

ALL INDIA FEDERATION OF RETIRED UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE TEACHERS ORGANISATIONS

at

Haridwar

(Pawan Dham Ashram, Sapt Rishi Road)

on

8th & 9th February, 2025

General Secretary's Report

Dear Friends,

Fraternal greetings!

It is a great pleasure for us to organise the **5th Academic Conference of AIFRUCTO** in this holy city of Haridwar. I extend my thanks and gratitude to the leaders of Uttarakhand Vishvavidyalaya-Mahavidyalaya Pensioners Parisangh, Dehradun for hosting this extravaganza. It is a small unit with a big heart. I express my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. S N Sachan, the Patron, Prof. Harishchandra, the President and Prof. Atul Kumar Gupta, the General Secretary of the Parisangh for their indefatigable zeal and devotion.

Haridwar, located in Uttarakhand, is one of the holiest cities in Hinduism. Known as the "Gateway to the Gods- Devbhoomi" Haridwar holds immense religious significance. It is believed that drops of Amrit fell here, making it one of the four sites for the Kumbh Mela, a massive pilgrimage drawing millions of devotees. The city is also home to the sacred Ganges River, where devotees perform rituals and take holy dips.

Har Ki Pauri, the most famous ghat in Haridwar, hosts the mesmerising Ganga Aarti, an evening ritual of offering prayers to the river. The city is dotted with ancient temples, ashrams, and ghats, attracting pilgrims and tourists alike. Haridwar's spiritual ambience, coupled with its natural beauty, makes it a significant destination for spiritual seekers, cultural enthusiasts, and nature lovers.

International Concerns:

The international political scenario is currently marked by significant geopolitical shifts and tensions. The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine has had global repercussions, affecting energy supplies and economic stability. In the Middle East, the situation remains volatile with the conflict between Israel and Hamas.

India, as a prominent regional power, has been navigating these complexities with a focus on maintaining strategic autonomy. India's relations with China have seen a cautious thaw, with recent agreements to resume direct flights and reduce military tensions along their disputed border. Additionally, India continues to strengthen its ties with the United States and other Quad members to counterbalance China's influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

India's foreign policy focuses on promoting economic growth, securing its borders, and enhancing its global standing through active participation in international organizations like the United Nations and BRICS.

Political and Economic Scenario of India:

The political scene is marked by intense competition between national and regional parties, with significant debates on policies and governance. The upcoming elections are expected to be highly contested, with key issues including economic reforms, social policies, and national security.

Economically, India is one of the fastest-growing major economies in the world. The country's GDP growth rate is projected to be around 6.5% for 2023-24. Despite challenges like inflation and global economic uncertainties, India has shown resilience with strong domestic demand and government initiatives to boost infrastructure and investment. The country aims to become the world's third-largest economy in the next five years, driven by digital innovation, sustainable development, and robust economic policies.

Environmental Challenges facing India and the Role of the Teaching Community:

India grapples with significant environmental challenges, including pollution, deforestation, water scarcity, and climate change. Rapid urbanization and industrialization have led to air and water pollution, endangering public health and biodiversity. Deforestation for agriculture and urban development contributes to habitat loss and climate change. Water scarcity, driven by over-extraction and pollution, threatens both agriculture and drinking water supply. Climate change exacerbates these issues, causing extreme weather events and impacting livelihoods. The teaching community plays a pivotal role in addressing these challenges. By integrating environmental education into the curriculum, teachers can raise awareness and foster a sense of responsibility among students. They can inspire the younger generation to adopt sustainable practices and become advocates for environmental conservation. Additionally, educators can encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skills, empowering students to develop innovative solutions to environmental problems. Through education and advocacy, the teaching community can drive positive change and promote a sustainable future for India.

The Global and the Indian Economy:

The global economy is experiencing rapid transformations due to technological advancements, geopolitical shifts, and environmental challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the interconnectedness of economies and the vulnerabilities within global supply chains. Inflation rates, trade tensions, and energy transitions continue to shape economic policies and strategies worldwide.

India's economy, one of the fastest-growing in the world, is navigating these global currents with resilience. The country is focused on digital innovation, infrastructure development, and fostering a robust manufacturing sector. Initiatives like "Make in India" aim to boost domestic production and attract foreign investment. Additionally, India's vibrant service sector, particularly IT and telecommunications, plays a pivotal role in its economic growth. However, challenges such as unemployment, rural-urban disparity, and environmental sustainability require continued attention. The balancing act between rapid

economic growth and inclusive development remains a key focus for policymakers as India aspires to become a \$5 trillion economy.

The Educational Scenario of Higher Education in India and Challenges Before NEP 20:

The higher education landscape in India is vast and diverse, encompassing numerous universities, colleges, and technical institutes. Despite its size, it faces significant challenges, including quality disparities, accessibility issues, outdated curricula, and limited research opportunities. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to address these challenges and transform the sector.

One major reform introduced by NEP 2020 is the establishment of Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) to foster holistic and interdisciplinary learning. It also advocates for the integration of vocational education, flexibility in course choices, and the adoption of technology-enhanced learning. The policy emphasizes the importance of research and innovation through the National Research Foundation (NRF) to promote a strong research culture.

However, implementing NEP 2020 is not without challenges. Funding and resource allocation remain critical issues, as significant investments are required for infrastructure development and capacity building. Resistance to change from established institutions and faculty, who are accustomed to traditional methods, poses another hurdle. Furthermore, achieving uniformity in quality and accessibility across rural and urban areas is a daunting task.

UGC Regulation 2025:

The University Grants Commission (UGC) Regulation 2025 has sparked significant debate and criticism. This regulation undermines the autonomy of state governments and centralizes control over higher education. The draft regulations propose that the Chancellor, often a political appointee, will have significant influence over the selection of Vice-Chancellors in state universities. This has raised concerns about the politicization of academic appointments and the potential erosion of academic freedom.

Moreover, the regulations allow for the appointment of Vice-Chancellors from non-academic backgrounds, which many believe could lead to the commercialization of higher education. This move is seen as a departure from the traditional emphasis on academic expertise and integrity. State governments, which contribute significantly to the funding of state universities, have voiced strong opposition, arguing that the regulations infringe on their constitutional rights and undermine the democratic functioning of universities.

In summary, while the UGC Regulation 2025 aims to standardize and improve the quality of higher education, it faces criticism for potentially compromising academic independence and democratic governance in state universities. It seems the autonomy of universities will be affected.

8th Central Pay Commission:

AIFRUCTO welcomes the announcement of the **8th Central Pay Commission (CPC)**. It has been met with a mix of anticipation and optimism among central government

employees. The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the constitution of the 8th Pay Commission on January 16, 2025. This decision is expected to benefit over **1 crore central government employees and pensioners**.

Central government employees have expressed **hope and relief** at the prospect of a significant salary hike. The 8th Pay Commission is anticipated to follow the Aykroyd formula, which takes into account the cost of living and nutritional requirements, similar to the 7th Pay Commission. Reports suggest that the fitment factor could range between **1.92 to 2.86**, potentially increasing the minimum basic salary from **₹18,000 to ₹51,480**.

The employees' unions and associations have welcomed the move, highlighting that it will **improve the quality of life** and boost consumption. The timely constitution of the 8th Pay Commission ensures that the recommendations will be ready for implementation from January 1, 2026.

Our Condolences:

I would like to pay tribute to Prof Shailendra Kumar Kulshreshth who left for heavenly abode recently. He was a veteran teachers' leader, erudite scholar and academician of Uttarakhand. He served as a Patron and President of Visvavidyalaya-Mahavidyalay Pensioners Parisangh. He had been a great asset in the teachers' movement of undivided Uttar Pradesh and participated in various AIFUCTO movements at all India levels. His demise is a great loss to the retired teachers' movement. In the year 2020, he decided to organise the AIFRUCTO Conference in Haridwar but the conference could not be held due to Covid menace.

I would like to pay homage to our departed leader Dr G Sridhar Reddy for his distinguished role in strengthening the teachers' movement in the country. He passed away on the night of July 14, 2024, in Hyderabad. His demise is a great loss to us and the entire teachers' fraternity of the country. Prof Reddy worked as a general secretary of the Affiliated College Teachers Association of undivided Andhra Pradesh for 18 years and served at the national level as National secretary of AIFUCTO. Prof Reddy along with Prof A Pullaiah was given full credit for obtaining various benefits to the aided college teachers in Andhra Pradesh. He worked day and night along with Prof Pullaiah for the implementation of UGC pay scales in 1976, 1986 and 2006. He also played an important role in the leadership of legendary teachers' leader Prof Manik Rao for direct payment of salaries to the staff of aided colleges, pension, gratuity and security of employment to the aided college staff. We feel proud that he joined the AIFRUCTO movement in 2014 as a founder National Secretary and later as Vice President.

We also express our grief and condole the death of all those who left us during this period.

About our Demands:

The following representation along with the Charter of Demands was sent to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and the Hon'ble Education Minister for necessary action. Unfortunately, we failed to get any response from the Union Education Ministry. The teachers are the most intellectual persons in society and keystones of the educational arch. Therefore, the government should have faith in teachers and fulfil the long pending demands.

1. Fixation of pension of retired Associate Professors of colleges in the Professor scale. Since the UGC gave the post of professor in its 7th Pay Revision to Colleges and promoted Associate Professors as Professors, the pension of retired Associate Professors should also be fixed in the Professor scale.
2. The 6th CPC has recommended payment of 20% additional quantum for pensioners above 80 years of age w.e.f. Jan 2006. Some states have awarded an additional quantum of pension to pensioners aged 75 years 15%, 10% at 70 years and 5% to pensioners aged 65 years. We demand that this scheme should be implemented uniformly across the country.
3. One notional increment should be given to those who retire from the service on June 30, since the date of increment falls on the next day of retirement i.e. 1st July. The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has already established law in the case Union of India vs. P. Ayyamperumal R. P. (c) No. 1731/2019 in SLP (C) No. 22008/2018.
4. The commutation period of pension should be reduced from the current 15 years to 10 years throughout the country due to a drastic decrease in the interest rates.
5. Senior pensioners of Universities and Colleges should also be given the benefit of a 20% additional quantum of pension from the first day of the calendar month in which it falls due and not from the date of completion of 80 years of age.
6. We request the Govt. of India to formulate a 'Medical Scheme' for University and College retired teachers that will help them to get lifesaving treatment.
7. Our organisation requests the Govt. of India to implement the 7th UGC Pay Scale and pension based on the concordance table without any modification to all retired University and College teachers in all states and union territories.
8. We request the Govt. of India to give some sort of relief to all pensioners in the payment of income tax. Either the slabs of income tax should be modified or the ceiling amount should be increased.
9. We demand a uniform pension scheme for all university and college teachers in all states and union territories. There are still some states where pensions are not being paid to university and college retired teachers. For instance, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and some Northeastern states like Manipur and Meghalaya don't pay any pension to the retired aided-college teachers.

We tried to press our demands in the Ministry of Education Govt. of India by sending representations directly and through Members of Parliament and approached the PMO for our demands. We also discussed our demands at the official level in the Union Education Ministry several times. We tried to seek the help of Sri Rajnath Singh, the Hon'ble Defence Minister of India. Our delegation met the Defence Minister at his Lucknow residence on September 04, 2024, and gave him a copy of the representation. The Hon'ble Defence Minister forwarded the representation with his recommendation to the Union Education Minister Sri Dharmendra Pradhan. The Hon'ble Defence Minister assured us of full

cooperation and promised to arrange a meeting with the Union Education Minister after the J&K and Haryana assembly election. Delegation included Dr J N Shukla General Secretary, Dr S S Chauhan, National Secretary and two veteran teacher leaders of Uttar Pradesh Dr A P Singh and Dr U K Shukla. Again, we met Sri Rajnath Singhji, Hon'ble Defence Minister of India at his official residence in New Delhi along with Dr S S Chauhan National Secretary to seek his help to fix an appointment with the union Education Minister for the AIFRUCTO delegation regarding the demands. The appointment could not be fixed due to the foreign visit of the Hon'ble Education Minister.

Some of our retired teachers are going to the courts and getting favourable orders. Our demand of reducing the commutation period from the present 15 years to 10 years is getting full support from various High Courts. Retirees from Punjab, Haryana, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh successfully received favourable orders from the courts. Retirees from other states are also trying to seek relief from their respective High Courts.

Our demand regarding grant of notional increment on 1st July to the teachers retiring on 30th June for the purpose of calculating pension getting support through several decision from Hon'ble Supreme Court and Hon'ble High courts. Some states have already issued G.O.s for granting one notional increment. Govt. of India also issued an Office Memorandum on October 14, 2024, No.19/116/2024-Pers.Pol.(Pay)(Pt), Government of India, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Department of Personnel & Training.

Pensioners Who have completed 70 years of age can very well avail of free treatment up to Rs 5 lakhs by registering them in Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)

Organizational Activities:

The National Secretariat meeting of AIFRUCTO was held on June 09, 2024.

AIFRUCTO supported and participated in the action program of JFME by wearing black badges on September 5th while participating in the functions of Teachers' Day and action programmes in protest against NEP and other retrograde govt. policies on education in response to the call given by AIFUCTO.

We expressed our solidarity and participated in the AIFUCTO demonstration on November 19, 2024, at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi

Zonal Meetings:

A zonal meeting of Zone III was organized by the All Odisha Retired University and College Teachers' Association in Bhubaneswar on September 18, 2024, and office bearers of Jharkhand and Odisha Participated in the deliberations.

The zonal meeting of Zone II was organised by Prof. Chandana Jha, Zonal Secretary and General Secretary of The Federation of Retired University and College Teachers Association of Bihar (FRUCTAB) in Teachers Training College, Katihar on November 28, 2024. Office bearers of Bihar and West Bengal participated in the deliberations. Prof Pawan Kumar Jha, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of Purnea University inaugurated the meeting. Prof Asok Barman, Patron of AIFRUCTO was the Chief Guest and Prof S Bhattacharjeya, Treasurer of AIFRUCTO was the guest of honour. Prof. Barman emphasized the necessity of

creating a strong network at all levels of the state units. Retired teachers facing problems due to age should be provided with all assistance by the relatively younger retired teachers. Dr J N Shukla General Secretary Presided over the meeting. Prof Tarun Kumar Patra General Secretary WBUCRTWA and Patron of AIFRUCTO addressed the meeting. In addition to this Prof Santosh Chaudhary Vice President of WBUCRTWA, Prof Rakesh Chaubey from Patilputra University, Prof Prakash Kumar of Munger University, Prof Piyush of B N Mandal University, Prof C K Yadav from Purnea University, Prof Sikander Prasad Yadav, Treasurer, FRUCTAB and other office bearers participated on the deliberations. Prof Gauri Kant Jha conducted the meeting.

Sub-committee Meeting to Create Medical Fund:

A virtual meeting of a committee to create a Medical Fund was held on December 15, 2024. It was the second meeting of the committee. The following members participated in the deliberations:

- Prof Sudhakar S Mankar- President
- Prof J N Shukla – General Secretary
- Prof S Bhattacharjeya – Treasurer (Convener)
- Prof V Swaminathan – National Secretary

After a long discussion, it was finalised that a document regarding the creation of a Medical Fund was presented by Professor S Bhattacharjeya at the NEC in Hyderabad.

The National Executive Committee meeting was held on December 22, 2024, in the auditorium of the Indian Institute of Management & Commerce, Hyderabad. The NEC meeting was organized by TRCTA and hosted by Prof. A Pullaiah, National Secretary and Prof. S Rajeshwar Rao, Zonal Secretary. NEC members from 12 states participated in the meeting. A large number of senior retired teachers of Telangana Retired College Teachers were felicitated for their valuable services.

A document to create a medical fund was approved by the NEC. The final document will be presented before the conference. The NEC also approved the proposal of the National Secretariat that all executive committee members should donate a minimum of Rs. 5000/ to the Fund. Prof. Mankar, the President promised to donate Rs.100,000/ to the fund on behalf of his association. Prof. R Halesh, the Editor of News Magazine already promised to pay Rs. 100,000/ to the fund. In addition to this Prof. S K Mathpati, our Zonal Secretary promised to pay Rs. 25000/, some other secretariat members also promised to pay Rs 10,000/ to the fund. It was also decided that rupees of five lakhs from the AIFRUCTO account would be transferred to the medical fund. Donations are invited from all members of the Federation throughout the country to make this program a success

A draft document regarding the Medical Care Fund is being presented for final approval. Suggestions are invited from the delegates in order to make a foolproof document. Members are requested to donate to the Medical Care Fund.

Provisional Document:

Name of the fund: Medical Care Fund.

Management: AIFRUCTO

Eligibility: Life Members of the Association and spouses who have completed two years of membership.

Effective date: One year after the day when the NEC or the corpus accepts the proposal reaches 10 lakh minimum

Application Process: Every application should be made through the affiliated association. The association will primarily judge the necessity and forward the application to the convener of the committee with their observations.

Governance of the Fund: The President, General Secretary, Treasurer (all ex officio) of AIFRUCTO, National Secretary and Vice President of the zone for which the application is under consideration will form the committee for assessment and disbursement of the aid to the applicant. Any other invitee whom the committee may require may be included.

Corpus: An appeal will be made to all members to donate generously to the fund quoting bank account details and all affiliates will be asked to donate a sum. The executive members are requested to donate a minimum of Rs.5000/-.

If the primary target is 1cr then in the first year the budget could be 10 lakh.

The AIFRUCTO will give 5 lakhs to start with.

Limit: Generally it would be up to 1 lakh per application but it may change depending upon the severity of the case or the number of applications.

Diseases: Cancer, Kidney, Liver etc failure, Critical Heart Disease (except Bipass), when the cost of treatment is over 10 lakh in all cases. For life members of the state where pension is not being given the limit will be 5 lakh only.

Audit: Each financial year this account will come under a separate ledger entry depicting all transactions. The treasurer will be responsible for this account so the cheque paid as medical aid will be signed jointly by the secretary and the treasurer.

If necessary secretary and treasurer will meet the member with the assistance of the forwarding association and do the needful.

If required the committee can send any other responsible member nearby to assess the situation.

Fund management: It would be a separate bank account. Except for donations meant for medical aid funds, no other regular transaction of AIFRUCTO will be reflected in this account after the fund is operative.

Final Note: This is to provide financial relief to the ailing members or spouse. We have to act fast and thus too many rules should not be there.

Bank Account:

All India Federation of Retired University and College Teachers Organisation

Canara Bank

Dunlop Bridge Branch

168, B.T.Road, Kolkata 700108

IFSC Code: CNRB0004988

A/C no: 110139882979

The NEC also endorsed the decision of the Secretariat to honour the Life Time Achievement Award to Prof. B. Vijay Kumar and Prof. Asok Barman, the Patrons and two other veteran

leaders, Prof. S S Chauhan and Prof. A Pullaiah, National Secretaries in Haridwar Conference for lifetime contribution.

Tasks Ahead:

AIFRUCTO, at the central and state levels, has been trying to take care of the problems faced by retired teachers through various initiatives at the state & national levels. However, in spite of our best efforts, we have some unresolved issues.

The most perturbing issue is the non-realisation of the demand for pensions for teachers in Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Manipur. In spite of sustained efforts, the issue is still unresolved. We need to further strengthen the movement at the state and the central levels. The /conference should take up a program of action in this regard.

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We have noted above the evils of the New Education policy, new UGC regulations & many other measures at the central level to deprive the states of autonomy & unwanted moves to centralise higher education. In a large & diversified country like India, such moves are extremely detrimental and divisionary. We must try our level best to ensure justice for the deprived teachers & maintain autonomy at the state level.

There are some senior teachers who have not been participating in our activities for various reasons. Efforts should be made to establish contact with them. Over the years our organisation has made considerable progress. But we need to involve all those who are yet to join the AIFRUCTO movement. In this regard, we must take care of very senior teachers who may need help and support. For this local level initiative is required. Our members should try to contribute generously to our Medical fund and a campaign should be launched. We have resolved to participate in the movement for protecting our natural environment. These activities should be further strengthened.

AIFRUCTO News Magazine

We acknowledge the valuable services being provided by Prof. R Halesh Editor of AIFRUCTO News Magazine in bringing out quarterly issues regularly. The next issue will be published after the Conference.

I submit this report for discussion before this august house.

Long Live AIFRUCTO!

Long Live Teachers' Unity!

Fraternally Yours,



Dr J N Shukla
General Secretary

