*Education lends beauty to a Human; education is man's secret wealth; education is the source of fame and happiness; education is the third eye for man.*

Newsletter launching Program

The first volume of the **UGC** newsletter was launched on Wednesday 2nd April 2008 at the Ministry of Higher Education. Professor Gamini Samaranayake, Chairman University Grants Commission handed over the first issue to the Hon. Minister of Higher Education Professor Wiswa Warnapala. Mr Tissa Nandasena, Secretary **UGC** and members of the editorial board were present at this occasion.

Corporate Plan, University Grants Commission - 2008 - 2010
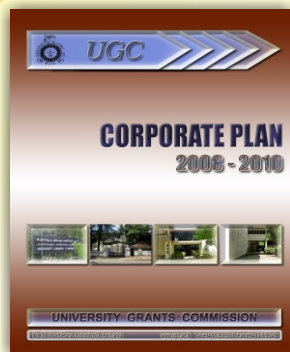
Corporate Plan 2008-10 of the UGC was released in May this year. Presently the commission is in the process of identifying the priority areas to be assigned to the relevant departments/divisions of the UGC. Subsequently, the Universities will be sensitised on the areas that needs to be incorporated within their respective corporate plans in order to collectively achieve the objectives specified in the UGC Corporate Plan. Although the Universities are free to carry out their own programmes, it is expected to implement by the Universities the key activities that were identified under Goals 1 to 4 of the UGC Corporate Plan within the specified time as indicated in the UGC Corporate Plan.

Release of Cut-off Marks

Applications were invited from candidates those who have done 2007 G.C.E (A/L) and total of 38,309 applications were received from eligible candidates. Out of total number applied for university admission, 18,713 students were selected for universities under normal intake. Selection of students under special intake is yet to be processed. Minimum "Z"-scores for selection to various courses of studies in respect of each district were released to the UGC web site on 4th June 2008 by Prof. Wiswa Warnapara, Hon. Minister

of Higher Education. Mr. MM Musthafa, Hon. Deputy Minister of Higher education, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Commission members and other distinguished guests participated at this event.

Editorial
<div align="right">*Prof. MTM Jiffry - Vice Chairman/UGC*</div>

- Let us draw up an overall Concept Plan

It is customary for the higher education institutions to obtain their annual funds on the basis of the historical basis of allocation. Usually this annual exercise is performed by the treasury on the basis of a percentage increase on previous year's allocation, quite independent to the actual needs of the Institutions. In certain specified occasions, there are instance where special allocations are made to meet the extra costs involved in particular, in introducing new courses. As an outcome of the recent meeting held with HE the President in April, this year the UGC was requested to prepare a o5 Year Overall plan identifying the basic minimum needs of all the HEIs on a time frame and programme or project budget. This is a practical and viable approach where all the stakeholders could get together and prepare a schedule on which the annual allocations could made without undue constraints being imposed to the national budget due to unforeseen demands. Thus it is requested that all HEIs prepare their own concept plan for the next 05 years at the earliest to finalise the overall Concept Plan for the HEI sector by the UGC.

Establishment of South Asian University(SAU)
<div align="right">*Prof. MTM Jiffry - Vice Chairman/UGC*</div>

- An opportunity to expand our horizon in higher education through regional co-operation

At the SAARC summit held in Dhaka in 2005, Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of Republic of India, proposed to establish a South Asian University as a centre of excellence by pooling the resources available within the SAARC member states. The main objective is to provide world class facilities and professional faculty to students and researchers drawn from every country of the region. Accordingly a Steering Committee was formed consisting of representatives from each member country to plan out the conceptual frame of the proposed SAU. Professors Gamini Samaranayake and M T M Jiffry represented Sri Lanka at the deliberations. It is expected to establish the main University at a location within 10-15 Km from New Delhi, India. The Indian Government has already allocated a sum of Indian Rupees 580 crores for the land And for the provision of basic infrastructure facilities for this purpose. In early May an interim CEO to supervisor and manage the preliminary work related to the establishment of the SAU has been appointed. It is expected to appoint the initial Faculty by January 2010 and to initiate admission exercise by April, 2010 and to commence the first academic session in August same year.

(*From Right*): Prof. G. Samaranayake - Chairman-UGC/Sri Lanka, Prof. Sukhadeo Thorat- Chairman-UGC/India, Prof. MTM Jiffry-Vice Chairman-UGC/Sri Lanka,

Education can no longer be the sole property of the state.

<div align="right">- *Peter F. Drucker*</div>

UGC-University interaction to enhance through wider networking -

Mr. Nalaka Lankasena Head/Higher Education IT Unit

- Centralized Information System (CIS) for University Network for Strengthening and Supporting Activities of the UGC & Universities will be introduced soon.

1. Introduction - The UGC will be introducing an IT based intranet facility to enhance quality and efficiency of the management within the Commission. The proposed Centralized Information System (CIS) will meet the requirements of the UGC, Universities, undergraduates, graduates & other stakeholders. This system will be a tool for management/monitoring of activities in the Universities and the UGC, in the areas of (a) university admissions, (b) student placement & tracking and (c) human resource administration.

2. Design of the Centralized Information System (CIS) - Figure 1 shows the design of the proposed system. The core of the CIS is based on the IT systems and infrastructure of the UGC. Integration of the activities of the UGC through IT is the primary concern in system designing in order to provide reliable information faster to all stakeholders. Accordingly, the activities of the UGC are being automated with a view to communicate interactively with other HEIs. The layer between the UGC and the universities is the UGCnet to meet authentication and access to the required information. The required data may be located in the UGC or within a university database. The Lanka Education and Academic Research Network (LEARN) is the physical layer which will provide the connectivity between the UGC and other HEIs and amongst HEIs also.
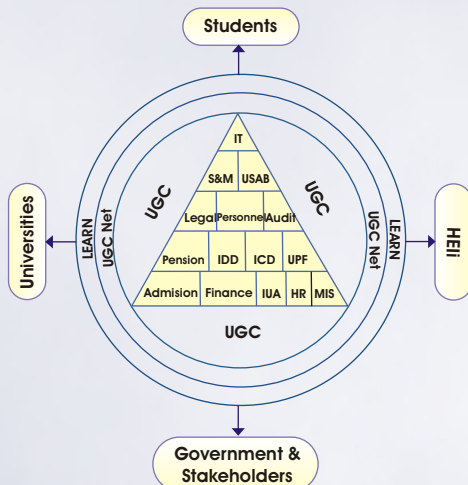

Figure 1: Schematic representation of the proposed Centralized Information System

3. Institutional/Organizational System Design - Figure 2 shows the institutional IT structure of universities/UGC/HEIs which provides data to the CISnet. When a user makes a request it will be passed to the respective institution through the CIS. Each university/HEI is responsible for maintaining up to date information. Authentication will be done at the institutional level to prevent unauthorized accessing.
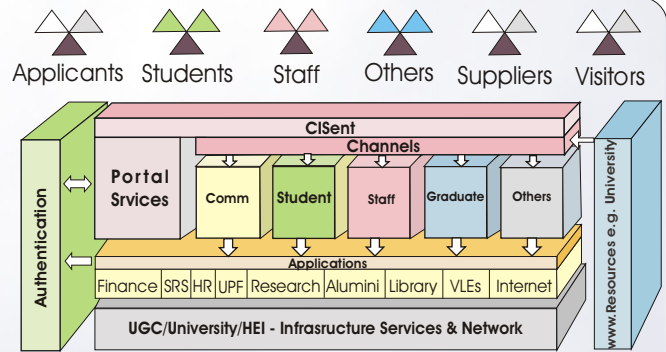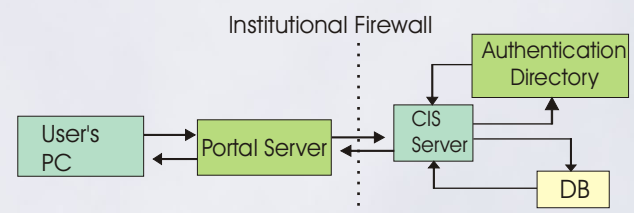

Figure 2: Diagrammatic representation of the institutional/organizational system design

4. Information Flow between Core Systems -

The diagram above shows the flow of a typical request from a User's PC. The request is passed to the portal server, which will communicate with the CIS server located in the institution behind the firewall. The CIS server will handle two functions in the core data trials. Firstly, it will attempt to authenticate the user in the institutional directory service and when that is successful, it will query the systems database and will retrieve and pass on the core data to the user. This information will then be securely passed from the CIS server to the portal server and displayed within a channel on the users PC.

5. Advantages for the University System

- Represents a significant collaboration between UGC and the universities in Sri Lanka.
- Promote development of support networks amongst universities/HEIs and encourage collaboration across the sector
- Implementation of this system minimizes paper based activities
- The system support Universities and Higher educational Institutions in the development of e - learning capacity.
- Enhances the efficiency of the UGC secretariat
- Could be further developed with the use of competitive fund allocation models. The statistical information relevant to the universities will provide a better environment to assess the performance of the universities.
- Enhances the transparency of the activities of the UGC such as selections to universities, fund allocation, human resource management, etc.

Facilitation of Academic Activities of Universities

Ms. Priyanthi Daluwatta - SAS/Inter University Affairs Department

- An interface among the universities and the UGC

The Inter University Affairs (IUA) Department of the UGC coordinates all academic matters pertaining to university system including establishment of new universities/institutes/departments introduction of new courses, recognition of new degrees and Higher Educational Institutes (HEIs) through 15 Standing Committees set up by the Commission. Moreover, it also engages in award of scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Standing Committees of the UGC - The standing committees have been set up under the provisions of the Section 4 (2) of the Universities Act No 16 of 1978 as amended. Each of the committees is chaired by a member of the Commission and consists of members from Universities/HEIs and representing other relevant state and non-state organizations.

The Standing Committees advise the commission on matters pertaining to higher education in respective areas referred to it by the Commission. The Commission may refer matters related to new courses, departments, units and other academic issues related to faculties to relevant Standing Committees for their observations. In addition, the Committee itself may initiate projects or make recommendations to achieve its objectives of maintaining academic excellence in universities. A majority of the Standing Committee meetings are held once in every 2 months.

International Handbook of Universities as per the Public Administration Circular No 16/92.

If an organization requires verifying the validity of a degree certificate of a candidate in recruitment/promotion process it can forward a written request to the UGC. Similarly, potential students intending to follow a course in a foreign university can verify the recognition of the university by referring the above mentioned references.

Award of scholarships - In addition to the above activities, the IUA Department engages in disbursing scholarships for undergraduates and award of research grants to university academics. There are three such scholarship schemes;

Endowment scholarships: Endowment scholarships are those that have been established and those that may be established in future by individuals, organizations or associations on such terms and conditions which the donors wish to lay down. These scholarships are initiated in the memory of a beloved member of the family or to encourage the study of a particular discipline by the undergraduate belonging to the birth place of the donors or to commemorate important events.

Most of the endowment scholarships were instituted during the time of former University of Ceylon in 1942. Presently, all endowment scholarships are awarded by the UGC according to the conditions stipulated in by the donors.

The 15 standing committees set up at present

1. Medical & Dental Sciences
2. Sciences
3. Engineering & Architecture
4. Humanities & Social Sciences
5. Management Studies
6. Indigenous Medicine
7. Career Guidance & Student Welfare in Universities
8. Staff Development in Universities
9. Agriculture Veterinary Medicine & Animal Sciences
10. Information Technology Development
11. Distance Education and External Degrees
12. The Teaching of English
13. Postgraduate Studies & Research
14. Libraries & Information Sciences
15. Quality Assurance and Accreditation

Recognition of degree certificates - An important service carried out by the IUA Department. to the public is the recognition of degree certificates other than that of universities established under the Universities act No 16 of 1978. The recognition of degree certificates of other universities and HEIs is carried out referring the Commonwealth Universities Year book and the

The Central Research Fund: The Central Research Fund was established in 1999 by the University Grants Commission to provide financial assistance for university personnel for research in the areas of Agriculture, Engineering, Natural Sciences, Medicine and Social Sciences. The research grants are awarded for a maximum period of three years.

It is a thousand times better to have common sense without education than to have education without common sense.

- Robert G. Ingersoll

Hiran Tillekeratne Research Fund: The Hiran Tillekeratne Research fund was established in 1990 by the UGC with a donation from Mr. Eardley Tillakeratne. The objective is to provide financial assistance to enhance research capacities in universities in the following disciplines; Agriculture, Chemistry, Economics, Engineering, Medicine and Natural Sciences (other than Chemistry).

In addition to the IUA Department, the International Cooperation Division (ICD) of the UGC also engages in providing funds for selected postgraduate studies.

The IUA Department endeavors in its functions to assist the UGC in reaching its vision to develop a university system of highest quality, appropriate to national needs and aspirations, in keeping with global trends.

Institutional Development in the University System for 2007
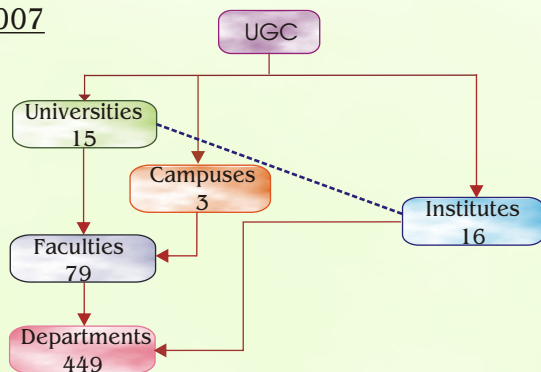
Faculties based on the area of study for 2007

Area of study	No of Faculties (N=79)
Medicine/Allied Health Science/Dental Science	10
Science/Applied Sciences	16
Engineering	4
Architecture	1
Geomatics	1
Management	13
Agriculture/Vetinary Medicine	10
Social Sciences/Arts/Education	18
Law	1
Graduate Studies	4
Information Technology	1

Faculties based on area of study (N=79)
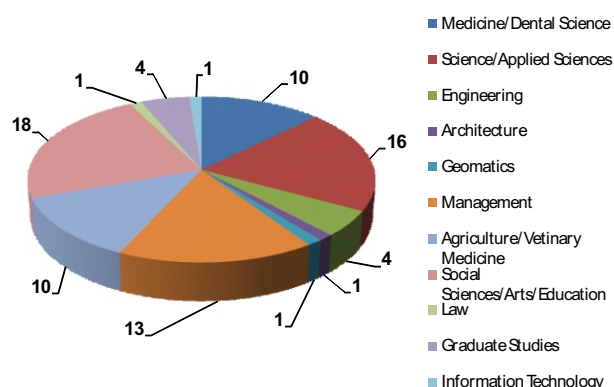
Note: N=Total no of Faculties
Bibliography
University Grants Commission www.ugc.ac.lk [Accessed 03 June 2008]
University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka University Statistics, 2007.

Commission Members

FROM RIGHT

1ST ROW: Prof. MTM Jiffry-Vice Chairman/UGC, Prof. SVDG Samaranayake - Chairman/UGC, Mr. WRVGG Samarasiri - Rep. of Treasury

2ND ROW: Prof. Janaka de Silva-Member, Carlo Fonseka-Member, Prof. Rohan Rajapaksha-Member, Prof. SBS Abayakoon-Member, Prof. SK Sitrampalam-Member, Mr. Tissa Nandasena-Secretary/UGC

New Appointments

Professor MTM Jiffry-(Vice Chairman) : Senior Professor of Physiology & Founder Dean of the Faculty of Medical Sciences of University of Sri Jayawardenapura(1996-2001) Member, Finance Commission and Honorary Consultant of the Ministry of Science and Technology. Member, Board of Management of the National Science Foundation & Post Graduate Institute of Medicine. Fellow of the National Academy of Science of Sri Lanka, Institute of Biology of Sri Lanka and International College of Continuing Dental Education.

Professor Sarath Abeykoon-(Member): Professor in Civil Engineering, University of Peradeniya. Dean Faculty of Engineering University of Peradeniya (2005 April-present). Member, Registration Board, Institution of Engineers(2005-present), International Professional Engineer, Institution of Engineers (Int. P. Eng.), Fellow, Institution of Engineers (FIE, C. Eng.)

Vidyajyothi Professor Janaka De Silva-(Member) Senior Professor of Medicine, University of Kelaniya and Consulant Physicion, Colombo North Teaching Hospital. Former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya(1997 - 2006). Memeber of the National Research Council Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London and Edinburgh, Fellow of the Ceylon College of Physicians and National Academy of Science, Sri Lanaka.

Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire

- W. B. Yeats

Automation and Integration of Activities of the Personnel Division of the UGC

Mr Nalaka Lankasena Head/Heigher Educstion IT Unit

University Grants Commission has taken necessary steps to automate personnel administration of the UGC secretariat to avoid difficulties due to manual processing. There are about 200 employees working at the UGC at present. The proposed system for the personnel Division would replace the existing manual system.

The system will be able to handle all activities relevant to personnel management/administration such as attendance, overtime, leave management, employee's personal data, report generation for management purposes, and maintenance of data on personnel history, on line data communication and accessing via LAN, export/import data from other software and data formats. In addition, integration with the payroll system etc., updating of past records, data backup facilities, data searching facilities, improper card users/system users, granting increments, promotions, EB requirements, confirmations, retirements and issuing of personal certificates and specific requirements of the university system will also be handled by the system.

The proposed system will have the facility to provide a high flexibility on data usage and would provide on-line data accessing facilities for all dept./divisions, an advanced mode of security to prevent unauthorized data accessing and modifications, report generation and customization to meet local requirements of the UGC and will contain electronic devices/terminals (finger scanners) for time attendance.

UGC is responsible for cadre allocation and management of certain human resource (HR) activities in the universities. At present activities related to these functions are carried out manually and it has caused delays in HR administration. Web based HR administration tool will allow tracking of personal & professional information of all employees in the system. Instant access to data and a variety of reports will enhance administration, communication and the decisions making ability of the University system.

HE the President meets the Commission

Prof. MTM Jiffry - Vice Chairman/UGC

HE the President Mahinda Rajapakse met the members of the University Grants Commission along with Hon Minister and Deputy Ministers of Higher Education and Acting Secretary of the Ministry on Friday 18th April, 2008 at the Temple Trees. The meeting was attended by Secretaries to the President and Treasury, and Secretary and Finance Controller of the UGC in the presence of the advisor to the President Prof P W Epasinghe. At this occasion the first volume of the UGC Newsletter and the Corporate Plan 2008-10 was handed-over to HE the President.
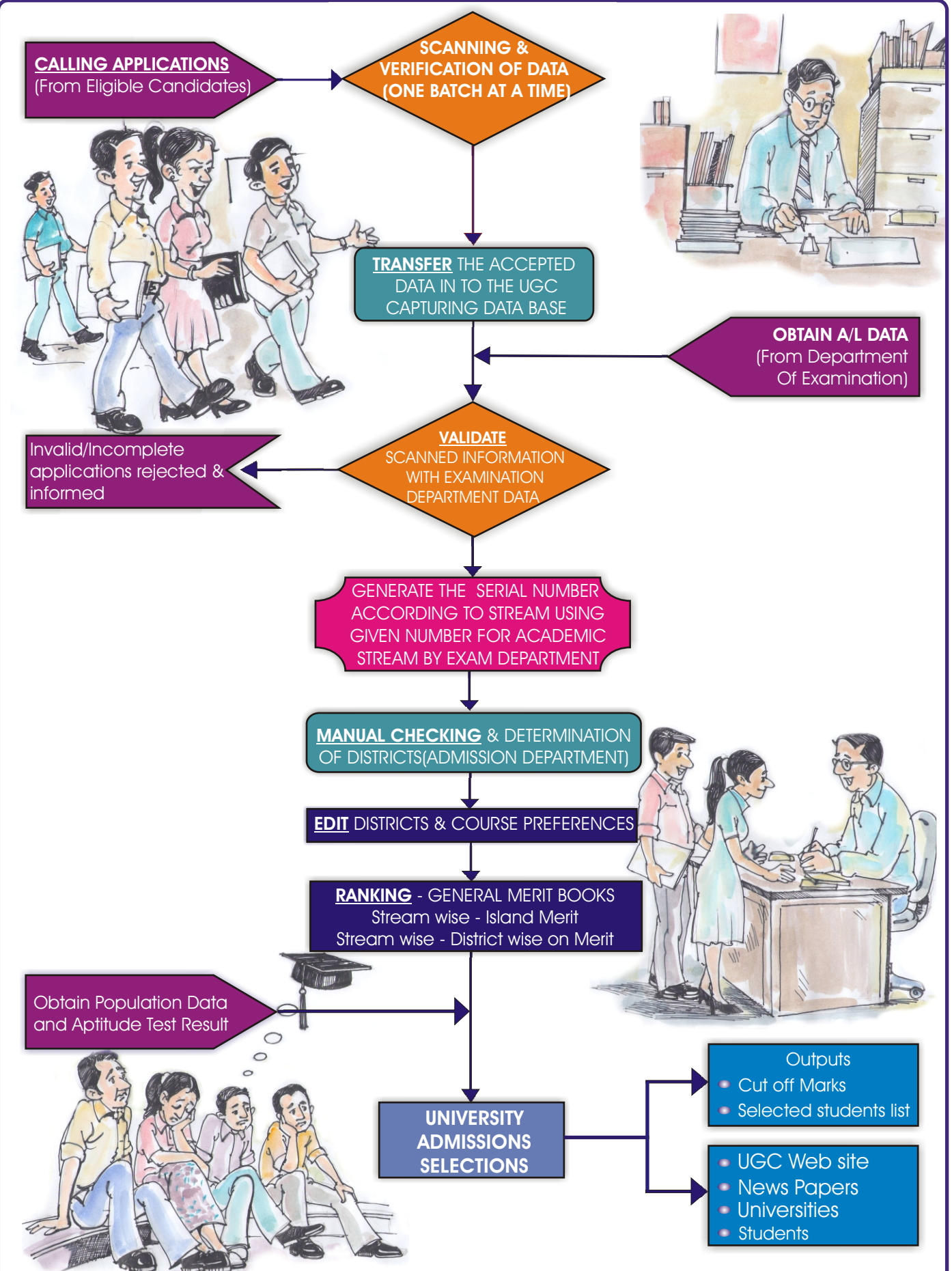
At this meeting Chairman, UGC briefed HE the President on the performance of the Commission for the last two years and highlighted the issues that needs urgent assistance. Amongst them were (a) the admission of students to the Universities in the North and East, (b) release of funds from the treasury to higher education institutions, (c) restrictions imposed on the recruitment of staff to the Universities, (d) problems related to students and (e) the issues related to newly established institutions, brought to the attention of HE the President.

HE the President advised the UGC
(1) to improve the facilities available within the presently established institutions without further expansion of the system to unmanageable proportions,
(2) on the importance of improving the quality of external degree programs,
(3) to initiate courses with employment potentials in the future, and
(4) to prepare a schedule identifying the minimum or optimum infra-structure needs of the HEIs for the next 5 years at least in order to streamline funding programs.

Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire
- W. B. Yeats

Selection for University Admissions

Mrs. Chandrika Godage - Asst.Sec./Admissions Department

CALLING APPLICATIONS
(From Eligible Candidates)

SCANNING & VERIFICATION OF DATA (ONE BATCH AT A TIME)

TRANSFER THE ACCEPTED DATA IN TO THE UGC CAPTURING DATA BASE

OBTAIN A/L DATA
(From Department Of Examination)

Invalid/Incomplete applications rejected & informed

VALIDATE SCANNED INFORMATION WITH EXAMINATION DEPARTMENT DATA

GENERATE THE SERIAL NUMBER ACCORDING TO STREAM USING GIVEN NUMBER FOR ACADEMIC STREAM BY EXAM DEPARTMENT

MANUAL CHECKING & DETERMINATION OF DISTRICTS(ADMISSION DEPARTMENT)

EDIT DISTRICTS & COURSE PREFERENCES

RANKING - GENERAL MERIT BOOKS
Stream wise - Island Merit
Stream wise - District wise on Merit

Obtain Population Data and Aptitude Test Result

UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS SELECTIONS

Outputs
- Cut off Marks
- Selected students list

- UGC Web site
- News Papers
- Universities
- Students

WE APPRECIATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY STAFF OF THE FACULTY OF VISUAL ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS IN PREPARING THE CARTOONS.

Education... has produced a vast population able to read but unable to distinguish what is worth reading.

- G.M. Trevelyan

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How to Contact UGC Newsletter

Special Ceremony, Secretariat of the UGC

The long awaited repairs were carried out at the University Grants Commission since February 2008. One part of the Secretariat Building was refurbished in May 2008 and a religious ceremony was held at the time of re-occupation on 15th May 2008.

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The Welfare Society of the UGC carried out the annual Sinhalese and Tamil new year celebrations on 26th April 2008. The full day event brought together 250 participants including family members of the staff. Prof MTM Jifry, The Vice Chairman, UGC, Mr Tissa Nandasena, Secretary, UGC and Mrs WHR Hussain, Registrar, University of Colombo inaugurated the ceremony which was held in the grounds of University of Colombo.

Sri Lanka University Statistics 2007
Mrs. Damayanthi Panagoda - Head/MIS Division

- Latest Statistics on University Sector

The seventh volume of the annual series of publications on university statistics entitled "Sri Lanka University Statistics 2007" was released in May2008. This publication serves the management information needs of the university system. To be comprehensive and assist researchers and policy makers in Higher Education, data has been presented along with the historical trends wherever possible.

The Hand Book consists of five chapters. *Chapter 1* presents the general information of the university sector in Sri Lanka highlighting the evolution of the system since 1980, through a set of key educational indicators. Information pertaining to the current strength and capacity of the UGC funded institutes and their academic structure also can be found therein. *Chapter 2* provides the summary statistics of **University Admissions** of the Year of Intake 2006/07. The basic data needs for understanding the input, process and the output of the university system are presented in *Chapter 3*. In this Chapter, you can find detailed undergraduate enrolment in university programmes

while providing a cross-sectional view of its constitution in the year 2007 according to the year of intake and that of preceding year etc. In addition to full time undergraduate studies, statistics pertaining to Postgraduate Studies and External Degree Programmes are also given separately in this chapter. *Chapter 4* presents the basic employment statistics of the university system. The distribution of different categories of non-academic staff among the university institutions and academic staff attached to each faculty also can be found in *Chapter 4*. *Chapter 5* refers to statistical information on university finance. It provides various important breakdowns of income and expenditure of the university sector. Data on growth of university expenditure, since 1980, in contrast with the growth of GNP, Government Expenditure and other sectors of education in Sri Lanka are also found in this chapter. This publication is available for sale at MIS Division, UGC.

The price: SL Rs. 500.00(for local sale) US $ 15.00 (for foreign sale)