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To,
Dr. Pramod Kumar
Registrar
JNU

Subject: Re: Minutes of the 144th AC meeting

Dear Dr. Kumar,

I am writing in response to the minutes of the 144th AC meeting my office has received a few days ago. I have three observations to make:

1. **With regard to the School of Engineering:** I think the minutes do not reflect the nuances of the discussions we had in the AC, and, at least, two points should feature in the minutes.
 - a. The minutes should reflect that the Chairperson, in response to a question raised by Professor Amit Ray of CITD, categorically mentioned that the financial resources to recruit faculty members for the School of Engineering would be made available separately, and would not imply any reallocation of existing resources meant for other Schools and Centres.
 - b. The Chairperson, and the House, I believe, agreed to my suggestion that JNU's School of Engineering should have an interdisciplinary PhD programme in Engineering and Technology. Such a PhD programme would help JNU to establish its unique niche in Engineering and technology studies by drawing upon its existing strengths in Social sciences and Humanities to produce socially and environmentally responsible engineers, in line with the aspiration of the draft proposal. The Chairperson also agreed that future discussions on the programme and structure of the proposed School would be much more broad based, drawing people from various disciplines of social sciences and humanities, and the Centre for Studies in Science Policy.

These points are important to mention in the Minutes also because of certain reports appeared in the national media immediately after the AC meeting. **In a series of articles, many leading newspapers reported how several**

undergraduate engineering colleges in the country (many are around Delhi) have been closing down due to non-fulfilment of seats. Huge public money was spent to create these colleges. In the light of these developments, it is important that JNU gives more careful thought in utilising its resources, which can only be done through a broad-based, inclusive process of deliberation within the university.

2. **With regard to the recent circular, on compulsory attendance of students, across the board, from the winter semester 2018:** While the same has been circulated to all students and faculty, *diligently*, by my office, I do think this circular is a premature one, where no clear guideline exists and a committee has just been set up to formalise the guidelines. Please note that the Committee has not also been given any timeline, and the winter semester is just around the corner. I hope your office will appreciate that a circular must come when there are clearly laid down rules and guidelines. Kindly arrange to withdraw the circular until the committee comes up with an acceptable set of guidelines through due discussion and deliberations. In addition, the JNUTA letter suggests that no such decision was taken in the AC. Since I had to leave the AC midway, due to certain health reasons, I would like your office to clarify the matter. I am sure, you would agree that a well-established, and well-accepted guideline should only be changed when the majority agrees to the change, and the changed guidelines respond ably to the diverse requirement of the university. I would like you to consider putting the circular on hold, and allow the committee to have detailed deliberations, following the best traditions of the university.

3. **Regarding delinking of MPhil and PhD:** Since a decision has perhaps been postponed due to the Court verdict, I hope your office would seek our feedback in due course before implementing a new norm. The students of our Centre have immensely benefitted from a combined programme of MPhil and PhD as this gives them an assured opportunity to take a long-term perspective in their research. For many, their PhDs have been an extension of their MPhils, and have helped them publish an elaborated version of their MPhils, in leading journals, while doing PhD. De-linking the programme would make faculty and students less committed to MPhil research, with adverse implications for their publication possibilities. I hope to be able to give my detailed feedback on this issue in near future.

Best regards



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