

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE INAUGURATION OF ASSESSORS' ORIENTATION
PROGRAMME (ENGINEERING) ORGANISED BY NATIONAL ASSESSMENT
AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL AT NAAC CONFERENCE HALL,
BENGALURU ON 21.08.2019 AT 11.30 A.M**

Anaivarukkum Vanakkam

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Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

It gives me great joy to be here at Bengaluru for the inauguration of the Assessors' Orientation Programme being organised by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council.

The NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) was established in 1994 as an autonomous institution of the UGC, with a mandate to provide quality assurance as an integral part of the system of functioning of Higher Educational Institutions. The Council has grown manifold since then and today has an elaborate setup comprising of educational administrators, policy makers and senior academicians to carry out the task.

The purpose of this process of quality assurance and accreditation is to provide to the stakeholders the status of quality of an institution so that a well informed decision can be taken by the students at the time of applying for admission. It also helps institutions to understand their strengths and weaknesses and adopt the right path towards quality improvement.

There are over 900 universities in India at present. Of them 325 only are accredited by the NAAC i.e., a figure of 36%. With regard to colleges the figures are even worse. Out of the approximate number of 40000 colleges in the country, of which only around 5300 are NAAC accredited i.e., a figure of 13%.

Clearly here is a need to spread awareness among colleges and universities to become a part of the accreditation network. For reliable accreditation and rankings to be truthful, there is a need to ensure that the accreditation system is simple, fair, precise, transparent, uniformly applicable, effective and less time consuming.

Random verification and validation of data provided by the institutions is also essential to make sure that the data provided by the institutions is factually correct.

For the assessment of a unit, the NAAC follows a process which is a combination of self study and peer review. The self-study report to be validated by peers is the backbone of the whole

exercise. Manuals have been developed to suit different units of higher education, with detailed guidelines on the preparation of the self study report and the other aspects of assessment and accreditation. The NAAC has identified the following criteria to serve as the basis for its assessment procedures: Curricular Aspects; Teaching-Learning and Evaluation; Research, Consultancy and Extension; Infrastructure and Learning Resources; Student Support and Progression; Governance, Leadership and Management; and Innovations and Best Practices. The self-study report is expected to highlight the functioning of the institution with reference to these criteria.

The validation of the self-study report is done by the peers through the criterion-wise scores and submission of a detailed assessment report. The criterion scores are used to arrive at the overall institutional CGPA.

While participating in the accreditation and ranking process, the major challenge faced by the Educational institution is to provide the data and the supporting documents related to several years; The data demanded by different certifying agencies is in different formats and for different time periods thus adding to the work load.

Government provides a lot of financial support to institutions of higher education through grants and special schemes. Usually these institutions

are in existence for a long period, few in number and cater to a small percentage of overall enrolment. Relatively young institutions established over last couple of decades, including self-financed institutions also need government support for their development.

Providing grants based on NAAC scores as they are being finalized at present can actually result in skewed distribution of financial support. It is necessary that NAAC scores should correctly reflect certain criteria faithfully such as the following:-

1. There are NAAC credits for the percentage of seats filled against reserved category. Minority

institutions lose these marks as caste based reservations are not applicable to them.

2. Similarly, Institutions are judged on the basis of percentage of students admitted from outside the state and from outside the country. In many states, Institutions are compelled to admit almost all their students through the state's centralised process and have virtually no scope to admit students from other states. Similarly, admissions from outside the country are meager. These criteria need to be applied appropriately.

3. Research and Development activities were mostly conducted by university departments at PG and PhD level in the past. These activities

were financially supported by the government. UG education was entrusted to affiliated colleges. It will not be reasonable to expect such colleges to engage in R&D activities. R&D demands a lot of finance, human resources & time; along with patience and perseverance. Major chunk of the R&D funds go to government run or government aided institutions. Self-financed institutions have to provide for expenditure from the students' fees and thus burden the parents even more. We need to devise an equitable scheme under the NAAC dispensation for R&D financial support so that private institutions can raise their

contribution to R&D without overburdening the students.

4. Some institutions spend a heavy amount on advertisements which is not a preferred practice. National level institutions like IITs, NITs, IIITs and a few institutions deemed to be universities have an upper hand because of their wider outreach. Unaided institutions operating at the state level tend to lose the battle because they are not well known. For a geographically vast country like ours, with highly asymmetrical distribution of educational facilities, a realistic perception of the quality status of institutions located in remote areas may not be possible.

5. Many of the factors are evaluated as a percentage of total number of the faculty or total number of students. The scores may not truly reflect the efforts taken by the institution. This is particularly true of activities like patent filing & publications.

It is expected that the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for the nation will go up from current level of around 25 percent to 50 percent by the year 2035. This will raise the enrolment in HEIs from 35 million to at least 70 million by 2035. One can imagine the level of human and digital power that will be required to encourage and accommodate more and more institutions in the accreditation and ranking process.

Larger numbers of students are taking to higher education year after year. Higher Education Institutions have to shoulder the responsibility of inculcating the desirable value system among the students. In a country like India with cultural pluralities and diversities it is essential that the students imbibe the values commensurate with social, cultural, economic and environmental realities at the local, national and universal levels.

The impact of technological advancement on educational transaction - both academic and administrative - indicates that our system of education is still uncomfortable with new technology. At a time when our educational institutions are expected to do more with less

inputs, one should make use of the technological innovations that are readily available.

I hope that the quality of NAAC accreditation and ranking process will be further enhanced by many more constructive measures to ensure quality education in Higher Educational Institutions. I congratulate all the authorities the assessors and the supporting staff for taking painstaking efforts to implement the processes and procedures for bringing accreditation to a level as to positively influence the pursuit of quality and excellence in a Higher Educational Institutions.

I extend my best wishes and greetings to the management and staff of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council and request them to

strive towards the pursuit of national good relentlessly. I am sure that in the times to come the National Assessment and Accreditation Council will be rewarded with greater success in their initiatives.

Jai Hind....