

Guest Editorial

Prof. H. P. Khincha,
Vice Chancellor, VTU



Involvement of Higher Education Institutions in Economic Development

On the eve of a new century, there is an unprecedented demand for and a great diversification in higher education as well as an increased awareness of its importance for socio-cultural and economic development. The higher education system is also under pressure on accountability to society and creating accountability within.

Traditionally, the ideals of higher educational institutions have been a combination of research and teaching. Such institutions receive normally a high level of financial support from the government because it is considered necessary to provide education required both to solve the present day problems and also as an insurance against the challenges and threats of the unknown future.

In addition to the functions of teaching and research, there is a growing feeling that higher education institutions have also to play a new role. This new role involves making direct contributions aimed at improving regional and/or national economic performance. In more recent years this demand that our institutions assume responsibilities for such roles in the society has become stronger. This is backed with the expectation that knowledge especially in natural sciences and technology should stimulate industrial growth and create jobs. Academic Leadership, all over, is justifiably concerned and also excited about this new role. It is also debating about the balance of the requirements and expectations of the society concerning the outputs of the higher education institutions and the demand for the academic freedom. It is also concerned of the issue that self interests of individuals do not take precedence over the performance of the whole system. The new role of the Higher Education Institutions and the discussion about Entrepreneurial science are also taking place all over the world.

Higher Education Institutions are generally - conservative, and slow to change. However, the new demands and pressures they face and the new opportunities now available can make change rewarding. Higher Education Institutions need to become more strategic and entrepreneurial and to find effective roles in economic development. In a competitive situation there is need to be strategic in their approach to economic development. Strategic planning will be required to anticipate changes in the organization's environment in order to achieve desired objectives. Some of these issues which need strategic responses could include institutional commitments, SWOT analysis, involvement depending on local needs organizational structure and the different roles that can be taken up. While needs grow and pressures intensify for universities to become, more active in economic development, the different types of activities to be undertaken vary according to local conditions and hence require different responses. Some of the possible roles/initiatives could be in human resource development, consulting activities, creation of new knowledge through research activity, technology transfer, support for entrepreneurial activities in creating new knowledge based businesses etc.

With science and technology emerging as the main engines of Industrial and economic development, it is important that Universities strike a dynamic balance between applied and basic research. In applied research, different universities and Higher Educational Institutions and different industrial sectors would need to have a broad range of mechanisms and processes for developing linkages. The call for greater involvement in economic development represents a new societal view of Higher Education Institutions. Without question, the demand that they become an integral part of the nation's new economic infrastructure is a serious one. It is up to higher education to form strategic new alliance with government, industry and others in helping the nation meet its economic challenges.

Prof. H. P. Khincha

From Chairman's Desk



There is general consensus among government, corporate and academic leaders that innovation is the “fundamental driver of economic opportunity, job creation, business competitiveness and advances in education, health care and a vast range of other disciplines”; so declare Satish Nambisan and Mohanbir Sawhney in their recent book “Global Brain”. The nature of innovation has changed dramatically, as a result of many factors, such as, “the dynamics of a flattening world, the march of commoditization, the rapid and global adoption of new technologies, and particularly,

Innovation is increasingly becoming global, as a result of the widespread adoption of networked technologies and open standards; multi-disciplinary, requiring a diverse mix of talent and expertise; and collaborative and open. Several CEOs have identified “external” collaboration as indispensable for innovation. The top three significant external sources of innovation are considered to be employees, business partners and customers.

The open movement has the potential to spark extra-ordinary innovation; “the Linux operating system, for example, is owned by no one, yet owned by everyone at the same time”. The art of collaboration may well turn out to be “the most distinguishing leadership characteristic of the XXI century”. “Universities need to teach it. Government policies and regulations need to facilitate it”.

“Even the lexicon associated with innovation is changing, with new adjectives that describe a very different view of innovation – open, democratic, distributed, outside, external, community-led.” Former Sun Chief Scientist, Bill Joy, observed many years back that “most of the smart people in the world don’t work for your company”. IBM has been conducting a global conversation on innovation over the past few years, termed the *Global Innovation Outlook*, involving diverse stakeholders. There is a definite shift from *firm-centric* innovation to *network-centric* innovation. There exists an electronic R&D network *InnoCentive*, a global community of scientists that helps large companies seeking solutions to their R&D problems by sourcing solutions from scientists around the world.

Prof. R. Natarajan

BITES to Get ISO Certification

Under the guidance of Dr. R. Natarajan, BITES is working to get ISO certification and is in the process of establishing a Quality Management System (QMS). M/s EQ Consulting have been appointed as consultants for this project and M/s TUV Nord has been identified as the certification agency.

Following activities will be taken up to achieve ISO 9000:2000 certification.

- System study & Gap analysis
- Finalization of quality policy and quality objectives
- Preparation of quality documentation including Quality Manual, Process Manual and formats of records
- Training for all staff members on ISO 9001 and quality documents
- Planning implementation of the Quality Management System (**QMS**)
- Monitoring the implementation of the QMS
- Training for internal auditors
- Conduct of internal audit
- Conduct of management review
- Certification audit by the certifying agency and the award of the ISO certificate

BITES QUALITY POLICY

We are committed to Quality and Excellence in all our activities, services and shall endeavor to achieve satisfaction of our stakeholders by implementing a Quality Management System, with the following objectives:

- *To create an effective IT ecosystem by networking Industries, Technical Institutions, Government, Faculty and Students*
- *To foster high –quality industry-relevant IT education*
- *To achieve continual improvement in all our activities and services*

The System study, GAP analysis and the formulation of Quality Objectives and the Quality Manual are under progress.

Shri Ashok Kumar Manoli, IAS takes over as new Principal Secretary of the Department of IT, BT and S&T



Our heartiest congratulations to Shri Ashok Kumar Manoli on assumption of office as the principal secretary of IT, BT and S&T

We extend him a warm welcome to join BITES governing board.

Shri Ashok Kumar Manoli obtained his BE Degree (Mechanical Engineering) from Bangalore University and served in Indian Telephone Industries as Executive Engineer prior to joining IAS in 1982

He has served with distinction in various capacities like

- Special DC (Development), District Rural Development Society, Belgaum
- Deputy Commissioner for the districts Belgaum, Bellary , Gulbarga and Bijapur
- Commissioner, Hubli-Dharwad Municipal Corporation, Director, Commercial Taxes and Director of Handlooms & Textiles
- Director, Watershed Development Board
- Director of Tourism
- Additional Secretary, Energy Department
- Managing Director, KSTDC
- Secretary (Expenditure) FD
- Chairman, BWSSB

He was instrumental in successfully implementing VAT across the state of Karnataka

What is new in the world of Information Technology?

Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland Lead the Rankings in the Global Information Technology Report 2007-2008

Denmark is the most networked economy in the world, followed by Sweden and Switzerland, according to The Global Information Technology Report 2007-2008, released by the World Economic Forum. Among the top ten, the Republic of Korea (9) and, to a lesser extent, the United States (4) post the most notable improvements.

Published for the seventh consecutive year with record coverage of 127 economies worldwide, the Report has become the world's most comprehensive and authoritative international assessment of the impact of ICT on the development process and the competitiveness of nations.

The Networked Readiness Index (NRI), featured in the Report, examines how prepared countries are to use ICT effectively on three dimensions: the general business, regulatory and infrastructure environment for ICT. The Report also features a number of excellent contributions from practitioners, scholars and experts with relevant knowledge and experience in ICT. An update of the NRI is followed by chapters on networked readiness-related topics, with a special focus on **innovation**

Source: www.weforum.org