Knowledge Society'. This was followed by an interactive

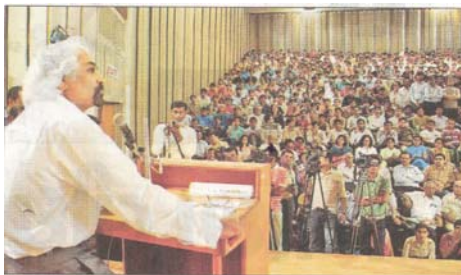
session with management students at the Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies. The discussion ranged from the current state of the education system

in India to e-governance and skill development. Mr. Pitroda also spoke about the need for reform in the regulatory framework of education to facilitate the entry of new institutions. NKC has recommended the creation of an independent regulatory authority IRAHE to monitor entry and standards of universities.

Dr. Sujatha Ramdorai stressed the need for improving the quality of research in India.

Exciting Young Minds: Sam Pitroda Connects with the Youth

October 2008



Chairman, NKC addresses students in Ahmedabad

At a conference organised by the Institute of Engineers in Ahmedabad, Sam Pitroda, Chairman, NKC addressed more than 800 students, faculty members and Vice Chancellors. The theme of the talk was 'Overall Development through Knowledge'. He said that the aspirations and potential of the 550 million young people can only be realised if a massive expansion is carried out and the quality of our education and skill development improved.

Teachers of India Portal Launched by the President

September 2008

The President of India Smt. Pratibha Patil launched the *Teachers of India* portal on 5th September 2008. The portal has been developed by the Azim Premji Foundation with the support of the National Knowledge Commission. The objective of the portal is to create a forum for teachers to interact and share best practices.

Visit the portal at <http://teachersofindia.org/>



Launch of the Teachers Portal at Rashtrapati Bhawan

Food for thought: In India, Teacher student ratio is 1:46 in primary schools; 1:35 in upper primary schools and 1:33 in Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools.

Excerpts from Prime Minister's speech at the Launch of NKC

“It is now commonplace to say that the 21st Century will be the “Knowledge Century”. What exactly do we mean when we say this? I believe that this proposition implies that it is not military power or economic power that will in fact determine a nation’s place in the world now in the making, but its ‘brain power’. The ability of a nation to make best use of its brain power will shape its place in the world in the present century.”

“The enormity of this task is all the more due to the demographic transition underway now in our country. In the next few decades India will probably have the world’s largest set of young people. Even as other countries begin to age, India will remain a country of young people. That I believe is potentially our great advantage.”

Read the complete text of the speech [here](#).



“The Knowledge Commission must come forward with creative ideas to promote the ‘knowledge base’ of our economy and to exploit the vast latent potential. We must leverage it to make India truly the ‘Knowledge Engine’ of the world.”

NKC Impact: The XIth Five Year Plan (2007—2011)

The XIth Plan places the highest priority on education as a central instrument for achieving rapid and inclusive growth. This is reflected in the **five fold increase** in resource allocation. **At Rs. 2.70 lakh crore, it constitutes 20 per cent of the Plan, representing a credible progress towards the target of 6 per cent of GDP.** The following gives an insight into some of the major components of the XIth Plan relating to the recommendations made by NKC.

E-governance for better service delivery. (Volume I: Inclusive Growth)

- Process re-engineering to be the most crucial element of the agenda to make delivery of services citizen centric.
- Creation of a common service delivery platform including State Wide Networks, Common Service Centres and Last Mile Connectivity.
- A body with PM as Chair to prescribe deliverables and milestones for the National e-governance Plan.
- Make use of e-governance in implementation of all major flagship programmes.

Libraries (Volume II: Social Sector)

- Develop Public Libraries including Rural Public Libraries.
- Special collections and technological support for visually challenged and hearing impaired.

Translation (Volume II: Social Sector)

- A National Translation Mission (NTM) for promoting translator education including specialised courses in translation technology. The Government has approved the setting up of a NTM within an outlay of Rs. 73.97 Crores under the aegis of CIIL, Mysore.

Intellectual Property Rights (Volume III: Economic Sector)

- Undertake the second phase of modernisation of IP offices to address the needs of human resource development, training and awareness and also infrastructure, besides regular updating of the IT facilities.
- Indian IPO would be made an International Searching Authority and an International Preliminary Examining Authority under the Patent Co-operation Treaty of WIPO.

[More areas of the XIth Plan relating to the NKC recommendations will be highlighted in the next newsletter.]



“Our future prosperity depends upon the policies, programmes and people that can foster continuous generation and application of knowledge in the pursuit of learning”

NKC Impact: State Level Initiatives

- The NKC is reaching out to state governments for implementation of its recommendations. At present NKC is working with 26 states. The states of Delhi, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Orissa are already in the process of preparing blueprints for state level knowledge initiatives.
- In October 2008, Karnataka launched a state Knowledge Commission on the lines of NKC to revamp the education sector in the state.
- NKC regularly organises outreach programmes in states. In the last two months, NKC organised meetings with educationists in Gujarat, Orissa and Delhi.

Food for thought: The Gross Enrolment Ratio (percentage of the 18-24 age group enrolled) for higher education is around 10 per cent in India whereas it is 25 per cent for many other developing countries.

Special Focus

ICT in Education: Technology is the Key

“Wherever feasible, ICT should be made more accessible to teachers, students and administration for learning, training, research, administration, management, monitoring, etc. This requires the provision of more facilities such as computers as well as connectivity and broadband facilities. Computer-aided learning also requires training of teachers and other staff in order to make the best use of the technology”

[NKC Recommendations on School Education](#)

“One of the most effective ways of upgrading the quality of, and enhancing the access to, education would be to stimulate the development and dissemination of quality Open Access (OA) materials and Open Educational Resources (OER) through broadband internet connectivity. This would facilitate easy and widespread access to high quality educational resources and drastically improve the teaching paradigm for all our students.”

[NKC Recommendations on Open Educational Resource](#)

Other Resources:

National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning

<http://www.youtube.com/iit>

Download NCERT Books

<http://www.ncert.nic.in/textbooks/testing/Index.htm>

MIT Open Courseware

<http://www.ocw.mit.edu>



India Environment Portal



The India Environment Portal, managed by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) and promoted by the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) is an attempt to put together a one-stop resource on environment and development issues. It brings together a vast repository of information resources on environment including news, feature articles, opinions, data, reports and documents, book abstracts, and links to institutions and government bodies.

Visit the portal at

<http://indiaenvironmentportal.org.in>

Feedback and Comments

“I am happy to know that the work of NKC is progressing well and that some of your recommendations have been integrated in the 11th Plan for funding. We are taking necessary steps to set up an Advisory Group to study the recommendations made by the NKC.”

Ms. Vasundhara Raje, Ex-Chief Minister, Rajasthan

“The 1st report of the NKC was systematically discussed in the University of Mumbai, in meetings with the Heads of University Departments, Principals of the Affiliated Colleges, University teachers and the Research students of the Post-Graduate Departments. Some of the key recommendations and the reforms suggested in the 1st report have been initiated in our University. The 2nd report also will be discussed in the University in similar fashion. Aspects related to Medical Education, Legal Education and Open and Distance Education will be discussed involving Universities that have been separately established for these disciplines.

Most of us in the Universities all over India have realized the importance of these initiatives and appreciate the efforts taken to provide a blue print to the Government of India for transforming our knowledge Institutions. The UPA government's commitment to the knowledge initiatives in the XIth plan are an indication of the acceptance of the NKC report.”

Dr. Vijay Khole, Vice Chancellor, Mumbai University

“I wish to compliment the Commission, which is working under your leadership, for making many important suggestions, which I hope will be considered with all seriousness by the entire political spectrum in our country.”

Shri. Somnath Chatterjee, Speaker, Lok Sabha

Join the Mission!

We invite you to become part of this change process!

Please send in your comments and experiences in dealing with the process of change.

“You must be the change you want to see in the world”

~ Mahatma Gandhi

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