

Report on the One Week National Workshop on Challenges and Opportunities in Higher Education

Date: 24th – 28th August, 2020

Venue: Government Aizawl College, Sikulpuikawn

The One Week National Workshop was organised by the Research, Innovations and Extension Cell, IQAC in collaboration with RUSA, Government Aizawl College during the 24th-28th August, 2020. The workshop was the first webinar hosted by the college IQAC after the Covid-19 pandemic. The workshop was coordinated in attempt to create new learning, and understanding the challenges in higher education, specially among teaching and non-teaching staff from various institutions. The main objective of the workshop was to reinvigorate participants in their service and engage in capacity building.

The workshop in focusing on the challenges and issues in higher education invited renown speakers from different field.

The first day of the workshop, i.e, 24th August was graced by the college Principal, Prof. C. Sangluaii, welcoming the participants and the guest speaker. Prof. C. Sangluaii expressed her vision for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Mizoram. She rendered her view on NEP 2020 and the impact it will have on HEIs with special reference to colleges.

On the first day of the workshop, a special guest, Prof. Nagaraju Gundemeda, a teaching faculty at Department of Sociology, University of Hyderabad gave lecture on *Higher Education for 21st Century India: A Sociological Analysis*. Prof. Nagaraju questioned that HEIs should understand the implications and functions of NEP 2020 is aiming to achieve. Prof. Gundemeda highlighted the NEP 2020 and changes and opportunities it will bring, focusing on the skills and cognitive learning the policy is planning. The lecture also draw the impact NEP 2020 will have, specially on colleges with more autonomous power.

On the second day, Prof. Jangkhongam Doungel, teaching faculty at Department of Political Science, and Director, IQAC, Mizoram University gave an interesting lecture on *Significance of Quality Assurance Cell for Accreditation of Higher Education (HEI) in India*. Prof. Doungel challenged teaching faculty to update themselves with the latest curricula. He underlined the importance of conducting research besides teaching among teaching faculty, specifically focusing on college teachers.

The third speaker, Mr. Lalnunvula, Under Secretary in Higher and Technical Education Department, Government of Mizoram gave an enlightening and educative presentation on *Service Matters Relating to Teachers in Higher and Technical Education, Government of Mizoram*. Mr. Lalnunvula with his in-depth knowledge on Service Rules expressed the importance of understanding rules and regulations when in service by government employees. Mr. Lalnunvula also highlighted the Conduct Rules- restrictions and disciplinary actions on employees under the government. He further added how such rules also protect employee on certain circumstances. The lecture presented by Mr. Lalnunvula welcomed many questions from participants, and engaged in interesting discussion between the speaker and participants.

Mr. Laltanpuia, Additional State Project Director, RUSA gave a distinguish lecture on *Vision for Higher Education in Mizoram* on the fourth day. Major issues faced by Mizoram colleges, both government and private were highlighted by Mr. Laltanpuia. Shortage of faculty hampering teaching and learning quality in colleges were mentioned as big issue. Mr. Laltanpuia also brought up the insignificant research output among college faculty which affected the NAAC grading. An interesting argument highlighted by Mr. Laltanpuia was the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) failure in Mizoram. He stated that, presently HEIs create job seekers instead of job offerors. The lack of vision, mode of establishment by certain people who have little or no academic purpose and the lack of regulatory system in Higher Education Institutions were critically argued by Mr. Laltanpuia. The lecture was concluded with insightful argument on the vision, and what challenges Mizoram HEIs should put on the table like paradigm change in pedagogy, skills development, integrating value system and innovation.

The final speaker for the workshop was David Rosangliana, a teaching faculty in Mathematics department, Government Residential Zirtiri College. Mr. David presented a lecture on *NEP 2020: Higher Education in Mizoram*. He critically highlighted what NEP 2020 is about, and raised possible questions if implemented in Mizoram. Mr. David explained the plan of NEP 2020 on promoting multi-disciplinary and benefits Mizoram HEIs will obtain. An important question Mr. David raised was the autonomous power colleges will enjoy under the new policy. The lecture challenged the participants with a take home questions, giving a reflecting question on how NEP 2020 will affect Mizoram HEIs.

The One Week National Workshop hoped to identify some of the concerns arising in higher education, and aimed to help the participants in providing pertinent tools in their service. The organising team sincerely thank the participants who made the workshop successful. The team is indebted to the college Principal, Prof. C. Sangluaii, who facilitate the team with inspiring words, giving support and assistance for the success of the workshop. The organising team also thank RUSA co-ordinator, Dr. Lalsangzuala Khiangte for rendering a great help in organising the workshop.