

# Depoliticizing academic atmosphere

*Education*

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THE existing senate with three hundred members elected and nominated is too large, and cumbersome, and it is to be replaced by the board of governors consisting of 15 to 20 members nominated from among the panels recommended by nominating committees. It further provides a new office of the deputy chairman to be appointed by the chancellor.

All other members of the senate shall be nominated by the chancellor on the recommendation of the "nominating committee" set up for the purpose or "the Search Committee" on an honorary basis. He shall be an ex-officio member of the senate. He will be a person of eminence possessing experience of administration at a senior level. Thus, the vice-chancellor will be relieved of his excessive burden of routine administration. The deputy chair of the senate may be removed from the office at any time by the chancellor.

Article 20(1) provides for a syndicate of the university consisting of the V-C, the deans of the faculties, three professors who are not members of the senate, principals of the constituent colleges, the registrar, the treasurer, and the controller of examination. All members except ex-officio members shall hold office for three years. The syndicate shall be the executive body of the university, and shall exercise general supervision over the affairs and all matters of management.

The main feature of the syndicate is that it does not provide for elected members from amongst the university teachers. Therefore, the Federation of the Academic Staff Association of the public universities have raised serious objections, and have mounted a nation-wide anti-MUA movement. Perhaps, it may be advisable to call a meeting of the representatives of the university teachers by the chairman of the HEC to discuss with them and ascertain their point of view and try to accommodate their demands as much as possible and desirable.

gushed administrator" shall be appointed by the chancellor from amongst the persons recommended by the nominating committee or the search committee to be constituted by the senate as prescribed under section 12(2) and (3) of the MUA. According to clause (4), the V-C shall be appointed for a renewable tenure of five years on terms and conditions prescribed by the senate. A more rational provision has been prescribed for the removal of the V-C. For this purpose the senate shall adopt a resolution by three-fourths majority of the total membership recommending to the chancellor the removal of the V-C on the ground of inefficiency, moral turpitude or physical or mental incapacity or gross misconduct involving misuse of position for personal advantage.

It may be noted that according

is concerned, a separate structure different from the one prescribed by the government may be designed, ensuring grade-wise, time-scale remuneration, and other lucrative perks may be provided for full professors, associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers, and research officers, and assistant research officers. Special allowances may be provided for research guidance to M.Phil, Ph.D. candidates. The qualification allowance for teachers holding Ph.D. degrees may be continued, and allowance may be enhanced depending on the number of the candidates attached with the Professors. For promotion to the next higher grade, merit determined by the criteria of research output, and course evaluation by the students, must be adhered to strictly.

The selection committees are to be constituted for each discipline consisting of foreign experts, professors of recognized excellence from the panels suggested by the nominating/search committees on the recommendation of the V-C.

The departmental councils should also be constituted for the administrative and academic management of the affairs of the department. These councils may operate as consultative bodies apart from the board of studies, a statutory body for designing syllabi, curricula, and research programmes.

However, the MUA does not suggest measures for ensuring depoliticization and deunionization of the university teachers, students and employees. All associations, societies, and unions of employees with political affiliations should cease to function. However, they may be allowed to operate strictly as merely consultative bodies to assist the admin-

istration.

The question of reviving student unions has not been dealt with by the authors of the MUA, and it deserves consideration. The departmental societies may be revived and indirectly elected central union may be reconstituted. For this purpose, proposals may be invited from students and teachers which may be considered at a national conference of all students advisers under the auspices of the Commission on Higher Education. The recommendations of the conference

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to the existing procedure, the V-C is appointed by the chancellor in his discretion and he "holds office during his pleasure" — a remnant of the British colonial era. However, now before adopting a resolution of removal the VC "shall be given an opportunity of being heard". In the present context, the proposed procedure is more rational and buttresses the authority and image of the vice-chancellor as the academic and administrative head of the institution.

The MUA further provides for