विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी उच्च अध्ययन संस्थान
(भारत सरकार के विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग के अधीन एक स्वशासी संस्थान)
विज्ञान पथ, पश्चिम बड़ागाँव, गड़चुक, गुवाहाटी -781035, असम : भारत
INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
AN AUTONOMOUS R & D INSTITUTE OF DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, GOVT. OF INDIA
VIGYAN PATH, PASCHIM BORAGAON, GARCHUK, GUWAHATI-781035, ASSAM, INDIA.

Minutes of 17th Finance Committee Meeting of IASST, Guwahati

Date:12.07.2024 **Time: 10.00 Hours**

Venue: IASST,
Guwahati, Assam-781035

Members present:

1.	Prof. A.K. Mukherjee Director, IASST, Guwahati	Chairman
2.	Prof. N.Sen Sarma Head PSD, IASST, Guwahati	Member
3.	Shri. Rohit Kumar, Director (IFD) (Representative of AS&FA of MoST, GOI attended through online mode) Department of Science & Technology, MoST, Government of India, New Delhi.	Member
4.	Dr. Ashit Biswas, FAO NIPER, Guwahati	Member
5.	Dr. Dhrubajyoti Mandal, Scientist C, (Representative of Head, AI Division) Department of Science & Technology MoST, Government of India, New Delhi.	Member
6.	Dr. D. Goswami, Registrar, IASST, Guwahati	Special Invitee
7.	Mr.P. Borkataki, F.A.O., IASST, Guwahati.	Member-Secretary

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Agenda Item No. 1: Welcome Address

Prof. A.K. Mukherjee, Director, IASST and Chairman of the Finance Committee, welcomed all to the Seventeenth Meeting of Finance Committee members of IASST. He expressed his special gratitude to the representatives of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India. He also appreciated Dr. Dhrubajyoti Mandal, Scientist C (representing Head, AI Division of DST), for their physical presence and Shri Rohit Kumar, Director (Finance) IFD, (representing AS&FA, MoST) for sparing his valuable time through online mode and to make it convenient to take part in the discussion and helpful contribution. After his brief welcome address, the Chairman requested the Member Secretary to start the meeting proceedings.

Agenda Item No. 2: Confirmation of the Minutes of the Sixteenth Finance Committee Meeting of IASST held on 26th June 2023.

Member-Secretary apprised the house that the approved minutes of the 16th Finance Committee meeting were placed in the 17th Governing Council Meeting for recommendation, and the salient points were noted in the minutes of the GC meeting. As no adverse comment was received on the minutes, the Committee confirmed the same.

Agenda Item No. 3: Action Taken Report on the decisions/deliberations of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Finance Committee.

Member-Secretary appraised the actions taken to implement recommendations of the 16th Finance Committee Meeting. The Finance Committee noted the action taken report and approved it.

Regarding the proposal for procurement of Major Scientific Equipment during the Financial year 2023-24, the member secretary informed the house that out of the 4nos of approved equipment, Institute could purchase only 2nos. of equipment, namely (i) High-Performance Computational Facility, and (ii) Field-Emission Scanning Electron Microscope (FE-SEM). The Institute opened In-Land LC for Rs.3.33 Crores against a High-Performance Computational Facility, which costs Rs.3.45 Crores. Based on the submission, the Committee suggested to approach DST for an additional sanction under Capital Head of Rs.3.19 Crores (Rs.1.17 Crores for Inductively Coupled Plasma - Optical Emission Spectroscopy (ICP- OES) + Rs.1.62 Crores for Cryo-Microtome + and balance amount of High-Performance Computational Facility of Rs.0.12 Crores with 10% enhancement of previous years L1 price). ICP-OES and Cryo-Microtome will be procured during the current FY.

The Member-Secretary also informed the house that the 2 nos of major equipment were purchased through the GeM Portal following the government guidelines. The committee member

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appreciated that and suggested maintaining the percentage of local components in the instrument, i.e. not less than 20% in case of procurement of Major Equipment, and IASST is following the same.

Regarding the non-approval of additional capital cost budget, the Member-Secretary informed that as per the recommendation of the 16th FC meeting, the Institute submitted the vetted proposal by IIT Guwahati to the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India from time to time. The representative of IFD suggested sending another reminder to the DST for immediate action.

Institute contribution/share towards the extramural project, the Chair informed the house that under a prestigious Scheme of the "Phyto-pharmaceutical Mission phase-II", which is in principle granted to IASST after a thorough review process, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is ready to sanction an Extramural Project subject to 25% own contribution of the Institute. He also explained the significance of this type of facility in developing herbal drugs and achieving the objectives of self-reliance in India. The Member-Secretary and Chairman said that IASST, located in NE India, has been contributing significantly to the basic and applied research; therefore, they requested DST to sanction additional grants of 25% of the cost of the major equipment proposed in this project (which was also approved in the previous FC meeting).

It was suggested to first approach DBT for waiver of 25% contribution by institute. Possibility to fund the same from own resources was also explored but it was deliberated that institute does not have sufficient internal resources. The Committee suggested discussing this matter with Additional Secretary (AS) & Financial Adviser (FA) of DST as he is in-charge of both DST & DBT.

Agenda Item No.4: Submission of Audited Accounts for the Financial Year 2023-24 for approval.

The audited accounts and auditor's report of IASST, including corpus fund, other current liabilities, and advance against grant and fixed assets expenditure for FY 2023-24, were presented in the meeting. The Committee did not find any adverse representation in the books of accounts of IASST drawn in Financial Year 2023-24 and hence recommended the same.

Item No.5: Submission of Budget Estimate for the Financial Year 2024-25 and present financial status of the Institute.

The Committee recommended a Budget Estimate of Rs.57.24 Cr. (Rupees Fifty-Seven Crores Twenty-Four lakhs only) for the Financial Year 2024-25, subject to fund availability.

Member Secretary appraised the members about the present financial status of the Institute and requested that the 2nd Instalment of GIA be released as soon as possible as the Institute has less balance under GIA- Salary and GIA-General.

The Committee also recommended items such as "Raising of Existing Boundary Wall and providing Concertina Coil Fencing around IASST" and some other construction proposals.

Item No.6: Proposal for procurement of Major Scientific Equipment during the financial year 2024-2025.

The member secretary briefed the proposal to procure the Atomic Force Microscope (AFM), which cost Rs.1.65 crores. The Committee recommended that the procurement process to be followed in compliance with the prevailing Govt. rules, subject to budget approval. Also, institute may seek buy back provision for the existing AFM, if possible.

Item No.7: Discussion regarding Draft Rule for creation/ Operation of Corpus Fund of the Institute.

Member Secretary appraised the members of the modified draft rules prepared by IASST based on the DST draft guidelines for the creation/operation of the Corpus Fund of the Institute. As per the recommendation of the Committee Section VI, IASST's Submission Sl. No. B "Interest/penalty earned on loans and Advances may be treated as source of Corpus Fund" should be excluded from the sources of generation of Corpus Fund.

The Committee also suggested keeping a provision to empower the Governing Council to recommend using the corpus fund for the purpose of Institute's benefit, as per the utilization guidelines of the corpus fund, as applicable.

Item No. 8: Proposal for formulating a rule for disposal of surplus, obsolete, unserviceable, and scrap items and submission of draft manual for approval.

The Committee recommended the IIT Guwahati manual on principle and suggested to prepare a draft rule on aligning GFR provisions regarding the disposal of surplus, obsolete, unserviceable, and scrap items, and submitted the same to the Governing Council for approval.

Item No.9: Current construction status of a Women's Hostel at IASST.

Member of the Committee showed their satisfaction with the construction progress and requested to keep monitoring the work progress to accomplish the Construction within the tender period.

Item No.10: Discussion regarding outstanding Audit Paras.

Outstanding audit paras were discussed and it was suggested to take necessary actions for expedite settlement of the same. If needed, a team from internal audit wing of DST may visit for necessary guidance and settlement.

Item No.11: Any other Item(s) with the permission of the Chair

(a) Discussion on increase in various allowances (HRA, CEA, etc.) consequent upon an increase in DA to 50%

The Member-Secretary informed the member that the Institute communicated with the AI Division, DST, seeking approval on implementing an enhanced allowance rate at IASST for an increase of DA to 50%. The Committee suggested waiting for a separate order issued from Ministry for Autonomous Bodies or obtaining approval from DST.

As there was no other matter to discuss, the Committee ended with a vote of thanks by the Member Secretary. Prof. A.K. Mukherjee, Director of IASST, also extended his special thanks and gratitude to the representatives from AI, Division, Department of Science and Technology and IFD of the Ministry for their continuous support for the smooth functioning and overall development of the Institute and also the other Committee members for their presence in the meeting.

(A.K. Mukherjee)

Chairman

(P. Borkataki)

Member Secretary