

• HIRAN THILAKARATNE RESEARCH FUND
- AWARD CEREMONY
• HOPE AMID DESPAIR
• PROGRESS OF ACTIVITIES OF THE
UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
- 2008

• PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING APPROVAL
FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECT PROPOSALS
• WORKSHOP FOR DIRECTORS OF STAFF
DEVELOPMENT CENTRES IN UNIVERSITIES
• AN IT POLICY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
SECTOR



UGC

NEWSLETTER

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"Education comes from living life, following passions, accessing information, observing, reflecting, and being inspired by wise and courageous elders in the community."

- Claire Aumonier



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மகிழ்ச்சி,
சௌபாக்கியம் மற்றும்
சமாதானம் நிறைந்த
செழிப்பான புத்தாண்டு
வாழ்த்துக்கள்..!

Greetings for Fruitful
New Year with
Happiness, Prosperous
& Peace!

A workshop on External Degree Program

A workshop on External Degree Programmes was held on 19th to 20th September 2008 at the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research & Training Institute at Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 7. It was organized by the University Grants Commission with funding from Distance Education Modernization Project (DEMP).



The workshop provided an opportunity to familiarize with the existing practices on external degree programmes and to identify new directions to meet the national needs. Group discussions were held on curriculum development including student quality, programme delivery &

learner support, quality assurance, student assessment & evaluation, policy framework and institutional planning.

The workshop was inaugurated by the Honourable Minister of Higher Education, Prof. Wiswa Warnapala. The workshop was attended by Secretary, Ministry of Higher



Education, Chairman/UGC and several Commission members, together with 100 participants representing several Universities including few Vice Chancellors.

Editorial

Prof. MTM Jiffry - Vice Chairman/UGC

- Some Challenges for Higher Education in Sri Lanka in 2009

We are reaching the end of the first decade of the new millennium with the dawn of the year 2009. In this new year, the Higher Education sector in Sri Lanka is expected to face several challenges and new opportunities. The ongoing World Bank funded IRQUE project is expected to be completed in this year. Thus it is time for us to take stock of what we have achieved from this mega project. All Institutions benefitted from the above grants should concentrate on completion of the project, introducing new activities in order to continue some of the good practices adopted, make full use of the equipment provided and other study tours undertaken. It is also encouraging to note that a new project will be introduced starting from 2010 with much wider emphasis on broader issues under a new WB funded programme.

Furthermore, the LEARN network will be managed by a new Board of Management registered under the Companies Act. We believe that this new development would enhance the quality of the services provided by the LEARN as well as make it more cost effective. In addition, many of the Universities will be provided with video conferencing facilities to promote frequent face to face interaction amongst Universities and UGC. This is a fine opportunity for us to cut cost on travelling to UGC by the VCs and other officials from Universities from the periphery. They could utilize the video conferencing facilities instead of travelling long distances, saving time and money. The assistance provided by the DEMP project in introducing ODL components to few of the selected external degree programmes is also worth mentioning. It is expected to complete the above project too in this particular year. Thus all HEIs are faced with the challenge of introducing sustainable programmes to continue the dual mode courses introduced through the DEMP project. Amidst the above landmark events being concluded enriching the Universities with more resources and experiences, the HEI sector is expected to face a notable budget cut due to financial constraints. Thus it is the duty of all the academics, administrators, other stakeholders and students to be sensitive to this crucial year where we are expected to face a significant metamorphosis in many spheres of higher education in Sri Lanka.

Hiran Thilakaratne Research Fund - Award Ceremony

Ms. Priyanthi Daluwatte - SAS/IUA Department



1ST ROW - FROM LEFT): MRS. BMGK BALASURIYA, PROF. GAMINI SAMARANAYAKE (CHAIRMAN/UGC),

MR. EARDLEY TILLEKERATNE, PROF. PIYADASA SENANAYAKA

(2ND ROW - FROM LEFT): MR. DP ATHULATHMUDALI-ADD.SEC./UGC, DR.(MRS.) THAYAMINI HAROLD SERAM,

MRS. MT NAPAGODA, MRS. NAYANIE SAMANTHA ARCTHIGE, DR. JM ANANDA JAYAWICKRAMA,

PROF. RM GAMINI RAJAPAKSE, DR.(ENG.)UG YASANTHA ABEYSUNDERA, MS. PRIYANTHI DALUWATTE-SAS/IUA

Hiran Tillekeratne Research Awards ceremony was held on 22nd October 2008 at the UGC with the patronage of Mr Eardly Tillekeratne who donated the financial support to establish the Hiran Tillekeratne research fund in 1990. The objective of the awards is to recognise the postgraduate research carried out by the university academic staff, staff of research institutes and professional organizations. Seven recipients covering the areas of Engineering, Agriculture (two awards), Chemistry, Medicine, Economics and Natural Sciences received awards which amounted to a total of Rs 900,000.

Hope amid Despair

Mrs. C.J Wijesinghe - Asst. Sec./General Administration Division

This article is based on an interview with the Chairman of the University Grants Commission on his visit to University of Jaffna in September 2008

Q: University of Jaffna is situated in an area of conflict for the last three decades. In our corporate plan it was mentioned that the UGC has prioritized to support universities in conflict zone; As a result there has been gradual deterioration of number of students especially from south who are willing to go there. How do you look at this issue?

A: University of Jaffna is a National University, and it is not an ethnic university as some people want to categorize. It is a national asset and we want to bring up the old glory of wisdom generated within this university. We had to shift 250 students from Jaffna to South. There was an assassination of Sinhala student in Eastern University, Sri Lanka. There were threats to Vice

Chancellors. In addition problems of road access currently exist. Therefore, students from south are not able to go there. However, we allocate funds for buildings, IT, recruitments, etc; equally as we do with regard to other universities. All these issues will soon come to an end with the present government's efforts to create an acceptable environment to all citizens. It has the potential to be one of the best universities in Sri Lanka.

Q: University authorities have a challenge to attract students in these areas. What is your opinion on this?

A: There is a challenge to university authorities to attract and retain students. University authorities should motivate students to have constant dialogue with them and to solve problems in an amicable way with mutual understanding. A grave deficiency which needs to be addressed without delay is the lack of space provided for students to attend functions of

common interest which facilitate to gain knowledge, competence and peaceful thinking.

Q: Disasters can be catalyst for change. How do you apply this into University of Jaffna?

A: Its development is hampered due to this war. University is not a place for issuing certificates; rather it should be a hub of regional development. With the functioning of universities in each province there should be a development in the particular area. Sri Lankan universities should adjust to that concept. For example the location of Rajarata University in Mihintale has created an income for people with regard to land and rented accommodation and they accept the fact that this University has brought much prosperity to them. Uva Wellassa University has started tea based course of studies which serves their area. Stake holders of University of Moratuwa are enjoying the benefits of engineering based courses of study. University of Jaffna was started in 1974 due to the request of scholars to fulfill long standing aspirations of the people. They should have courses of study which cater to the development of that area such as fisheries.

Q: What are the opinions of the people you met in Jaffna?

A: I met couple of doctors and they love their university and value it. They came from Colombo to serve in the University of Jaffna. UGC is facilitating University of Jaffna but people should understand that it takes time to evolve. Administrators and academics should support it. The people of Jaffna take education in a more holistic manner. Thus, they have loyalty towards their university where they have been educated. Laymen of this country should understand the fact that a university is a very broad concept. It takes time to evolve and creation of a full fledged university is a process.

Q: What is the role of media in this current context?

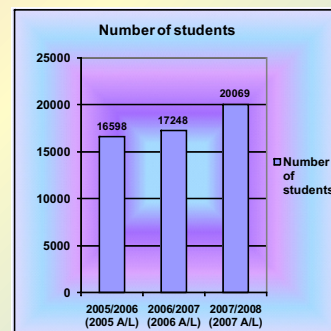
A: Media should bring up the positive impact of universities as well, rather than bringing up only student agitations. They should highlight the fact that universities and economic development of a country go together rather than creating them as centres of storm. We want to emphasize that we will bring up this university as one of the best in Sri Lanka. The potential outcome of University of Jaffna should take up as unique. Students should learn to live in coherence and co-existence with another culture. This is the nature of students and academics we are looking forward for creation of such an environment.



Progress of Activities of the University Grants Commission - 2008

Mr. Nalaka Lankasena - Head - Higher Educational IT Division

At present there are 14 conventional universities with approximately 72,000 students being enrolled. In addition, the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) accounts for an enrolment of over 28,000. With the gradual expansion of University system in our country, at present Sri Lanka is proud to offer an internationally competitive system of education that prepares people for public life in the widest sense of the term. However, our system of higher education is now facing a host of challenges, the salient issues being the quality, relevance and equity of higher education, and the inability to meet the ever growing demand for higher education.



1. Increase of Students to Universities: The student intake was increased by **16.4%** in 2008 when compared to the previous intake. A series of discussions and activities are still in progress for providing adequate funds and cadre to universities and HEIs in this regard.

2. Reviewing External Degree Programmes : A workshop was held from 19 - 20, September, 2008 to review the External Degree Programmes of Universities. This workshop was organized in collaboration with the D.E.M.P and by the Standing Committee on Distance Education and External Degrees of the UGC.

3. Synchronization of Academic Calendar of Universities: The UGC had several programmes in the last few years to synchronize academic activities in universities. Subsequently the UGC at its 758th meeting held on 23rd June 2008 decided to fix common days for the commencement and the end of the academic programmes of all universities with effect from the next academic year [2009], it will be repeated for the subsequent academic years. Accordingly, the new entrants would be admitted to the University/HEI in the last week of May each year. Faculties should decide the academic year plan based on semesters/terms. UGC has already issued a Circular (No.898) in this regard, which came into effect from 1st September 2008.

4. Establishment of New Departments and New Programmes: The UGC has approved the establishment of the following new departments, undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes in order to meet the current needs and market demands in higher education as at October, 2008.

Description	Name Department/Degree	Faculty	University
Establishment of New Departments	Department of Political Science,	Faculty of Arts	University of Sri J'pura
	Department of Marketing	Faculty of Mgt. And Finance	University of Ruhuna
	Department of Disability Studies	Faculty of Medicine	University of Kelaniya
	Department of Archaeology and Heritage Management(Mgt.)	Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities	Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
Commencement of Undergraduate Degree Programmes	B.Sc. Special Degree in Biology	Faculty of Science	University of Peradeniya
	B.Sc. Special Degree in Statistics	Faculty of Science	University of Peradeniya
	BA (Special) Degree in Archaeology and Heritage Management(Mgt.)	Department of Archaeology	Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
	B.A. Special degree programme in History	Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities	Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
Commencement of Postgraduate Degree Programmes	MBA in EGovernance	Faculty of Engineering	University of Moratuwa
	MA Course in Political Science in Democracy	Conflict and Governance Studies, Faculty of Arts	University of Colombo
	M Sc in Bio diversity Eco tourism and Environment Management(Mgt.)	Postgraduate Institute of Science	University of Peradeniya
	Master of Science in Agri Business Mgt.	Faculty of Agriculture	University of Ruhuna

5. Government funds for University Education

Comparative Figures for 2007/2008	2007 (Rs. '000)	2008 (Rs. '000)	% Increase
Recurrent	9,456,900	10,281,897	8.72
Bursary	367,000	500,000	36.24
Mahapola	150,000	158,000	5.33
Buildings	3,026,770	2,883,000	(4.75)
IT Development	150,000	186,000	24.00
Other Capital (Equipment, Furniture, Books)	1,623,230	1,860,000	14.59
Total	14,773,900	15,868,897	7.41

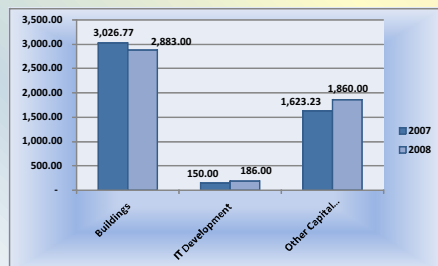
5.(a). IT Development: The total funds available for the year 2008 is Rs. 186 Mn, out of which Rs. 54.3Mn has been reserved for continuation of projects commenced in year 2007. Accordingly Rs.131.7Mn was allocated for new projects proposed in this year. (The total of the proposals we received from universities is greater than Rs. 1000 Mn.) Allocation was made considering the factors such as; necessity to improve the existing facilities of the HEI, student number and commencement of new faculties/courses to increase the student number, IT allocation during the last 3 years, trend towards use of new ICT.

5.(b). Recurrent Budget: The Recurrent expenditure budget estimated for 2007 amounted to Rs. 11,685.3 million. The grant expected from the Government was Rs. 11,135.3 million, while the balance Rs. 550 million was to be generated internally. The total allocation approved by the Treasury amounted to Rs. 10,012.2 million. With the subsequent cut of 2% on recurrent expenditure, the revised allocation was Rs.9,973.9 million. Of this allocation Rs. 7,555 million was earmarked for personal emoluments, Rs. 367 million for Bursary payments and Rs. 150 million for the Mahapola scholarships.

As compared to the year 2007, the total recurrent grant approved for 2008, amounts to Rs. 10,939.897 million, out of which Rs. 7,417.5 million is for personal emoluments, Rs. 500 million for bursaries, and Rs. 158 million for Mahapola scholarships.

The allocation for recurrent expenditure in 2008, shows an increase of 8.72% as compared to 2007, while the allocation for bursaries is an increase of 36.24% and for Mahapola scholarships the increase is 5.33%.

5.(c). Capital Budget: The initial allocation for capital expenditure in 2007 approved by the Treasury amounted to Rs. 6,000 million. This allocation was later revised to Rs. 4,800 million and In the year 2008, the total allocation for capital expenditure increased to Rs. 4,929 million. A comparison is given in the Chart.



Although the allocation for buildings has declined by 4.75% as compared to 2007, the funds for IT development and other Capital expenditure have increased by 24% and 14.59% respectively.

6. Relocation of Trincomalee Campus : The Trincomalee Campus which was started as an Affiliated University College was vested in the Eastern University of Sri Lanka in year 1996 and has become a Campus in year 2001. Academic activities of the two faculties were conducted in a small building of 4000sq ft floor area and there were no enough facilities for academic work, accommodation and sports activities. Due to the unavailability of land for expansion of the Faculties, it was decided to shift the Campus to a location at Trincomalee on the Nilaweli Road.

The new complex consists of hostels for students, space for academic activities, laboratory, herbal garden and parapet wall to prevent elephant encroaching. The Total Cost Estimate is Rs. 240 million approximately. The whole project is to be completed within three years.

7. Launching a UGC Newsletter: UGC has initiated to publish a newsletter quarterly with the objective of giving more publicity to higher educational activities carried out by the UGC amongst its stakeholders and to educate the public. The newsletter is expected to reach academic, administrative and non-academic staff of the Universities, students, officials of the Ministry of Higher Education, Secretaries of other Ministries and public libraries and other relevant authorities.

8. Progress of Human Resources Activities: The UGC managed to get the approval of the Department of Management Services to create new 1246 cadre positions for the year 2008. Of this 695 cadre positions were for the academic and academic support staff grades. 496 positions were for the non academic non administrative grades.

9. Correction of Anomalous Issue with Regard to Students who have Registered for HND Courses: In certain years when there were delays in admission to universities some students registered for courses conducted by SLIATE i.e. HNDE, prior to making applications for university admissions. The percentage of students who came under this category was significantly high in this year due to delays in releasing 2007 A/L results and cutoff marks. In consultation with the Attorney General's Department, the Appeals Committee of the UGC permitted students who have withdrawn registration prior to the date of application, for university admission. It was also decided to inform the SLIATE to create awareness among their registrants, the rules pertaining to restriction of dual registration at SLIATE and Universities. It should be noted that this rule has been strictly followed with regard to other institutions specified in the admissions handbook.

10. Strengthening Internal Security of Higher Educational Institutions: Due to the concerns expressed by the Vice Chancellors on deterioration of discipline in HEIs, a discussion was held with the IGP and along with the other officials under the Chairmanship of Hon. Minister of Higher Education. Consequent to this meeting with the unfortunate killing of a student in EUSL it was compelled to station police posts at EUSL, SEUSL and Trincomalee Campus as a priority measure. Furthermore as agreed upon at the discussions held with the IGP all HEIs are expected to regularly liaise with Senior Police Officers in the area.

11. Project Monitoring: Project monitoring unit was established in the UGC to evaluate new infrastructure development projects & to monitor the progress of on going capital projects. As a policy, priority will be given for newly established and universities in the North and the East in infrastructure development. Under this scheme reports were regularly obtained and on-spot visits were made by the officials of the UGC to ensure the progress.

12. Resolving University Admissions Problems Encountered in the Universities in the North and East: Amidst the current problems experienced in the Northern and Eastern regions of the country, the Universities in these regions faced special problems. The UGC

admitted students to Universities in the North and the East according to a judgment delivered by the Court of Appeal in December 2007.

However due to a shooting incident which cost a life of a Sinhala student of the Eastern University (EUSL) in August, a series of decisions were taken by the UGC to relocate 246 Sinhala and Muslim students as displaced students of EUSL to universities in other provinces. This was done in consultation with Vice Chancellors of the Universities concerned and other relevant authorities.

Course	Number of students	University
Medicine 2007/2008 EUSL	55	RUSL - 5
		CBO - 10
		RUH - 10
		KLN - 10
		SJP - 10
		PDN - 10
Management 2007/2008 EUSL	43	WUSL - 43
Law 2007/2008 Jaffna	27	CBO - 27
Nursing 2007/2008 EUSL	22	PDN - 8
		SJP - 7
		RUH - 7
Commerce 2007/2008 EUSL	99	SJP - 52
		KLN - 47
Total	246	

13. Infrastructure Development - Estimates of Expenditure for Construction Projects - 2009 - Continuation Projects

Name of the HEI	Approved TEC (Rs. '000 Million)	Funds Allocated up to 2008 (Rs. '000 Million)	Cumulative Expenditure from Commencement of Project upto 31.05.2008 (Rs. '000 Million)	Estimated Expenditure 2009 (Rs. '000 Million)
UVPA	838.4	410.3	247.388	614
UWU	3420	1056.56	768.64	900
PGIA	36	35.16	23.93	0.84
PGIS	37	18.6	8.349	13.4
IIM	42.2	41.571	25.761	1.19
Trinco	91	91	66.832	40
PGIM	80			60
PDN	1352.1	587.04	345.058	271.95
CMB	1569.27	241.5	126.987	551.75
SJP	624.3	182.8	43.4	191.8
KLN	425	243.3	140.7	270
MRT	2221	742.15	580.121	436.93
RUH	912	258.8	144.4	310
Jaffna	1628.86	694.39	410.243	231.75
OUSL	90		30.36	35
EUSL	973			490
Rajarata	936	195	126.8	347
Sabaragamuwa	1256.7	513.4	286.04	599
South Eastern	667	180.25	85	486
Wayamba	440.2	260.3	117.87	231.13

Ongoing Projects (in Rs. '000 Million)

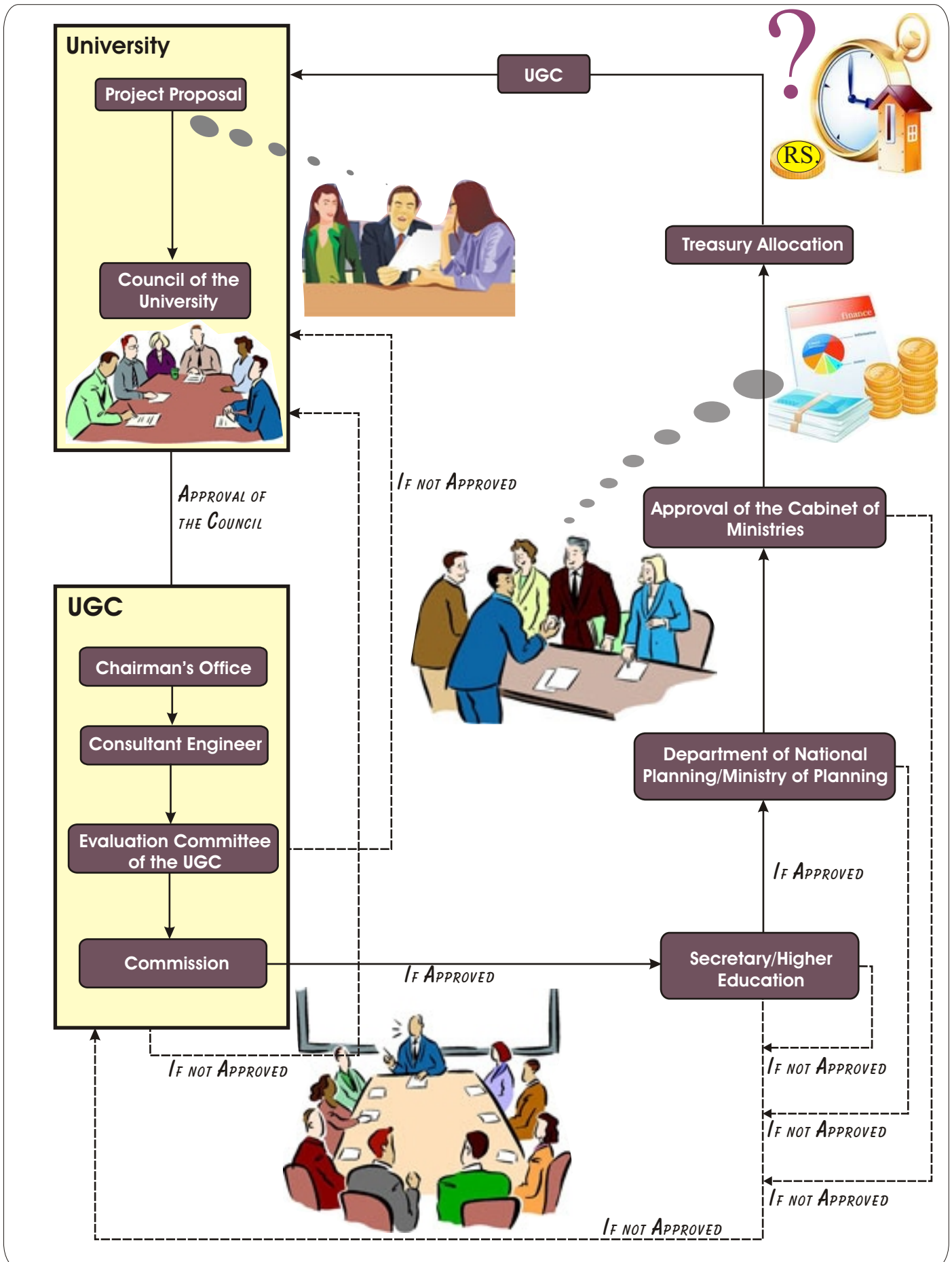
Total Value of Ongoing Projects	17640.03
Funds Allocated upto 2008	5752.121
Cumulative Expenditure from Commencement of Project upto 31.05.2008	3577.879
Estimated Expenditure 2009	6081.74

New Projects

19 New projects approved by the Commission during 2008	5320.87
Total Value of New Projects	
Estimated Expenditure for Year 2009	811.59

Procedure for obtaining approval for construction Project Proposals

Mr. IMJ Warakagoda - Engineer - Infrastructure Development Division



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DESIGNED BY: MS. PRIYANGIKA GAMAGE PHOTOS: HIGHER EDUCATIONAL IT DIVISION

Retired after 40 years of service

Ms. Priyanthi Daluwatte - SAS/UA Department



Mr. MRP Ariyaratne (Karyala Karya Sahayaka) retired from UGC on 13th November 2008 after serving the Higher Education Sector for 40 years. His first appointment had been to the National Council of Higher Education under the Chairman, Prof. Gunapala Malalasekera.

Workshop for Directors of Staff Development Centres in Universities

Ms. Priyanthi Daluwatte - SAS/UA Department



Lanka. The Standing Committee on Staff Development of UGC will ensure that the workshop recommendations are carried out.

A workshop was held on 29th August 2008 at UGC to discuss best practice, challenges & remedies adopted at Staff Development Centres (SDC) in Universities. Prof. MTM. Jiffry, Vice Chairman UGC in his introductory speech highlighted that the staff development programme in universities are in existence for over a decade. The workshop would give an opportunity for universities to share resource material and expertise in developing training programmes. A total of 21 academics participated from 9 Universities including University of Jaffna and Eastern University, Sri



An IT Policy for Higher Education Sector

Mr. Nalaka Lankasena - Head - Higher Educational IT Division



The Government has invested extensively in Information Technology education in Universities and promoting the use of IT in assisting administration, monitoring and other functions of the System. In order to ensure the proper usage of the computer systems by all



staff and authorised users in an effective, ethical and lawful manner the UGC has implemented a "User IT Policy" for the Secretariat. Thus, the Commission has decided to encourage Universities and HEIs to set out parameters of permitted use of the IT resources in education, learning and administration. The UGC initiated the activity through the IT Standing Committee, subsequently, a workshop was organized for representatives of Universities/HEIs on 15th December 2008 at Hotel Janaki. The Keynote Address was delivered by Mr. Jayantha Fernando Legal Advisor, ICTA. Meeting was chaired by Prof MTM Jiffry Vice Chairman of the UGC and Co-Chaired by Prof LL Rathnayake Director IRQUE Project. We appreciate members of IT Standing Committee for organizing this event and IRQUE Project for making funds available.



PROF. MTM JIFFRY



MS. VISHAKA NANAYAKKARA



MR. JAYANTHA FRENANDO



DR. AJITH PASQUAL