

From the Chairman's Desk



We have successfully gone through another year: a year full of activities, new enthusiasm, and new concerns.

With emergence of knowledge societies, a new set of vocabulary, such as knowledge economy, knowledge jobs, knowledge workers, knowledge management has emerged. Education is required to play a significant role for providing appropriate responses to the impending challenges. It is being felt increasingly that the children and youth of the country should have quality school level education (general education as well as vocational education and training). Opportunities of continuing education are also required to be provided by the concerned education development sectors. In the wake of exponential expansion of knowledge, the welfare state is required to make provision of education of good quality at least upto secondary level for all. The Government of India is committed to Universalisation of Elementary Education. Now Universalisation of Secondary Education is also the priority agenda of the Government. It is now well accepted that access to education of good quality can also be imparted beyond the four walls of school by taking recourse to the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode of education.

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) has been marching ahead steadily to carry out its mission of "reaching the unreached" through Open Learning and Distance Education Programmes upto pre-degree level. The open schooling programme has now taken roots both at national level and at state level. After more than 15 years of its operation, NIOS is now in a position to share its experience and expertise in open schooling with the State

Education Departments in India, particularly for setting up/ up-scaling of State Open Schools (SOS), and with other countries, specially the developing ones, in the world.

In addition to expansion of open schooling, it is felt that increased use of information and communication technology (ICT) will enable the Open Schooling System to contribute substantially to meet the challenge of educating increasing number of prospective learners. However, access without quality assurance is not very meaningful. NIOS has been taking steps for qualitative improvement of its open schooling programme through activities such as development of curriculum and study materials, development of media support materials, student support services, development and implementation of pupil evaluation tools, and activities related to examination and certification. Convergence of product focus (enrolment retention, cost effectiveness, pass rates) with learning focus (access to learning, learning design, learning resources, learning outcomes) is being ensured in the programmes and activities of NIOS.

It is felt that nurturing the personnel associated with open schooling is as important as nurturing the learners of open schooling. Besides making provision of Self Instructional Material and Media Support, Personal Contact Programmes are organised for NIOS learners in about 1850 study centres for Academic Courses and about 900 study centres for Vocational Education Courses. The personnel dealing with learners are tutors and managers of the study centres. Hence it becomes imperative to organize periodically the training of personnel associated with open schooling programme. During 2006-07, NIOS, in collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning (COL), undertook of project on identification of the training needs of personnel involved in open schooling in India, and development of

appropriate training materials for them. The Training Package will be used for training of Open Schooling functionaries from India and from developing countries.

Another major area of focus is research in open schooling, which is needed for a variety of reasons such as planning for future, growth and development of open schooling, establishment of credibility of the system, monitoring of progress and providing research based solutions to various functional and related problems. The priority areas of research were identified and work was initiated in some areas.

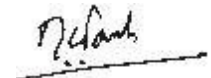
There have been several significant developments in NIOS during the year 2006-07. These are the contents of this Annual Report.

In planning and operationalisation of its programmes and activities, NIOS collaborates with several National and International organisations.

During 2006-07, NIOS had mutually beneficial collaboration with international organizations like UNESCO, COL, UNFPA in areas such as

development of life skills, training of open schooling functionaries, and national agencies like NCERT, COBSE and RCI. NIOS continued receiving guidance and support from the Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, in planning and implementation of its Open Schooling programmes. I gratefully acknowledge the inputs received by NIOS from individuals, institutions, and organisations at National and International levels.

I acknowledge the hard work and contribution made by all my colleagues in NIOS during the 2006-07. I appreciate the efforts made by the group that was assigned the task of preparing and bringing out this report on time. I specially acknowledge the efforts made by Prof. K.R. Chandrasekaran, Director (Academic) and Shri D.S. Bist, Secretary, NIOS, in preparation of the Annual Report of NIOS.



M.C. Pant
Chairman