MINUTES OF THE FIRST COUNCIL MEETING
OF INFLIBNET CENTRE

The first meeting of the Council of INFLIBNET Centre was held at UGC, New Delhi on 20th May, 1996. The meeting started at 12:55 p.m. Following were present.

In the Chair : Prof. (Miss) A.S. Desai, Chairperson, UGC

Members	:	Prof. N.C. Mathur, Vice Chairman, UGC
	:	Prof. Yash Pal, Chairperson, GB, INFLIBNET Centre
	:	Prof. N. Balakrishnan, Chairman, NCSI
	:	Prof. J.V. Narlikar, Director, IUCAA
	:	Shri P.P. Kale, Ex-Director, SAC/ISRO
	:	Prof. Chandrakant Mehta, V.C., Gujarat University
	:	Prof. J.P. Gupta, Member Secretary, AICTE
	:	Prof. T. Vishwanathan, Director, INSDOC
	:	Dr. S.P. Gupta, Secretary, UGC
	:	Ms. Harsha Parekh, Librarian, SNDT Women's University
	:	Shri Pramod Kumar, Director, INFLIBNET Centre and Member-secretary

Invitees : Dr. P.S. Rajput, Joint Secretary, UGC

Also present : Shri S.M. Salgar, Scientist-G, INFLIBNET

Other members of the Council who were unable to be present :
Prof. S.K. Khanna, Dr. R.A. Mashelkar, Dr. D.N. Banerjee, Prof. Goverdhan Mehta, Prof. M.A. Gopinath, Dr. Vasant Gowarikar, Prof. Y.K. Alagh and Prof. Ramlal Parikh.

(Agenda item No. 1) : ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO THE COUNCIL OF IUCAA FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS INFLIBNET PROGRAMME

The President welcomed the members to the first Council meeting. She thanked Prof. J.V.Narlikar, Director, IUCAA and the Council of IUCAA for nurturing INFLIBNET Programme since its inception. The Director, INFLIBNET also joined the

Chairperson in his appreciation of the support he had received.

(Agenda item No. 2) :   REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF INFLIBNET PROGRAMME BY THE DIRECTOR

Director, INFLIBNET Centre thanked the UGC for providing support to INFLIBNET Programme in the last 5 years. He gave a brief account of the activities of INFLIBNET Programme. Highlights are given below.

(1) AUTOMATION OF LIBRARIES :

Against the target of automating 60 university libraries in the 8th Plan period, 54 libraries have already been funded under this programme till the end of March, 1996. It is proposed to fund 20 more libraries in FY 1996-97 for which budget has been sanctioned by UGC. Out of 54 libraries funded so far, only about 16 libraries have managed to procure computer systems. The procurement process in universities for these computers needs to be hastened.

(2) TRAINING :

Library professionals from 110 universities and 12 Regional Engineering Colleges have been trained in computerised operation of libraries through 12 one month courses for operational staff and 3 Executive Workshops for senior librarians. Three annual national conventions, popular with acronym CALIBER, have been organised in different parts of the country. The last convention was organised at Vadodara, jointly with MS University of Baroda in February this year, which was attended by more than 200 library professional from all over the country.

(3) CREATION OF STANDARDS/FORMATS FOR DATA CAPTURING :

A national level standardisation committee has finalised

standards and formats for serials, books, theses and dissertations, to be used by libraries for creating databases. Copies of a manual containing these standards and formats have been widely distributed to university libraries.

(4) CREATION OF DATABASES :

A centralised database is being created at INFLIBNET Centre. We have so far received data of serial holdings from 60 universities. Theses/dissertations have been collected from all universities. The database now cover 27,000 serials, 70,000 doctoral dissertations, and about 6.5 lakhs book holdings. A database of experts in various academic fields is also being created which has 1600 records presently.

(5) ON-LINE ACCESS FACILITY :

A mini computer to house this centralised database has been installed at INFLIBNET Centre. This computer has been connected to I-NET on leased line with four X.25 ports. This database can be accessed by university libraries either on-line or in off-line mode using E-Mail.

(6) SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT :

A Library Management Software is under development in collaboration with DESIDOC. Catalogueing, search and circulation modules were developed and refined, based on the feedback received from a few university libraries where these packages were installed for trial. Other modules, viz., acquisition and serial control are under development. Number of interfaces and utility software tools have also been developed.

(7) NETWORKING :

University libraries have been advised to subscribe to ERNET

of DOE, NICNET of Planning Commission and I-NET of DOT. Through ERNET and NICNET, users will be able to send E-Mail across the world and also access INFLIBNET database off-line in query and response mode. INFLIBNET has already installed X.25 leased line connection of I-NET. This will enable university libraries, having I-NET connections, to access INFLIBNET databases on-line. Use of I-NET for data communication substantially reduces communication charges. NICNET has offered connectivity at the rate of Rs. 2700/- p.a.

Some universities have already started taking advantages of off-line search facility by sending queries to INFLIBNET using E-Mail which are being served off-line and reply is being sent back by E-Mail.
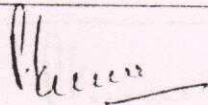
Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. have started a cost effective service called "Gateway INTERNET Access Service (GIAS)" for accessing foreign databases on-line. INFLIBNET has become a subscriber to GIAS.

(8) COPSAT SERVICES   :

"Contents with Abstracts of Periodicals in Science And Technology (COPSAT)" service started in collaboration with NCSI, Bangalore, is increasingly becoming popular. ISO 2709 format has been introduced in the service to enable subscribers to create their own COPSAT database. This service has been found very useful by the research and academic community. There are 283 subscriptions till date.

(9) HUMAN RESOURCE :

In the first year, INFLIBNET Programme had a staff strength of 12 comprising 6 technical persons and 6 administrative / support staff. Significant growth in human resource took place in the third year, i.e. 1993-94, and the staff strength became 19 comprising 11 technical and 8 administrative /

support staff. The staff strength in 1995-96 rose to 23 comprising 15 technical and 8 administrative / support staff.

(10) BUDGET :

The total grant provided by the UGC to INFLIBNET Programme in the 8th Five Year Plan was Rs.853.9 lakhs. It had two main components, viz., (i) Grant-in-aid of Rs.459.63 lakhs provided directly to universities for modernising their libraries and (ii) Grant totalling Rs.394.27 lakhs provided to INFLIBNET Centre for its activities.

In the first year, i.e. 1991-92, a small amount of Rs.25 lakhs only was provided for initiating the Programme. The grant peaked to Rs.360 lakhs in 1994-95 when substantial amount was provided to a number of universities as grant-in-aid from the special grant provided for library improvement by the UGC/MHRD. In the last year of the 8th plan, i.e. 1996-97, a provision of Rs.250.04 lakhs has been made by the UGC, provided commensurate funds are released by MHRD.

(11) UTILISATION OF GRANTS :

UGC has provided a total grant of Rs.394.27 lakhs for various activities at INFLIBNET Centre during the 8th five year plan. The total establishment expenses are of the order of Rs.181 lakhs. Training and networking activities account for Rs.55.25 lakhs and Rs.38.15 lakhs respectively. A mini computer, along with suitable RDBMS worth Rs.15 lakhs, has been procured. Database creation and software development activities account for Rs.10.9 lakhs and Rs.5 lakhs respectively. Maintenance and consumables account for Rs.14.8 lakhs. An amount of Rs.45.82 lakhs for INFLIBNET building consists of rent being paid to the Gujarat University for present premises and a sum of Rs.10 lakhs as seed money is kept for starting building activity for the INFLIBNET Centre. This seed money could not be used till date due to the non-availability of land. Rs.27.43 lakhs meant for setting up a

Regional Centre has been sanctioned for the year 1996-97 and will be utilised accordingly if the required funds are released by MHRD to the UGC.

For further details, 'Activities of INFLIBNET Programme' document, provided with agenda papers, may be referred.

Discussion on the report of the Director followed.

It was suggested that in the Expert database being created, traditional scholars, pundits etc., who may not possess formal university degrees but are known for their scholarship and learning, be also included.

INFLIBNET should strive to become, in due course, an INTERNET type of national network with connection to all databases/ networks operating in India.

Publicity materials on INFLIBNET activities be developed and circulated to the universities and other academic institutions. Publicity, including a press conference, should be undertaken. The focus should not be only on the library but on all academicians so that they not only access information but also put information on NICNET, INTERNET.

(Agenda Item No. 3) :   AUDITOR'S REPORT

The Council considered the audited accounts and the Auditor's Report for the F.Y. 1995-96 of the INFLIBNET Programme and accepted the same.

(Agenda item No. 4) :   9TH PLAN PROJECTIONS

The Council considered the modified budget projections for the 9th Plan totalling to Rs.42.18 crores and the following points emerged.
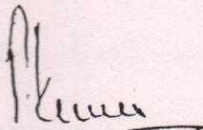
(a) The Council discussed and generally accepted the revised budget proposal for Rs.42.18 crores taking into account the suggestions made by chairperson, UGC to prune the budget by (i) utilising experinced universities as Regional Centres with only peripheral augmentation of staff and equipment. (ii) providing only capital cost of equipment to DRCs. (iii) asking universities to bear the cost of telephone installation and charges as also the network charges out of the unassigned grant. Discussion on the 9th Plan raised the need for stating quantified outputs to be delivered during the Plan Period.

(b) The Council President suggested that for providing VSAT Network costing Rs.13.5 crores, a separate project proposal be prepared. The UGC and Director should also explore the possibilities of getting funds for this network from agencies outside MHRD, such as through the European Union, which was going to commence funding in India, or through CII, or other similar organisations. The project needed to be marketed as well as the product, that is, the software being produced. It could be done through Education International.

(c) The UGC has already suggested to the universities to make use of unassigned grants given to them, to meet some of the expenditure for activities under INFLIBNET Programme such as STD line and consumables.

(d) The universities located in remote regions, tribal areas like NE region, Jammu and Kashmir, Andaman and Nicobar, etc., should be accorded high priority for access facilities under the INFLIBNET Programme as they are in isolated locations.

(e) INFLIBNET Centre should have collaboration and inter-connectivity with various UGC national information

centres, viz., NCSI and SNDT University, and should consider inclusion of the names of experts using COPSAT services in the Expert database of INFLIBNET.

(f)   It was further suggested to explore the possibilities of using INFLIBNET as a channel of the UGC for administrative communication with the universities, especially for putting all its schemes and guidelines, and keeping them upto-date on the network so that, universities would have the correct status of a scheme at any time and need not write to the UGC for information.

(g)   INFLIBNET may explore the possibility of putting the contents of the A.I.U. Handbook and similar information regarding the universities on INFLIBNET database and make them available on INTERNET.

The meeting ended at 2.05 p.m. with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Minutes approved by

(Pramod Kumar)

(Prof. (Miss) A.S. Desai)

President, Council