

Address by Smt. D. Purandeswari, MoS-HRD at the inauguration of South Central Regional Office of the AICTE at Hyderabad on 16-6-2007.

Hon'ble Minister Shri Arjun Singhji, Hon'ble Dr. Y. Rajasekhar Reddy garu, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Hon'ble Members of Legislative Assembly and distinguished guests and dignitaries. It is my proud privilege to extend to you all a warm welcome on this important occasion of the inauguration of the South Central Regional Office of the AICTE at Hyderabad

Technical education in India contributes a major share to the overall education system and plays a vital role in the social and economic development of our country. In India, technical education is imparted at various levels such as: craftsmanship, diploma, degree, post-graduate and research in specialized fields, catering to various aspects of technological development causing resultant augmentation in economic progress.

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) was set-up by the Government of India in November 1945 as a national level Apex Advisory Body to conduct survey on the facilities on technical education and to promote development in the country in a coordinated and integrated manner. Subsequently, as stipulated in, the National Policy of Education (1986), it was decided that the AICTE be vested with statutory authority for planning, formulation and

maintenance of norms and standards, quality assurance through accreditation, funding in priority areas, monitoring and evaluation, maintaining parity of certification and awards and ensuring coordinated and integrated development and management of technical education in the country. The Government of India (Ministry of Human Resource Development) also concurrently constituted a National Working Group to look into the role of AICTE in the context of proliferation of technical institutions, maintenance of standards and other related matters. The Working Group also recommended that AICTE be vested with the necessary statutory authority for making it more effective, which would consequently require restructuring and strengthening with necessary infrastructure and operating mechanisms.

Pursuant to the above recommendations of the National Working Group, the AICTE Bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament in (1987 (No. 52 of 1987). The Act came into force w.e.f. March 28, 1988. The statutory All India Council for Technical Education was established on May 12, 1988 with a view to proper planning and coordinated development of technical education system throughout the country, the promotion of qualitative improvement of such education in relation to planned quantitative growth and the regulation and proper maintenance of norms and standards in the technical education system and for matters connected therewith.

Presently the purview of AICTE (the Council) covers programmes of technical education including training and research in

Engineering, Technology, Architecture, Town Planning, Management, Pharmacy, Applied Arts and Crafts, Hotel Management and Catering Technology etc. at different levels.

Andhra Pradesh, as you may all be aware is the largest State in the country in terms of the number of Technical institutions. Presently the State has 885 technical institutions under Engineering, Pharmacy, Management etc., with an annual intake capacity of 1,55,187 students. Despite the existence of so many seats, there is still a very high demand and stiff competition among the students in taking up the technical courses after their Higher Secondary education. out of the above mentioned technical institutions there are 282 Engineering Colleges with an annual intake of 2,17,865 students, 106 Pharmacy institutions with an annual intake of 6252, 222 Management Institutes with 14,945 seats, 266 institutes imparting post graduate education in Computer Applications with an annual intake capacity of 15645.

With so many institutions functioning around it has been a long pending demand of the State of Andhra Pradesh for the establishment of a separate AICTE Regional Office. It is in fulfillment of this demand that 8th Regional Office of AICTE is being inaugurated in Hyderabad today which would take care not only of requirement of AP but also that of Chattisgarh, which also has a huge potential to develop into a center of excellence in technical education. Incidentally the new AICTE Regional office which is being opened to-day would

also lighten the heavy burden of the already overburdened South Regional office of AICTE in Chennai.

The State of Andhra Pradesh houses many core industries and software industries and in fact has been a frontrunner as far as establishment of software parks are concerned. On the other hand the state of Chattisgarh has been blessed with immense mineral resources by Mother Nature. The State is also moving up on the path of agricultural development with cereals, pulses and fruits and vegetables. The State should develop to be a hub for creating trained manpower to assist farmers and processors in maximizing their productivity through agro-processing and agro based industries. It is important that science should not only provide comfort to the urban people but also serve the needs of our rural people and that of the weaker sections who live in the villages, still largely dependent upon agriculture for their sustenance. We should remember that agricultural sector for agriculture is the major life line of our country and a booster of our economic growth.

Before I end, I would like to mention that in order to meet the skilled manpower shortage of the industry and to enhance the employability of the engineering graduates, AICTE is proposing Post graduate diploma and advanced diploma level courses for the degree and diploma holders respectively. These courses will be drawn up in close collaboration of specific segments of industry where the emphasis will be on skill and competence building. The focus will be on specific areas, where there is an acute shortage of manpower.

Construction and manufacturing industries are some typical examples, which are presently coming to my mind.

AICTE is also launching Employment Enhancement Programme with the provision of testing and certification by NASSCOM through online tests. The test scores will be recognized by the industry for the purpose of employment. This programme shall help in enhancing the employability of our technical graduates.

Finally the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) have decided to forge a formal partnership with 348 universities across the country, called the University –Industry Council. It has been estimated that together, the center and the states have the capacity to provide employment only to 10% of the 10 million people we inject into the market every year. We must therefore act in close unison with the captains of industry to provide suitable employment opportunities to the professionally trained personnel. The proposed University-Industry Council would afford us an opportunity in this regard.

With these words, I thank you, all, especially our respectable HRM for his benign presence and blessings for the inauguration of the opening of the South Central Regional Council of AICTE.

Jai Hind.