

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY held on 28th October 2024

A meeting of members of the Governing Body of R J College of Arts, Science and Commerce (Empowered Autonomous), also known as Hindi Vidya Prachar Samiti's Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College of Arts, Science and Commerce (Empowered Autonomous) affiliated to the University of Mumbai was held on 28th October 2024 at 3.00 pm via Hybrid Mode through Google Meet.

The following members were present:

1. Dr. Rajendra Singh (Management, Chairperson of the meeting)
2. Principal Dr. Sonali Pednekar (University Nominee)
3. Dr Rupesh Raut (State Government Nominee)
4. Shri. Alok Kumar Saboo (Management Nominee)
5. Shri Chandra Mohan (Management Nominee) Leave of Absence
6. Shri. Umesh Singh (Management Nominee)
7. Shri. Rajdeep Singh (Management Nominee)
8. Dr. Usha Mukundan (Management Nominee - Invitee)
9. Shri. Aditendra P. Sengar (Industrialist- Member)
- X 10. Dr. Amita Valmiki (Teacher of the College- Member)
11. Dr. Shashi Mishra (Teacher of the College- Member)
12. Dr. Himanshu Dawda (Principal of the College)

AGENDA

1. To read and confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 29/04/2024.
2. The present approval of recommendations made by the respective Board of Studies in various subjects for the curriculum designed under NEP 2020 for the Third year UG program and approved by the Academic Council held on 22/10/2024.
3. To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Academic Council held on 22/10/2024.
4. To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 25/10/2024.
5. To present update on the IQAC initiatives during the period of 12/06/2024 to 22/10/2024.
6. Update on AQAR 2023-2024.
7. Academic Audit 2023-2024.
8. Update on promotion of teachers under CAS.
9. Update on vacancies filled against the NOC obtained for 12 Assistant Professors (Aided).
10. Update on CHB appointments and Contractual appointments.
11. Update on MoUs.
12. Update on Seed money grant and Project grant received from ICSSR.
13. Any other matter.

The following business was then transacted:

Item 1: To read and confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 29/04/2024.

Resolution 1: The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 29/04/2024 were confirmed and passed.

Item 2: To present the approval of the recommendations made by the respective Board of Studies in various subjects for the curriculum designed under NEP 2020 for the Third Year UG program and approval by the Academic Council meeting held on 22/10/2024.

and

Item 3: To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Academic Council held on 22/10/2024.

Resolutions 3 and 4: The Chairman presented for the approval of Governing Body the recommendations made by the respective Board of Studies in various subjects that was approved by the Academic Council in its meeting held on 22/10/2024 and the minutes of the Academic Council meeting held on 22/10/2024. The Governing Body members unanimously approved the recommendations, and the minutes of the Academic Council meeting held on 22/10/2024 were also confirmed and passed. The following resolution was passed-

"Resolved that the recommendation made by the respective Board of Studies in various subjects for the curriculum design under NEP 2020 for the Third Year of UG, further passed and approved in Academic council in its meeting held on 22nd October 2024 be approved and passed unanimously for its implementation from academic year 2025-2026."

Item 4: To approve the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 25/10/2024.

Resolution 4: The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 25/10/2024 were confirmed and passed.

Item 5: To present the update on IQAC initiatives during the period of 12/06/2024 to 22/10/2024.

Principal presented a brief update on different academic and co-curricular activities carried out on campus for both students and the Teachers during the last 6 months which included students

induction program, FDPs for teachers, Orientation of New Recruits, Academic Audit, and sessions on Health & Wealth. Some of these are the exclusive initiatives of IQAC which spread across all the departments involving participation of almost all teachers and many students benefiting from the same.

UGC 10-point Quality Mandate to enhance teaching, learning and evaluation experience on HEI campus is adopted by the college which provides all round personality development of the learner through the quality initiatives taken by the college. The new academic year opened with SY and TY students on campus and a weeklong Induction program called *Deeksharambh* was organized by IQAC in multiple sessions. It started with the interaction of students with Principal, Vice Principals, IQAC Coordinator, In charge of all extension activities, sports and Cultural, Librarian, Convenor of Code of Conduct committee. Day 2 of the induction program involved special sessions on physical and mental health of the students. Day 3 onwards departments started a dialogue with their students sharing with them the curriculum, POs, COs, PSOs and arranging bridge courses for them. An exercise to identify slow and advanced learners followed the remedial planning for slow learners and tasks to further sharpen the skills of advanced learner also formed a part of induction program. Some departments also invited their illustrious alumni during the induction program for the new batch to have an interaction with them and understand the options and opportunities with the subject.

RJC-NSS unit did remarkable work during the past 6 months. College NSS in association with Shri Ambika Yoga Kutir, Thane, celebrated International Yoga Day and two of our NSS volunteers also participated in celebration of International Yoga Day at Mumbai University. Blood Donation Camp was organized by the college NSS unit in the month of June. Through NSS, Cancer Victory Day and Doctor's Day were celebrated by inviting experts on the campus to educate the students. In association with *Vanashakti* Foundation, RJC- NSS organized Mangrove clean-up drive at Bhandup. The NSS unit in collaboration with United ways Mumbai organized Helmet-4-Life: A session on Road Safety Awareness. In the month of September, coinciding with the Ganesh Festival, RJC-NSS partnered with United Ways Mumbai and conducted a 'Clay Idol making' workshop and conducted an interesting competition on Pandal Decoration.

On August 26, 2024, the Department of Botany organized a session on Research Methodology by Dr Mugdha Ambatkar Kamat which was attended by all PG and PhD students at the college. More than 200 students and 10 teacher colleagues participated in '*Vidnyan Sammelan*' that was jointly organized by the departments of Botany and Marathi in association with the *Marathi Vidnyan Parishad*, Mumbai. On July 18th, Department of Marathi and *Pavo* Nature Club of Department of Botany joined hands to take out *Vriksha Dindi* on *Asahadi Ekadashi* coinciding with the rainy season and highlighting the significance for plants and nature to connect with God. IQAC organized a Faculty Development Program for Teachers that was conducted on 4th September

2024 on the topic 'Using Chat GPT and AI Tools in Academic Practices'. IQAC meticulously crafted a day long Academic Audit for AY 2023-2024 on 14th September 2024. On 17th October 2024, Principal conducted an Orientation session of New Recruits giving an overview of the journey of the college so far, milestones achieved, our ethos, our commitment towards society, quality research on campus, RAC activities, role of IQAC, code of conduct applicable to teachers and how a teacher must rise above all from being not just a teacher but a true mentor to students. This was followed by the IQAC Coordinator taking new recruits for a college tour.

Principal further informed the house that the Central Library of the College organized a National Reading Week in the second week of June 2024. With formal inauguration on explaining the importance of books as friends forever, weeklong activities included Book Exhibition entitled 'Essential Reads: Books that will Change Your Life' and a two-day workshop for students that was conducted by our Librarian on 'Read to Succeed: Developing Lifelong Reading Habits'. During the week, Library Tour was also organized for every class to understand and appreciate Library wealth of books, different sections of the library and code of conduct applicable to Library users. In the month of July 2024, the Central Library organized an orientation and training session on Digital *Knimbus* Library for UG and PG students.

Principal further appraised the members regarding several sessions that were organized by different departments regarding Health & Wealth management in life. The Department of Botany organized a talk on 'Wellness & Nutrition.' The BBI department arranged a session on 'Mental Wellness- Need of the Hour'. The same department also conducted sessions on 'Spiritual Wellness' and 'Hazards of consuming junk food. The Department of BAF organized a session on Entrepreneurship called 'Idea to Reality'. The department of BBI in association with the DLLE (Department of Lifelong Learning and Extension Unit) organized a session on 'Financial Literacy: Wellness and Awareness.' The principal further shared with the members that under NEP vertical of CC, students have now become more aware of different activities organized by various departments exclusively for the benefit of students and the CC vertical being evaluative, student participation has significantly increased in the interdepartmental activities bringing more harmony among student community on the campus. This makes the campus more vibrant and buzzing all the time with the students.

Item 6: Update to AQAR 2023-2024.

The principal informed the members that the preparation of AQAR 2023-2024 is under way. The required data to be obtained from all the respective stakeholders is completed and the document for submission is in the final stage of its preparation. The deadline for the submission is 31st December 2024 and we shall meet up with this deadline.

Item 7: Academic Audit 2023-2024

Principal informed the members that the Academic Audit for 2023-2024 was conducted on Saturday 14th September 2024. Prin Dr Sridhara Shetty, S M Shetty College, Powai; Prin Dr Vijay Dabholkar, Jai Hind College, Church gate and Prin Dr Nina Roy Choudhury, SIES College of Commerce & Economics, Sion East were the Experts. The day-long audit started at 9.30am with Principal's presentation followed by the interaction with IQAC members and the members of the Examination Cell. CDC members also interacted with the Experts. This was followed by the faculty-wise presentation in three parallel sessions of Humanities, Science and Commerce. The Experts gave their valuable suggestions to the faculty members during their presentation and the overall observations as well as recommendations by all Experts forms a part of the Academic Audit report. 2023-2024.

Item 8: Update on Promotion of Teachers under CAS

The principal informed the members that in the first half of the new academic year 2024-2025, on 23rd July 2024, eight teachers defended themselves for their promotion under CAS (Career Advancement Scheme). Mrs. Devashree Ghorpade from the department of Economics in category of stage 1 to 2; Dr Mangesh Panchal, department of Accountancy, Dr Laxmi Desiti, department of Commerce, Dr Palak Chawla, department of Chemistry and Dr Sanket Tikare, department of Mathematics successfully defended for their promotion under CAS for stage 2 to 3. Dr Sandip Hinge, department of Physics, Dr Sandesh Divekar, department of Chemistry and Dr Geeta Joshi, department of Zoology, gave presentation followed by panel interview and successfully defended for their promotion due from stage 3 (Assistant Professor) to stage 4 (Associate Professor). All the files have been submitted to the University for their approval. The principal further appraised the members that six more teachers have submitted their intent to go through their CAS promotion. Four teachers from the department of Chemistry, Dr Asawari Mokal, Dr Amol Kadam, Dr Prabijna Babu and Dr Jitendra Girase prepared for defending their promotion under CAS from stage 3 to 4. Dr Manisha Bhattacharya from chemistry department and Dr Mithilesh Sharma-Head, department of Hindi shall defend for CAS promotion for Professorship (stage 4 to stage 5). Names of the experts on the selection panel as well as the name of Government Nominee has been received but due to Assembly elections, the Achar Sanhita (Code of Conduct) being in effect, interviews shall be conducted only after 23rd November 2024.

Item 9: Update on vacancies filled against the NOC obtained for 12 Assistant Professors (Aided)

Principal updated the house that the State Govt GR of 24th July 2023 has information regarding granting of 12 teaching positions (Assistant Professor- Aided) to RJ College. The College then submitted all the information required in support of obtaining the NOC and did a constant follow-up with the Joint Director's office, Mumbai, Directorate of Higher Education, Pune and Mantralaya for obtaining NOC. On 9th July 2024, a communication was received from the Higher and Technical Education Department, Government of Maharashtra and NOC was received for 12 teaching posts (Assistant Professor- Aided), 2 each in Botany and Chemistry and 1 each for the subjects of Zoology, Mathematics, Statistics, Hindi, Economics, Sociology, Commerce and Accountancy. The due procedure was then followed. The advertisement appeared in leading newspapers on 17th July 2024. The applications received before a due date in every subject were then scrutinized by the members of the Scrutiny committee which consisted of Principal, Vice Principals, HoDs, Senior Teachers from the department and IQAC Coordinator. The scrutiny committee for different subjects met between 8th August 2024 to 17th August 2024 and the final Scrutiny committee meeting held on 20th August 2024 recommended the eligible candidates to be called for the interview. Communication with eligible candidates was done through mail, speed post and telephonic call. Interviews were conducted between 20th to 28th September 2024. Files of all candidates are now in the CONCOL section, Mumbai University.

Item 10: Update on CHB appointments and Contractual appointments

The principal informed the members that 56 out of 99 sanctioned posts in teaching staff and 75 out of 124 in non-teaching staff in our college are currently filled. For the vacant positions, as a stop gap arrangement, contractual appointments have been made by the management for the smooth functioning of the academic activity and salvage the loss of academic hours. In the month of June, NOC was obtained from the Joint Director's office regarding CHB positions in the subjects of English, Geography, Botany, Zoology, Chemistry, Statistics and Physics. Over the years, our observation is that the response in terms of applications received is usually low for CHB positions because it does not give steadiness in career and moreover, once the teaching of academic lessons is over, the teacher does not have any work. However, interviews for CHB positions were conducted. With selected candidates in 5 subjects declining to accept the offer, only 2 files, one each in Chemistry and Statistics, were submitted to Mumbai University for their CHB approvals. The principal further informed the house that 21 contractual appointments in teaching section and 9 contractual appointments in non-teaching section by the management are helping in the smooth functioning of the academic affairs of the college.

Item 11: Update on MoUs

Principal informed the members that four more MoUs are signed after June 2024. These are- First, with 'Child Rights and You' (CRY) wherein students volunteer to teach underprivileged children on weekends, especially on Saturdays morning and afternoon hours. Second, with 'ATBS'- Association of Teachers in Biological Sciences for Seminars, Conferences, Workshops, Exhibitions and Career guidance sessions. Third, with 'Nidan- Hi-tech Imaging Centre' for using their infrastructure for training and OJT, to enhance practical skills & knowledge for MLT and MIT students. Fourth, with 'Paryavaran Dakshata Manch'- For seminars and workshops to be conducted related to the environmental issues, concerns and creating awareness regarding clean and sustainable environment.

Item 12: Update of Seed money grant and Project grant received from ICSSR.

The principal apprised the house that there is a provision made by the management to provide seed money to deserving and desirous young teachers for carrying out small scale research in their respective subjects. He shared with the members that unlike before, for quite some years now, there is no project funding for teachers either from UGC or Mumbai University is being released. Seed money thus helps young teachers to engage in research, build confidence and get prepared for applying for big time projects in future in receiving fundings through national level funding agencies or private organizations. He further shared with the members that Post pandemic, seed money is granted to deserving PG students as well. Students under supervision of their individual mentor give a presentation to the RAC. Each proposal is individually reviewed, discussed, and deliberated by the RAC and suggestions, if any, are given during RAC meeting and then the funding is released. Teacher projects are funded for 1 lakh rupee and student project upper sanction limit is Rs 25,000. Assessing the requirement of the individual project and budget justification submitted, the upper limit of funding at times is relaxed. In the AY 2024-2025, Six project proposals by Teachers have been sanctioned to the tune of total amount of Rs. 7,00,000/-. Nine students benefited from seed money for their projects getting selected and total seed money given to students is 2,22,750/-.

Principal informed the members that this year, two teachers have received research project funding from Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Ministry of Education. Dr Sucheta Joshi, Associate Professor and Head, Department of Economics has been awarded a grant of Rs. 6,60,000/- for her project entitled 'Study of Causes of Low Consumption of Ayurveda and Panchakarma Healthcare in a Multi-stakeholder' Framework with reference to Greater Mumbai and Thane City and Solutions'. Dr Baishakhi Dutta, Professor, Department of Geography received a grant of Rs. 6,44,000/- for her project titled 'An Empirical study of Factors Affecting the Quality

of Life in the Slum Area of Mumbai City: Case of Selected Slums of Eastern Suburbs'. Both the Projects are Minor Research Projects, and each Project duration is of 12 months.

Item 13: Any other matter.

The principal shared with the house the achievement of R J students in sports during the period of the last six months. In athletics, both Men's and Women's championships, 8 individual medals- 2 gold, 5 silver and 1 bronze and in Team events, 2 medals- 1 each in silver and bronze are won by RJ athletes. In Taekwondo, 2 bronze medals in men's category and 1 bronze medal in women's category are bagged by RJ Athletes. In Kho-Kho, both Men's and Women's team secured first place. In Kabaddi, the Women's team secured first place and the Men's team was placed forth. 4 players for the Women's team and 2 players from the Men's team were selected for Interzonal tournaments. In Basketball tournament at university level, both Men's and Women's team secured first place. Also, 4 players in the Men's category and 4 in the Women's category qualified for playing at Inter-zonal level. 7 players of the college Men's Volleyball team and 1 player from the Women's team got selected to play in the inter-zonal tournaments. In Chess, our Women's team was placed 4th and the Men's team secured 6th place at the university games. In Shooting tournaments (Women), our student Ms. Khushi Chaubey secured silver medal and qualified for the Inter University matches. Our player Ms. Rinky Singh received a gold medal in Cross Country tournament for women and got selected for the Inter University matches.

The principal further shared with the members the performance of R J students at the 19th Interdepartmental/ Interuniversity Research Convention of Mumbai University- Aavishkar. In all project categories, the college registered a total of 48 projects and had representation in all three levels of UG, PG and PPG. The College contingent was of 114 students. 8 projects were selected for the second round which included 2 projects each from the UG and PPG Category and 4 projects from PG category. It was an enriching experience for the participating students and an opportunity to learn from their peers.

Principal shared with the members that on 9th October 2024, Evonik India Pvt Ltd, channelizing through YUVA Unstoppable, inaugurated the state-of-the-art Evonik Grow Beyond Yourself Chemistry Laboratory at our college. This facility offered by Evonik India Pvt Ltd is designed to provide our students with advanced resources enabling them to carry out experiments, engage in the innovative research and undertake practical projects in pure chemistry and its allied branches. The central instrumental facility in the college is now further equipped with generous donation by Evonik India Pvt Ltd. with modern equipment and instruments aiming at fostering a hands-on approach to chemistry education on R J campus. This philanthropic approach of Evonik India Pvt Ltd also included reimbursement of tuition fees for 200 girl students from FY, SY, TY

levels with Chemistry as their Major or Minor subject. Evonik India Pvt Ltd also extended their support the college by providing 34 Lenovo tablets, notice boards and White boards for academic and administrative work and assistance in setting up the Language lab for the undergraduate students.

State Government Nominee Dr Rupesh Raut, Joint Director, Higher & Technical Education, Mumbai region who despite his busy schedule joined the meeting online, congratulated the principal and his team for the recently awarded 'A' Grade in the 4th Cycle of NAAC and conveyed his best wishes for the continuation of the quality academic work on college campus. Vice Chancellor Nominee Dr. Sonali Pednekar appreciated principal and his team not only for their preparedness in welcoming another new year under NEP but at every stage, designing the curriculum under each vertical of NEP so meticulously that the essence of any of the vertical of NEP is not lost in spite of having so many departments with so many study programs and with significantly high student number in every program. She also appreciated the increased interdepartmental interaction under NEP.

In his closing remarks, Principal thanked all the members for their participation in the meeting and their appreciation and valuable suggestions. He informed the house that the college will close for the Diwali vacation on 30th October 2024 and shall reopen for the second half of AY 2024-2025 on 13th November 2024.

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