

NEWS BULLETIN

December 2009



National Institute of Open Schooling

NIOS CELEBRATES FOUNDATION DAY



The 21st Foundation Day celebrations of the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) was held on 23 November 2009 at the India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. Smt. Anshu Vaish, Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD, Govt. of India who was the Chief Guest, lit the lamp and inaugurated the programme.

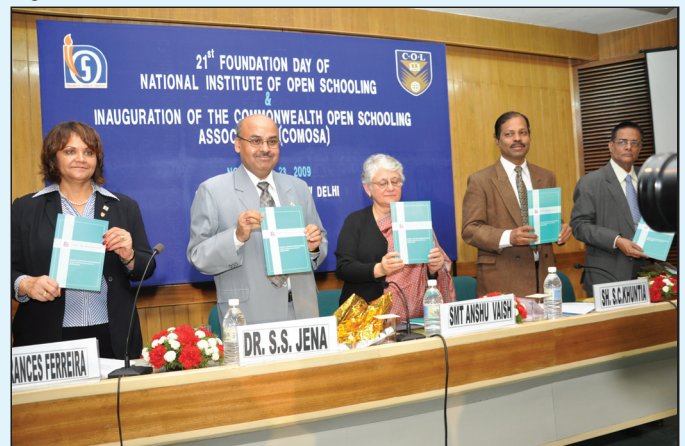
The occasion also witnessed the Inauguration of the Commonwealth Open Schooling Association (COMOSA) established by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Vancouver, Canada.

Conveying the wishes of Sri. Kapil Sibal, Hon'ble Union Minister for Human Resource Development, who could not be present on the occasion and congratulating the NIOS, Smt. Anshu Vaish stated that the NIOS has emerged as a trend setter institution not only in the Open Schooling (OS) sector but also as a model for Commonwealth countries. From a small project of CBSE, she said, it had grown to become an apex organization with a lead role to play in the educational arena of Open Learning. While commending the NIOS for bagging the Silver Award in e-governance, she also mentioned the significant projects such as the HUNAR Project for education of Muslim girls which was launched by the NIOS in collaboration with Bihar Education Project Council. She stressed on the need for the NIOS to be further strengthened as a Resource Institution in Open & Distance Learning as well as the need for State Open Schools to take up responsibilities to meet the challenges of number, credibility and quality. She also stressed the need of NIOS for supporting the Sakhar Bharat programme recently launched by Govt. of India focused for women literacy with emphasis on skill development. Ms. Vaish hoped that the COMOSA would give proper impetus to OS in the Commonwealth countries, expand access, promote equity, develop network of institutions for sharing learning resources, deliver high quality and effective resources & reduce the unit costs of education at tertiary levels.

Sh. S.C. Khuntia, Joint Secretary, MHRD, Govt. of India congratulated the NIOS for completing 20 years of its existence successfully with a phenomenal enrolment of 1.6 million learners. He mentioned the strong role that NIOS was expected to play in the Department of School Education & Literacy through activities such as SSA and supporting Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA). He also emphasized on the need for the NIOS to play an important part not only in terms of access but also equity to equip learners with life skills.

Congratulating the NIOS on achieving the milestone of having completed 20 years as the largest Open Schooling System in the world, Ms. Francis Ferreira, Education Specialist, COL, pointed out that OS is not a second choice anymore but an innovative option for the Commonwealth. She mentioned about a study conducted by the Commonwealth of Learning which indicated that the effectiveness of NIOS is comparable to most schools in the country. She appealed to the OS System to respond to the technological dynamism as an aid to education. She was confident that the collaborative efforts of COMOSA can act as an agent to expand and improve the quality of education in the Commonwealth countries.

A publication titled '**NIOS: The Way Forward**', outlining the efforts of the NIOS in the last two decades and the future perspectives of the organization was released on the occasion.



In his inaugural speech, Dr. S.S. Jena, Chairman, NIOS thanked all those who had helped the institution grow from infancy to adulthood. While referring to the huge responsibility of ensuring universal access to education by 2017 & universal retention by 2020, Dr. Jena said that a Centrally Sponsored Scheme had been developed by the NIOS to meet this challenge. The Hunar Project, in collaboration with the Bihar Education Project Council, he said plans to cover 50,000 Muslim girls, SC & ST & other backward communities in the next phase.

The On-Demand Examination Scheme (ODES) which is one of the major initiatives of the NIOS would be extended to all Regional Centres of the NIOS by January 2010. Some of the bold initiatives in the area of ICT would be the introduction of a web-based learning system, teleconferencing, community radio etc. to strengthen the teaching-learning process.

The Programme concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Sreedher, Director, Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi.

'NIOS' THE FIRST SECRETARIAT OF COMMONWEALTH OPEN SCHOOLING ASSOCIATION (COMOSA)

The two days inaugural meeting of the Commonwealth Open Schooling Association (COMOSA) held at New Delhi from November 23-24, 2009 organized by Commonwealth of Learning with its head office at Vancouver, Canada adopted the first Constitution of Commonwealth Open Schooling Association (COMOSA). The COMOSA is a democratic,

collaborative and futuristic organization based on mutual respect and committed to support the efforts of open schooling institutions to cooperate and collaborate in the development, promotion and introduction of innovative, high quality, relevant, equitable, gender-sensitive and cost-effective programmes of school education for sustainable development in commonwealth countries through Open and Distance Learning Mode. The basic objective of this organization is to network, develop advocacy programmes, build capacity of open schooling system, share resources, undertake research and development to meet the challenges related to quality assurance and gender equity through Open Schooling programmes in Commonwealth countries.

In total 22 participants mostly, the Open schooling Heads of Commonwealth countries, from Australia, Belize, Botswana, Canada, Cameroon, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tanzania, Trinidad & Tobago, Zambia, Ireland, India, South Africa, and Seven State Open Schools from India participated in this Inaugural Meeting and adopted the COMOSA Constitution on 24th November, 2009.

In the first Inaugural Meeting of COMOSA, **Dr. Sitansu Sekhar Jena, Chairman, National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)** of India was elected through a secret ballot as the **First Chairperson** of the COMOSA for a period of one year. Ms Fancy Amey from Botswana as Vice Chairman, Ms. Lystra Samson Ovid from Trinidad & Tobago as Secretary, Prof. Desh Bandhu Gupta from Jammu and Kashmir State Open School, India as Treasurer were elected as COMOSA Office Bearers.

It was agreed upon by the members that the first secretariat of the COMOSA will be located at NIOS Campus (NOIDA), India. The office bearers of COMOSA have been authorized by the members who participated in the inaugural meeting to chalk out the action plan for COMOSA during the next one year. This has definitely enhanced the prestige of the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), India by way of recognizing the potentiality and good work that has been done by the Institute during the last two decades of its existence.

The delegates also paid a visit to NIOS at NOIDA on 25th November, 2009 and they were exposed to various kinds of innovative practices such as — Ni-On Project, On Demand Examination System, 24x7 Learning Support Centre through IVRs and other operational systems on student support services.

It was also resolved by the COMOSA members that possibilities for developing Open Educational Resources (OER) in Vocational Education areas may be explored with the lead role of NIOS.

Dr. Sitansu Sekhar Jena expressed gratitude to the member countries of COMOSA for reposing the faith on NIOS for the good work that is being done in the Asian region.

NIOS TO DEVELOP OER FOR VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) has decided to develop Open Educational Resources (OER) for Vocational Programmes to be offered at Secondary and Sr. Secondary (+2) levels. The educational resources will not only be beneficial for the students pursuing their studies through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system at school level but also will be accessible for millions of learners interested to develop their skills in various vocations. This will also help to vocationalise the curriculum of Secondary and Sr. Secondary levels across the Boards in the country.

In a workshop on OER held at New Delhi on Nov. 26-27, 2009 jointly organised by NIOS and Commonwealth of Learning (COL) with its head office at Vancouver, Canada, it was resolved that accessing good quality educational resources to build capacity of millions of learners pursuing or interested to have career in various vocations is the need of the hour to make education relevant to them. About 40 participants, including 24 participants from Commonwealth countries, across the globe participated in this workshop and deliberated on various issues on how to make vocational education relevant to school curriculum. It also focused on the issue related to 'copyright issues' to ensure repetition

on developing the materials to be avoided. Dr. Sitansu S. Jena, Chairman, NIOS requested the participants from various commonwealth countries to join hands with the NIOS in the mission of vocationalising open schooling curriculum and skill development programmes as envisaged by the institute. The NIOS has been focusing on development of Equivalency and Skill Development programmes for "Sakshar Bharat" mission under National Literacy Mission (NLM) of Govt. of India, which will benefit about 60 million illiterate women in the country through this programme. It was pointed out by the participants from various countries that this mission could only be achieved if good quality OER is developed, both print and non-print, focusing on skill development areas relevant to the varied target groups and is made accessible to the target groups. The educational resources available in various countries could also be effectively adopted/adapted to avoid repetition in developing the learning resources. Mrs. Frances Ferreira, Education Specialist from COL co-ordinated and led the workshop.

TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR MASTER TUTORS

The National Institute of Open Schooling organized a three day programme of Master Tutor Training from 14th -16th of November, 2009



at the National Institute of Biologicals (NIB), Noida, Sector-62. Inaugurating the training programme, Dr. S.S. Jena, Chairman, NIOS dedicated the training package developed in collaboration with UNFPA to the children of the nation. He initiated his thoughts by drawing everyone's attention towards the target beneficiaries of the programme, that is, adolescents whose population would soon be touching maximum on the population cascade. According to Dr. Jena, the stage of adolescence has its own specific concerns and needs special treatment. Dr. Jena put forth the purpose of the programme as an orientation for the tutors so that they could provide proper guidance and training to their learners. He drew attention towards the current scenario and how unsafe our young adults are today in their own society, thus focusing on the need to guide them well and make these adolescents aware of their surroundings. Dr. Jena maintained that through this programme, a force of master tutors from different regions would be developed which in turn would widen the outreach of the programme by helping out the beneficiaries at their levels.

Dr. Anita Priyadarshini, Director (Academic), NIOS felt that this training programme had a far reaching impact. She emphasized on the importance of effective Personal Contact Programmes in distance education and encouraged the trainers to facilitate learning of Open Schooling learners.

Dr. Jaya of UNFPA congratulated the NIOS for investing in an initiative of this magnitude that has implications for all the learners of the NIOS system. She commented that this approach is in tandem with the National Curriculum Framework 2005 that focuses on building learners' experiences. She also expressed that NIOS and UNFPA should work together so that life skills integrated materials become the norm for all educational materials developed by NIOS.

Authors of the lessons and the subjects-in-charge shared the painstaking journey towards the development of this material. They said that the material was different from the usual, as life skills had been integrated

into the lessons, to enable learners to deal with real life situations effectively. They acknowledged that it was a great learning experience.

The Valedictory function was graced by Prof. Saroj Yadav, Project Coordinator, NCERT. Dr. Anita Priyadarshini, Director (Academic), NIOS addressed queries raised by the participants.

Prof. J.L. Pandey expressed that there are many skills in one life skill and all of them are being used simultaneously. He believed that any knowledge, attitude that leads to action is a life skill. He appreciated this initial step taken up by AEP Unit and NIOS of opening the closed doors of ignorance towards blissful, lighted path of knowledge, and helping the tutors to develop a new insight towards a wonderful dimension of teaching – learning.

In the end Asheema Singh, Project Officer, thanked all for their efforts and informed that keeping the NIOS policy of reaching the unreached in mind, more such programmes are being organized in Lucknow, Bhubaneswar and Patna.

NIOS COMPUTER TRAINING AND DATA CENTRE INAUGURATED

Mrs. Frances Ferriera, Education Specialist, Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver, Canada inaugurated the Computer Training and Data Centre of NIOS meant specifically for the capacity building on IT of the personnel involved with the open schooling system in the country.

In order to make maximum utilization of ICT in Open Learning and under the capacity building programme, the NIOS in collaboration with Intel organised an IT Teach Programme in order to enhance and upgrade the IT skills of NIOS officials. Training was provided to 120 officials in batches of 20 for a duration of 10 working days (2 weeks) for 2½ hrs. per day from 26 November to 29 December, 2009.



NIOS EXAMINATION RESULTS

The National Institute of Open Schooling declared its Secondary and Senior Secondary October 2009 examination results on 10.12.2009.

The details of certification are given below:

Course	Male		Female		Total	
	Appeared	Certified	Appeared	Certified	Appeared	Certified
Secondary	77309	26166	33227	12103	110536	38269
Sr.Secondary	81206	28739	31981	11997	113187	40736
Total	158515	54905	65208	24100	223723	79005

The results have been declared in less than 4 weeks from the last date of the examination. The above results also include the results of the Patrachar Vidyalaya of Govt. of NCT, Delhi. The students could view and download their results at the NIOS web site www.nios.ac.in The results were also available on the web site www.indiaresult.com and www.examresults.net

The results were also made available through SMS. For Sr.Secondary, the students had to type - NIOS12 <rollno> and for Secondary, the students had to type - NIOS10 <rollno> and send it to any one of the following numbers 5676750 , 58888, 56263.

Result through IVRS:

Toll free: 18001809393 for all users.

For Reliance users: 56263, For virgin mobile users: 58686

Airtel Mumbai: 52255, Airtel Orissa: 52545

IDEA Maharashtra: 52345

Result through E-mail:

The students could send their request for result to: lsc@nios.ac.in

The Mark Statements, Migration Certificates and Provisional Certificate have been despatched to the (AIs) study centres. The students can collect their Mark Statements, Migration Certificate and Provisional Certificates from their respective study centres (AIs). The examination fees for the April 2010 examination will be deposited as per the schedule from 16th of December to 31st of December 2009.

WORKSHOP ON EVALUATION

A two day training workshop on evaluation was held at NIOS on 17 & 18 Nov. 2009. This was conducted by Prof. H.L. Srivastava, Former Head, Dept. of Educational Measurement & Survey, NCERT for the academic staff of NIOS on the development of blue print, question paper & other evaluation related issues.

DEVELOPMENT OF QUESTION BANK FOR ON-DEMAND EXAMINATION SCHEME (ODES)

The development of Question Bank based on the revised Senior Secondary course of NIOS has been initiated. So far, questions have been generated in the subjects of English, Chemistry and Biology. Questions in the subjects of Hindi, Urdu, Mathematics, Physics, Geography, Economics and Psychology are being developed. The question items are also being reviewed and translated.

This activity which began on 24 Nov. 2009 has been taken up on priority basis as all Regional Centres are planning to set up On-Demand Examination cells.

VICE CHANCELLOR - BANGLADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY VISITS NIOS

Dr. R.I.M. Aminur Rashid, Vice-Chancellor, Bangladesh Open University visited the NIOS campus at NOIDA on 9 December 2009 Welcoming him on the occasion, Dr. S.S. Jena, CM, NIOS gave a brief introduction on the functioning of NIOS. Dr. Rashid then visited the Computer Training & Data Centre and the Learner Support Centre.



NIOS CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

The International Human Rights Day was celebrated on 10 December 2009 in the NIOS campus at NOIDA.

Dr. Anita Priyadarshini, Director (Academic), NIOS welcomed the participants and introduced the speakers, Prof. A.K. Sharma, Former Director, NCERT and Prof. Pandav Naik, Former Director, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU and Former Vice-Chancellor, Utkal University.

Explaining the history of the Human Rights movement, Dr. S.S. Jena, Chairman, NIOS stressed on the importance of including human rights issues in the material developed by the NIOS.



Delivering the keynote address, Prof. A.K. Sharma emphasized on the need for celebrating the International Human Rights Day in the same spirit that has been spelt out in the declaration of Human Rights. Various concerns such as equality, religions co-existence and the quality of teacher education which are reflected in the articles were shared and discussed.

Referring to the aspect of equality, Prof. Pandav Naik pointed out that rigid hierarchical systems should be avoided so that people feel suitably equal to be able to interact freely. He stated the importance of the need to understand human rights as well as use it as a tool for reform by negotiating the difficulties.

Ms. Gopa Biswas, Deputy Director (Academic) proposed a vote of thanks.

MEETING OF NIOS REGIONAL DIRECTORS

A meeting of Regional Directors of NIOS was held on 13-14 November 2009 at the NIOS Headquarters at NOIDA. Sri Sunil Kaura, Secretary, NIOS welcomed the Chairman, NIOS, all the Regional Directors and other members present in the meeting.

Dr. S.S. Jena, Chairman, NIOS pointed out that the Regional centres are directly linked to the public and therefore are much closer to the problems



faced by the students. NIOS should become a vibrant organization at the grass root level conducting examination in a fair and transparent manner. All regional centres should become academic hubs. He stressed upon the monitoring of Personal Contact Programmes (PCPs), training programmes of Co-ordinators of AIs/AVIs and the need for advocacy to reach the unreached. Presentations were made on issues related to the Work Profile of Regional Centres, Current Status of Academic & Support Services, Future Vision of Regional Centres for Academic & Support Services and Issues & Problems.

The following points emerged from the presentations:

- All Regional Centres to setup a "May I help you" counter equipped with computer, internet facility where students can get basic information. The counter should have at least one/ two regular staff to provide information to students/ redress their difficulties to the extent possible at the counter itself.
- Efforts should be made to set up a "On Demand examination cell" at all the regional centers.
- All Regional Directors should forward a schedule of PCP in their region to H.Qs and ensure that PCP is conducted at all study centers. At least one academic facilitator is to be allotted to each AI in the region and he/she monitors the conduct of PCP in the AI allotted to him/her. At least one meeting of the co-ordinators of AI/ AVI and Exam Centres should be held within the next two months.
- Regional Directors should make an effort to locate an appropriate place to house the Regional Centre. The building should preferably be in a Govt./Semi Govt. Organization well connected with railway station/bus stop for convenience of the student and general public. They should also take up the issue of acquisition of land for NIOS building with the concerned state Govt. on subsidised rates/ lease.
- Sale of prospectus, both Academic and Vocational, should be reconciled and the statement sent to Accounts section for proper record keeping.
- Requirement of computers/ printers and other accessories should be sent to H.Qs well in advance for taking necessary action. Edusat, dish antenna/ TV should be made functional wherever these equipments are available.
- All Regional Directors should have their own local website. A link may be created with the NIOS website. Regional Directors may take the help of SAP. Regional Directors to submit proposal for purchase of TV/LCD/Dish antenna to H.Qs for purchase if not available in Regional Centre.
- Physical verification report of the assets available in the regional centers should be done and a report to this effect be sent to Maintenance Unit so that audit team can inspect the same when they visit the regional centers.
- All Regional Directors to ensure that the AIs functioning under their jurisdiction should put a sign board indicating their name, number, name of coordinator, telephone no, email id, pcp timing, no of seats etc., at a prominent place for students and general public. The SSS Department will send a prototype board for their reference.
- All Regional Directors and all officers up to the level of Assistant Director to adopt one AI for monitoring and facilitation of students. The AI thus adopted should be intimated by the Regional Directors/ Officers of H.Qs to SSS Department with their feedback.
- All Regional Directors to pursue recognition of the programmes of NIOS with concerned State Boards/ Universities.
- All Regional Centres may participate in book-fairs in their respective region(s) whenever they are held.

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