

MINUTES OF THE 26TH MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF NIFT HELD ON 18TH NOVEMBER, 2014 (TUESDAY) AT 10:30 A.M. AT NIFT CAMPUS, HEAD OFFICE, NEW DELHI

Present:

1. The following members were present.
 - a. Smt. Kiran Dhingra, IAS (Retd.), Chairperson, BOG NIFT
 - b. Shri Naresh Gujral, Hon'ble M.P Rajya Sabha
 - c. Shri S. Selvakumara Chinnayan, Hon'ble M.P Lok Sabha
 - d. Shri Sunil Sethi, President, Fashion Design Council of India
 - e. Dr. A Sakthivel, Chairman, M/s Poppys Knitwear Pvt. Ltd
 - f. Smt. Kavita Bhartia, M/s Ogaan
 - g. Ms. Namita R.L Chowdhary
 - h. Shri William Bissell, Managing Director, Fabindia Overseas Pvt. Ltd.
 - i. Shri Pradyumna Vyas, Director, National Institute of Design
 - j. Shri Prem Kumar Gera, Director General, NIFT

2. Shri R.V.S Mani, Deputy Secretary, MoT was nominated by AS&FA, Ministry of Textiles and Board allowed Mr. Mani to attend in place of Sh B.P Pandey AS & FA the meeting.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3. The following members were granted leave of absence:
 - a) Smt. Poonam Mahajan, Hon'ble M.P Lok Sabha
 - b) Smt. Sunaina Tomar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Textiles
 - c) Shri Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, IAS, Joint Secretary Ministry of HRD
 - d) Shri Sabyasachi Mukherjee, Fashion Designer, Sabyasachi Couture

4. On behalf of the Board, the Chairperson welcomed Shri S. Selvakumara Chinnayan, Hon'ble M.P Lok Sabha, a newly nominated member to the Board and confirmed the quorum. She also informed that this meeting was in continuation of the meeting held on 30th September, 2014 wherein all the agenda could not been completed. While taking up the agenda, the Chairperson briefed the new Board member about the functioning of Board and its sub-committees. She suggested taking up items as per sequence.

Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting held on 30-09-2014:

5. The Board Secretary informed the Board that Minutes of the meeting held on 30-09-2014 were circulated to all members inviting their comments/suggestions. Since no comments were received, the Board confirmed the Minutes.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2503

DELEGATION OF FINANCIAL POWERS

6. The Director (F&A) apprised the Board that for smooth functioning of NIFT, the Board in its meeting held in February, 2013 had delegated the financial powers to DG, the Directors and Officers at Head Office and Campuses. While making the said delegation, the power to pay Statutory/Periodical Payments like Taxes, Dues, Electricity/Water charges & Telephone Charges were left out inadvertently. The proposal was to include the same in delegation of powers. The matter was placed before the F&A Committee, which had recommended inclusion of the same. The Board while approving the recommendation of the Finance & Audit Committee suggested that delegation be given with an appropriate ceiling in order to curb profligate use, and require the approval of the next higher authority in case the ceiling was crossed.

7- On the subject of controlling growing expenditures, the Board endorsed the decision that yearly budgetary grants should be subject to more stringency, and the revised budget for the year, which showed a low pace of utilization, should be subject to a cut wherever possible, say an overall 10% cut on Revenue expenditure, in order to ensure that funds were not expended at the end of the year only because there was budget availability.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2504

DELEGATION OF FINANCIAL POWERS (DOP) TO THE CAMPUS DIRECTOR ON SANCTION OF INTEREST BEARING ADVANCES

8- The Director (F&A) apprised the Board that in the existing DOP, full power to sanction interest-bearing advances for purchasing motor car or house etc. had been delegated to the Director (F & A) if the advance is made to employees of HO, However in case of campuses the power is with DG only, it has not been delegated to the campus Directors. However, a need has been felt to give more autonomy to the Campuses hence, a proposal to delegate powers to grant interest bearing advances to Campus Director as per laid down guidelines. This was placed before the F&A Committee, which considered the proposal and recommended the same in its 24th meeting to the Board for approval. The F & AC also directed that the power to relax the eligibility condition in pay band would be vested with DG only.

9- After discussing the issue, the Board took the view that although interest bearing advances were now anachronistic, NIFT may follow the corporate practice where its employees seeking loans may be encouraged to approach NIFT's official Bank (currently UBI) to provide advances with EMIs being deducted from the salary of the employees and credited to the Banks advancing loans. Subject to above the recommendation of F&AC was approved.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2505

SUB- DELEGATION OF POWERS TO DY. DIRECTOR (F&A)

10. The Director (F&A) informed the Board that in most of the Government Organizations, the financial powers had been delegated to the Gazetted Officers of the rank of Under Secretary. He also informed that the Deputy Directors in NIFT were senior officers of similar rank. However, no powers had been delegated to the Deputy Director (F&A). It was therefore suggested that sub-delegation of power to sanction the routine expenditure up to maximum limit of Rs. 10,000/- may be provided to the Deputy Director (F&A). The F&AC had recommended the same to the Board

11. While approving the sub-delegation of powers to Deputy Director (F&A) as recommended by F&A Committee, the Board directed to delete the clauses 27 & 28 of DOP and in column 9, replace the term 'periodical' with 'academic journals'. The Board also directed that a monitoring mechanism may be provided whereby the Campus Director / Director in Head Office can ensure that delegation did not lead to splitting of bills and must periodically review the Dy Director's exercise of these delegated powers .

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2506

STATUS OF C&AG PENDING AUDIT PARAS

12. The Board took note of C&AG audit paras. The Chairperson expressed her concern over the undue time and cost overruns in execution of construction projects in NIFT. She drew attention to the audit comments on the projects in Delhi and the problem confronting the Mumbai project, which suggested inexperience, lack of application of mind, and lack of competence, at best. After discussion, the Board advised that a competent agency like CPWD, EIL or NBCC should be engaged by NIFT to study the tender documents, contracts, safeguards and procedures followed for construction of its campuses and other civil projects in last five years in order to suggest remedial measures and improvements to be adopted by the Institution to eliminate cost and time overruns and legal battles in regard to its construction works.

13. The Board also came to the conclusion that the present Project Engineer was not experienced or senior enough to handle the on going construction projects of NIFT. DG NIFT informed that the post of Project Engineer is of rank of senior Executive Engineer of CPWD which could be filled up by a person holding analogous post or junior post. The contract with the present incumbent had expired but he had been given extension as the advertisement of the post had not met with satisfactory response. The DG had met DG CPWD who had informed him that CPWD was itself short of Executive Engineers and had suggested that taking into account the scope of construction work at NIFT, the DG should ask for a Superintending, if not Chief Engineer, who, moreover, were available for deputation. DG submitted that if the level of post was increased to the level of Superintendent Engineer in the grade pay of Rs. 8700/-, NIFT may perhaps get few suitable candidates. The Board agreed for up-gradation of the post and it was decided that the revision of the Recruitment Rules should be put before the Establishment Committee immediately.

14. While discussing the CAG's observations on Delhi Campus Project, the Board also advised that if the MoU with DSIIDC provided for an Arbitration Clause, it may be invoked for recovering interest amount for which C&AG had made adverse observations.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2507

MODIFICATION IN THE EXISTING PROVISIONS WITH REGARD TO REIMBURSEMENT OF COST OF PURCHASE OF BOOKS/JOURNALS/PERIODICALS BY FACULTY FROM DDF

15. The Board approved the proposal of modification in the existing provisions with regard to reimbursement of cost of purchase of Books/Journals/Periodicals by faculty from DDF with a caveat that all faculty members, subject to production of original bills, may be reimbursed Rs. 5000 on purchase of Books/Journals/ Periodicals of academic relevance. These Books/Journals/Periodicals need not be deposited with Resource Centre.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2508

ESTIMATE TOWARDS INTERIORS, FURNISHINGS, AIR-CONDITIONING, NETWORKING AND WI FI WORKS IN THE GANDHINAGAR CAMPUS

16. The Board noted that the proposal would lead to expenditure beyond the approved amount by the Union Cabinet . For funding the proposed infrastructure from OBC plan funds, the Board asked to be given an overall picture from where funds for this purpose would be made available as there was no surety that Government would agree to an increase in the allocation for the purpose.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2509

COMPLIANCE OF FINAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2012-13

17. The Director (F&A) informed the Board that one important point in Internal Audit Report was old outstanding advances, which was explained in previous agenda item. He further informed that some of these advances pertained to the period 1995 to 2005, and to employees who had resigned and were no longer traceable. He informed that in the last 12 months, efforts had been made to settle these advances. Out of 69 cases of these advances, 19 cases had been settled and 50 cases were still pending. In the past a practice was prevalent where advances were not settled in time even after officials or service provides had submitted their vouchers. It appeared that many officials, who left NIFT were relieved by giving NOC, even though the Finance had not settled their bills. The details of these bills were not traceable in their records. The size of most of the advances was not very huge, but due to large numbers of cases, the total figure looked big. He explained that the procedures had since been improved and no advance was allowed to remain outstanding for a period exceeding two months.

18. The Board advised greater effort to trace the old records and reconcile them, and to trace the employees who owed money. If after all serious efforts made, these advances could not be settled for want of contact details or other reasons, a specific proposal giving complete justification for writing off the outstanding advances could be placed before the competent authority as per delegation of powers.

19. The Board also directed that the Campus Directors must submit compliance report on the observations of the report of Internal Audit with a prescribed time.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2510

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE PURCHASE POLICY FOR NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE/ RESOURCE CENTRE MATERIALS

20. The DG apprised the Board that through this agenda amendments to the Purchase Policy for National Resource Centre/Resource Centre materials had been proposed to facilitate online purchases of specialized print and non-print material, which was often not available in stores. The Board was also assured that online purchases would be made in case of non-availability of the books/ material off-line. The Board noted that the F&AC had recommended the same for approval. The Board considered and approved the proposal with an amendment that in case of availability of the option of "Cash on Delivery", the same would be exercised instead of making payment through Debit Card/Credit Card issued for official purpose.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2514

ENGAGEMENT OF AN ARCHITECT AND PMC FOR CONSTRUCTION OF PANCHKULA CAMPUS

21. The DG-NIFT briefed the Board on the proposal. Government of Haryana had allotted 10 acres of land and agreed to provide a financial grant for construction of Panchkhula campus. The DPR for Panchkula had been revised to match the funds that Govt of Haryana had agreed to provide for the Campus. The Government of Haryana that wanted NIFT to execute the project, but the Finance and Audit Committee had felt that NIFT did not possess the competency to select an Architect and PMC and otherwise to handle such projects. Accordingly Principal Secretary Technical Education Deptt of Government of Haryana had been requested to construct this campus. The present proposal was to inform the Board that in accordance of the decision of F&AC, Government of Haryana had nominated Haryana Policy Housing Corporation (HPHC) for initiating the process of selection of an architect, which could not be completed due to general elections to the Legislative Assembly of the State.

22. The Board noted that the aesthetics and architectural quality of the new NIFT campuses did not reflect innovation or creativity to inspire the students and the faculty who would be the users of the campus. The Board felt that a less bureaucratic procedure needed to be followed, by inviting a competition for the design and ensuring that it received good response, in which the final choice of the design was that of the Board. The Board suggested that Government of Haryana be requested to redo the exercise and call for designs from renowned architects for selection, with fees to be paid for this purpose as per the Rules of the Council of Architects. The Board would join the Government of Haryana in the selection of the Architect based upon the most appropriate design submitted.

23. The Board was also not in favour of seeking financial bids from architects or of fixing their fees in percentage terms of the estimate. The first led to a decision that did not depend on the quality of the design, and the second to the temptation to add to the costs of construction. Instead, the percentage being generally charged by Architects as advised by the CPWD or the

Council of Architects could be converted into an absolute figure based on the allocation with NIFT for the construction, and fixed at that figure. The DG was requested to follow up accordingly with Govt. of Haryana.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2515

C&AG COMMENTS ON THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 2013

24. The Director (F&A) informed the Board that recently the Ministry had informed that when the Cabinet had approved the Block Grant in 2007, along with additional liability towards pay and allowances due to implementation of 6th Central Pay Commission Report, NIFT have only 7 Campuses. Therefore the Pay Commission arrears would only be given for the 7 old Campuses and not for all 15 Campuses. Accordingly, the calculation for arrears was revised and sent to Ministry and there response was awaited. The Board directed that this should be pursued with the Ministry vigorously to get funds due and admissible as per the decision of the Cabinet.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2517

SPECIAL REPAIR WORKS IN THE NIFT DELHI CAMPUS

25. Discussion took place on the proposal for special repair works in the NIFT Delhi Campus. Taking note of large number of items pertaining to the construction of infrastructure, and the reports being received of inappropriate changes, an empowered Building Committee consisting of following members was constituted by the Board:-

- i) Sh. Sunil Sethi
- ii) Ms. Kavita Bharti
- iii) Sh. William Bissel
- iv) Sh. Naresh Gujral
- v) The Director General

The Project Engineer would be Secretary of the Empowered sub-Committee.

26. The Committee would guide, supervise and review the progress of the repairs to the Delhi NIFT.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2518

STATUS OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31st, 2013

27. Director (F & A) stated that since the annual accounts for the year 2013-14 has already been approved by Board therefore this agenda item becomes infructuous and may be withdrawn. The Chairperson BOG drew the attention of the Board to poor progress in capital expenditure during nine month ended December 2013 and emphasized that NIFT needs to speed up its construction projects.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2521

INCREASE IN LIMIT OF CONVEYANCE HIRE

28. The Board considered and approved the increase in limit of Conveyance hire as brought out in the agenda notes.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2527

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS ON THE PROPOSALS RECOMMENDED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF BOARD ON ESTABLISHMENT MATTERS

29. The Board considered and approved the recommendations of the 12th Meeting of Standing Committee of Board on Establishment matters on the following Agenda items :

- I. Amendment of authority to review of the APAR of Chief Vigilance Officer.
- II. Proposal for engaging retired officers as OSD against the sanctioned teaching/Administrative posts
- III. Proposal for grant of lumpsum incentive for acquiring higher qualification as per Central Government norms issued by Ministry of Personnel, Pension and Public Grievances.
- IV. The Chairperson of the Board recalled that the DG had taken up a proposal with the former Textiles Secretary to confirm if the Board of Governors NIFT was to record the APAR of the DG after NIFT had been set up under an Act of Parliament. The Board felt that since it was accountable under the Act, the Ministry should allow the Board to hold the DG, as its chief executive, accountable for which it must have power to appraise the work of the DG. The former Secretary Textiles did not agree with the DG's proposal. Since Dr. SK Panda had recently taken over as the Secretary Textiles, his views could be different from his predecessor. The Board agreed, and authorized the Chairperson to take up the matter with the Ministry that the Board of Governors should write the Annual Performance Appraisal Report (APAR) of the DG and review those APARs recorded by the DG.

30. The Board considered and approved the recommendations of the 14th Meeting of Standing Committee of Board on Establishment matters on the following Agenda items :

- I. The Board noted that Establishment Committee had taken note of the violation of RRs in all those cases where faculty was given conditional promotion to acquire the PhD within 5 years from date of promotion and they have not possessed the same within the stipulated time. The provision of RR that "exceptional published/professional work can be treated equivalent to PhD" was also noted. It noted that the Senate with the help of Expert Committee had been asked to frame the guidelines of the no. of paper, kind of journals etc. which would be considered equivalent to PhD., an essential qualification required for promotion to the post of Associate Professor and Professor as per existing RRs.

- II. The Board approved the Establishment Committee's decision on the Appeal of Prof. Kavita Saluja, Prof, NIFT Bengaluru against Adverse remarks in APAR 2010. The Establishment Committee had considered the report of the peer Review Committee for upgrading the "Poor" grading recorded in the APAR of Ms. Kavita Saluja Professor, NIFT Bengaluru. Taking into account the recommendation of peer review committee, the Establishment Committee had decided to make the APAR for the year 2010 as Non-est. The review carried out by the then DG would be pasted with white sheets to mask the adverse entries.
- III. The Board took note that the Establishment Committee had asked the DG to submit a comprehensive proposal for re-structuring, which included not only the instant proposal concerning RAs, but also took into account the need of the Accounts Section and the Teaching side.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2534 and 2546

TAKING NOTE OF THE MINUTES OF THE 20TH and 21st MEETING OF SENATE OF NIFT

31. While taking note of the minutes, Sh. Sunil Sethi pointed out to the Board that the last meeting of the Senate was proposed to be held in the Hyderabad. He further pointed out that convenience of the Senate members was not sought before organizing a Senate meeting out of Delhi, which discouraged members like him to attend the Senate meeting. He said that most of the Senate members were Campus Directors and other NIFT ex-officio members therefore the Senate meetings should have been organized in Delhi to cut down the administrative expenses on travel and stay. He further pointed out that there were only 4 outside members. Out of which Ms. Aneeth Arora, Designer attended only one Senate meeting. It was therefore suggested that details of those members of the Sub Committee who were not regularly attending the meetings may be brought to the notice of the Board so that new members may be appointed on the sub-committees which should be re-constituted. The DG noted this concern of Sh Sethi and agreed that all future meetings of the Senate would, as far as possible, be held in the Head Office. The Dean would be requested to issue the agenda well in advance, so that members get sufficient notice. Mr. Sethi informed that he needed more time to study the minutes of the Senate in detail and proposed that the agenda items no. 2534 and 2546 may be deferred. The Board approved his proposal.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2541

REPORT ON CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES (CEP) FROM ALL CAMPUSES

32. The Board took note of the progress report on Continuing Education Programmes (CEP) from all Campuses. It appreciated the efforts made to provide opportunities to industry professionals to upgrade their knowledge and skills at NIFT campuses.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2545

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON PROJECTS THAT NIFT HAD UNDERTAKEN DURING FINANCIAL YEAR 2013-14

32. The Board took note of the Annual Progress Report on Projects that NIFT has undertaken during the Financial Year 2013-14. It appreciated the amount of revenue generated and efforts made by NIFT in getting the Projects.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2601

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF 25th BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING OF NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY HELD ON 26TH JUNE, 2014 (THURSDAY) AT 10:30 A.M. IN THE INDIA HABITAT CENTRE, LODI ROAD, NEW DELHI

33. The Board was informed that the members of the Board that the minutes of the 25th meeting of the BOG held on 26th June, 2014 were circulated to all members for their comments. After noting that no comments have been received, the Board approved the Minutes of the 25th Meeting of the Board.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2602

ACTION TAKEN REPORT ON 25th MEETING OF THE BOG HELD ON 26TH JUNE, 2014

34. The Action Taken Report on 25th Meeting of the BoG held on 26th June, 2014.

35. Paucity of time prevented the members from taking up any other agenda items in serial order. However, it agreed to take up the following agenda items 2609 and 2610 that had approval of the Establishment Committee as it needed its urgent attention.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2609

REGULARIZATION OF MS. NAINA KAMAL, JUNIOR ASSISTANT OF SC CATEGORY AGAINST THE REGULAR VACANT POSTS

36. The Board considered and approved the proposal of regularization of Ms. Naina Kamal, Junior Assistant of SC Category against the regular vacant posts.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2610

RECRUITMENT POLICY

37. The Chairperson of the Board explained the Agenda note on the subject to the members. On her presentation, the Board approved the following:

- i) 50% of all posts in NIFT, as per their recruitment rules framed, would be filled on contract. The ratio of 1:1 for regular and contract employees was also approved, with the proviso that it could be further examined, if it posed a significant challenge.
- ii) Even though NIFT may have to bear a higher burden, for making service conditions equitable at NIFT, all NIFT employees whether on contract or regular would be given same benefits for services rendered. This would include not only pay and allowances but all perks including leave and medical facility etc.
- iii) There would be no upper age limit for making appointments on contract. However, the maximum age would be at par with retirement age of regular employees.
- iv) Regular and contract posts would be treated as separate cadres. Separate rosters for contract and regular employees would be started and maintained, and would also be drawn up so as to implement Central Government policy on reservations of post for SC/ST/OBC and for differently abled persons. Unfilled reserved vacancies for SC/ST/OBC and for differently abled persons may be filled by taking up a recruitment drive.
- v) Separate advertisements may be issued for filling up contract and regular posts, so as to obviate any confusion in the mind of candidates. Those appointed on contract would have no claim to be regularised, and would be governed by their contractual terms.
- vi) All contractual posts would be filled on direct recruitment by open selection. Regular posts except at the base level would be filled up by promotion on the basis of seniority cum fitness criteria. However if the number of posts available exceeded the number of eligible promotional candidates, they would not be kept vacant for regular candidates to become eligible, but be immediately filled as follows:

The first selection would be by selection on basis of performance from among where faculty/officials on contract and in the same grade. If no candidate from the same grade was found suitable for selection, they would be advertised and filled through open competition, in which internal candidates, contractual or regular, would be eligible to apply.

Amendments in Recruitment Rules may be made accordingly and the procedures and systems put in place.

- vii) The Board recommended that NIFT should endeavor to maintain campus-wise ratio of 1:2:4 for faculty positions viz. Professor: Associate Professor : Assistant Professor. For working number of posts at various levels in each campus, depending upon the number of students, number of faculty positions may be worked out. Having determined the number of faculty positions in the campus, they may be divided in ratio of 1:2:4. The Establishment Committee may work out the precise details of positions and norms at various levels in each campus.
- viii) The Chairperson of Board also recommended to make changes in the composition of the Selection Committee for Group 'A' posts. The existing Statutes provided that the Chairperson/ Director General NIFT chair the selection Committee. The DG was thus deciding the selection panel, making the selection, and then accepting the recommendation of the selection committee, all on his own. The Board concurred with her that this procedure was fraught with the possibility of abuse, and needed to

be changed. It was decided that a Board Member other than ex-officio members of the Board or an Industry outside expert should chair the Selection Committee. DG-NIFT should be a member of the Selection Committee. The Board should decide the names of the Board members who would be available as members on the Selection Committee. The experts called to assist the Selection Committee should be from a panel approved by the Board. The presence of the Board member as a non-official member should be mandatory in the Selection Committee meetings. The letter of appointment of the selected candidates should be issued only after the Board approved the recommendations of Selection Committee.

- ix) The Board authorized the Empowered sub-Committee of the Board to incorporate these changes in the draft Statutes at the earliest. The statutes so prepared may be sent to the Ministry for getting it laid in both the houses of Parliament as per the suggestions received from the Sub Committee of Rajya Sabha on Subordinate legislation. Meantime, the DG should initiate action to give effect to this decision.

Other issues :

38. Due to paucity of time no other agenda items could be discussed. However, the following issues of urgent importance were raised by members and decisions taken:

39. Ms. Namita Chowdhary pointed out that in the juries, often the faculty of the other departments was invited instead of the relevant department. Sh. Sunil Sethi pointed out that sufficient time was not given to the students to present their work. Accordingly, the Board suggested that adequate time should be given to the students to present their work before the Jury members who should be nominated/ invited from the relevant area.

40. Sh. Sunil Sethi expressed his concern that the Board members were not being kept informed of NIFT's participation in events of national importance. He referred to one such event, viz the Varanasi visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister where NIFT had also participated in an exhibition that Ministry of Textiles had put up on the occasion of laying down foundation stone of Trade Facilitation Canter at Varanasi. While he received an invitation from HHEC where he is a member of the Board, but he did not get an invitation from NIFT. The DG acknowledged an oversight and said it would not happen again.

41. Sh. Sunil Sethi informed the Board that in the Academic Curriculum Review Committee, he had strongly objected to the proposal to change the nomenclature of the degree offered at NIFT from Bachelor of Design in Fashion Design to Bachelor of Fashion Technology (B.F.Tech.) in Design. This was the most popular course in the Institution, and the most preferred; a change in nomenclature would unnecessarily confuse the students, without serving any useful purpose. In fact, it was his argument that the intake should be increased in popular courses like Fashion Design, Fashion Communication by running two batches in some centres and phasing out courses less in demand. Suggesting instead a change in nomenclature as a solution was unacceptable. The meeting had ended with no decision on the proposal, and he was therefore unhappy to see the changed nomenclature in the Annexure of the agenda item no. 2534 The Board advised that CP(FD), a senior faculty from FD and Dean may examine the above matter and make a presentation before a sub-Committee of the Board comprising of Mr. Sunil Sethi, Mr. Pradhymna Vyas, Ms. Kavita Bhartia, Mr. Sabyasachi Mukherjee and the DG-NIFT.

42. The Chairperson said that there was unhappiness amongst the faculty that they were being asked to come to campus and attend to work while on Child Care Leave. The Chairperson said that leave was not an entitlement, and sanctions were subject to the exigencies of work. If the DG found he could not make do with the staff shortages created by sanctioning CCL under the present guidelines, he should consider approaching the BOG for a revision. Or he could resort to adhoc or short-term engagement of staff. But compelling faculty to work while being on CCL was coercive, and he should desist.

43. Ms Namita Chowdhary drew attention to the incident of ragging that happened in NIFT Chennai, and expressed her unhappiness that the offending students, who had been expelled by the LASC, had been given readmission by the DG to the same college and without regard to the fact that two of them were repeat offenders and one of these two had sexually assaulted a fresher. The Chairperson said that she had heard of this incident and asked the DG for clarification. The DG had sent her the concerned file, from which she observed that no new grounds had been made out in the appeal which could have given the DG a cause to take such decision.

44. The DG explained that in his view the appeal for clemency in the representation received from parents and the students constituted new grounds for appeal. After hearing the accused students, he noted that they were not informed about the precise complaints received and therefore did not get a reasonable opportunity to state their case. However they admitted, as they did not want to go against the authorities. They regretted their acts and expressed remorse. They were under suspension for forty days, during which they had realized their folly and promised never ever to repeat the alleged acts. The DG said that he had spoken on phone to the Campus Director and some of the victims, who felt they needed an assurance that they would not be harassed by the accused students. The Campus Director had mentioned that the identity of complainants had not been revealed, but the accused had indeed been informed about the allegations. The LASC had recommended expulsion as its members had felt that this was the most appropriate action that would meet the ends of justice. DG said that he had discussed a possibility of change of their campus with the Director, who had said that if the DG allowed their appeal, she could handle them if they were allowed to join Chennai. Taking into account the pleas of parents, written undertaking of the accused students and the fact that they had reflected upon their deeds during the period when they were under suspension, the DG had decided that they could be given a chance to return to their campuses.

45. The Board felt that the LASC decision should have been allowed to stand. Discipline in the Campuses was an important matter, and had never been taken lightly in NIFT. Every student signed an anti-ragging undertaking which made the consequences of a breach clear to him. The Supreme Court's guidelines also enjoined determined action to curb the tendency to bully juniors. By letting the students come back, on the grounds of their future, the issue of the vulnerability of the junior students and the discipline of the centre had been overlooked. That the juniors had not objected to the raggers being readmitted could not be taken at face value – it pointed as much to their vulnerability before the hostility that it would generate if word went around that they had been consulted and they had put their foot down. In fact, it was wrong to have exposed the complainants to this sort of pressure. It was also felt that no store could be set

by the assurance of good behavior of the offenders, when at least two of the students expelled were repeat delinquents, and the offense had included a sexual assault. The Board therefore took the decision to review the DG's order. Since the students had rejoined, it would now be harsh to re-expel them. Past precedent had established change of centre as a via media. The Board directed the DG to allow the students to continue their studies, but to change their Centres and move them out of Chennai. The DG suggested that Board was competent to take such a decision, but he would advise that the Board or its empowered Committee hear the affected students before taking such a decision. Possibilities could not be ruled out that the affected students may seek a judicial review. The Chairperson said that in what constituted a review of the DG's order, the DG had been heard, and hearing the students again was not necessary.

46. While appreciating the in-house efforts to develop a computer software for managing affairs of NIFT, Ms Chowdhary drew attention of the concern of the faculty regarding safety of their data being maintained on the Campus Management Software (CMS), and the tight time limits prescribed. Internet connectivity seemed to be a challenge that made it difficult for the faculty to enter the considerable information regarding students' attendance, assignments on time. The DG said that the CMS had been adopted after Government had under Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act 2013 made it mandatory for all government servants to provide the details of their assets and liabilities. The Board said that since NIFT faculty was not handling any sensitive matter, DG should check with UGC, IIT and NID etc its applicability to the academic institutes.

47. The issue of students' feedback being made mandatory on pain of denial of Admit Card for their final exam was raised. DG assured the Board that it remained anonymous and from this semester, the students had been given an option not to give feedback, if they so desired. The Board requested the DG to re examine the issue with an open mind, and also asked that that Prof Gandhi make a presentation to it of the CMS and explain its safeguards and features.

48. Sh. Sunil Sethi raised the issue of giving permission to the NIFT faculty to be on the Board of Private Organization. He felt that this compromised the Institution and lowered its reputation. The DG explained that the Dean was given such permission as it increased opportunities for NIFT to establish industry linkages that was necessary to improve the recruitment of NIFT students. Board felt that a conscious decision needed to be taken on the matter, and asked DG to put up an agenda item for a policy decision.

49. Since, the agenda was voluminous, the same could not be completed. It was therefore decided that the remaining agenda listed in the Annexure may be taken up in the next meeting of the Board which could be held in Bangalore.

A List of remaining agenda items that would be taken in next meeting of Board of Governors of NIFT:-

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2603

Fee Revision for the year 2015-16

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2604

Proposal for approval of revised estimated cost of buildings works under MoT's OBC plan funds

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2605

Proposal for post facto approval for re 2013-14 and be 2014-15 in case of Srinagar, Chennai and head office

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2606

Allowing NIFT follow GFR Rule 145 and GFR 146 for works

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2607

Consolidated Internal Audit Report of NIFT for the Fourth Quarter ending 31st March, 2014 and Action Taken Report on the points raised therein

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2608

Status of Capital Expenditure and Revenue Income & Expenditure for three months ending June 30, 2014

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2612

Status of Recruitment of Group a Officers

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2613

Status Report on Admission 2014

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2614

Progress Report of the construction projects of NIFT

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2615

Taking note of the minutes of the 22nd meeting of Senate of NIFT

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2616

Status of Pending Disciplinary Proceeding cases of Head Office

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM NO. A

Nomination to the sub-committees of the Board

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM NO. B

Status of Pending Court Cases of all NIFT Campuses & Head Office

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM NO. C

Submission of Annual Report and Audited Accounts of NIFT for the year 2013-14