

QUIZ OF THE DAY

Refer to The Hindu News Analysis Video (YouTube)

Date: 03rd Dec 2022

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

1. The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system.
2. The Council is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN Security Council.
3. The Human Rights Council replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 2006.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Q2. Consider the following benefits given to the 'Institutes of Eminence' selected under the Institute of Eminence Scheme:

1. The Institutions will have complete Administrative and Academic Autonomy.
 2. They are provided with the freedom to recruit foreign faculty up to 50% of their total faculty.
 3. They can take admissions of foreign students up to 30% of the total admitted students.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2, and 3 only

Explanation and Solutions

Q1. Answer: B

Explanation:

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations on them. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. It meets at the UN Office at Geneva.

The Council is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly. The Human Rights Council replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

History

The Council was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 March 2006 by resolution 60/251. Its first session took place from 19 to 30 June 2006. One year later, the Council adopted its "Institution-building package" to guide its work and set up its procedures and mechanisms.

Among them were the Universal Periodic Review mechanism which serves to assess the human rights situations in all United Nations Member States, the Advisory Committee which serves as the Council's "think tank" providing it with expertise and advice on thematic human rights issues and the Complaint Procedure which allows individuals and organizations to bring human rights violations to the attention of the Council.

The Human Rights Council also works with the UN Special Procedures established by the former Commission on Human Rights and now assumed by the Council. These are made up of special rapporteurs, special representatives, independent experts and working groups that monitor, examine, advise and publicly report on thematic issues or human rights situations in specific countries.

Review of the Council

When creating the Human Rights Council in March 2006 the United Nations General Assembly decided that the Council's work and functioning should be reviewed five years after it had come into existence at the level of the General Assembly.

10th Anniversary of the Council

In June 2016, the Council marked its tenth anniversary through several events.

Efficiency measures of the Council

In an effort to uphold and increase the efficiency of the Council while addressing financial and time constraints, the Council adopted President's statements at its organizational sessions of 3 December 2018, 6 December 2019 and 7 December 2020, containing concrete measures.

The Human Rights Council in 2021

The Human Rights Council recorded one of its busiest years. Under the presidency of Ambassador Nazhat S. Khan of Fiji – the first held by a representative from a small island developing state in the Pacific – the Council continued to introduce innovations, break boundaries and set new human rights standards. It did this against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, which continued to disrupt countless lives and livelihoods around the world.

Innovations

In a landmark decision, the Council passed a resolution recognizing the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for the first time.

For the first time in its 15-year history, the Council:

- enabled delegates to vote remotely
- attracted the highest number of dignitaries ever to speak at its sessions
- supported the participation of 19 delegates from least developed countries and small island developing states through its SIDS/LDCs Trust Fund
- Also, for the first time, the Council held five special sessions in 2021 - again demonstrating its effectiveness in responding to urgent global crises. These concerned:
 - Myanmar
 - the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and Israel
 - Afghanistan
 - Sudan
 - Ethiopia

Activities

In 2021, the Council extended the mandates of 17 Special Procedures and investigative bodies - and created seven new mandates:

- an accountability project on Sri Lanka
- a monitoring mission in Belarus
- a Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and Israel
- a Special Rapporteur for Afghanistan
- a racial justice body addressing systemic racism in law enforcement around the globe
- a Special Rapporteur on climate change
- an investigative body for Ethiopia

Throughout the year, the Council enabled some 260 civil society organizations to deliver more than 900 statements.

The Council's Universal Periodic Review Working Group held three sessions resulting in reviewing human rights situations in 41 states. Also, it held several thematic forums, panels and seminars between regular and special sessions.

Q2. Answer: B

Explanation:

UGC notified 'UGC (Institutions of Eminence Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2017' for private institutions and guidelines 'UGC (Declaration of Government Educational Institutions as Institutions of Eminence) Guidelines, 2017' for public institutions on 07.09.2017 to provide regulatory structure for enabling Higher Educational Institutions to become world-class teaching and research institutions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME – INSTITUTIONS OF EMINENCE:

- to provide for higher education leading to excellence and innovations in such branches of knowledge as may be deemed fit at post-graduate, graduate and research degree levels and award degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions;
- to engage in areas of specialization to make distinctive contributions to the objectives of the university education system wherein the academic engagement is clearly distinguishable from programmes of an ordinary nature and is tuned to developing the capacity of the students and the researchers to compete in the global tertiary education marketplace through the acquisition and creation of advanced knowledge in those areas;
- to provide for high quality teaching and research and for the advancement of knowledge and its dissemination through various research programmes undertaken in-house by substantial number of full time faculty and research scholars in diverse disciplines;
- to pay special attention to teaching and research in unique and emerging areas of knowledge, including interdisciplinary areas, which are regarded as important for strategic needs of the country but are not being pursued by conventional or existing institutions so far, and award degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions.

- to aim to be rated internationally for its teaching and research as a top hundred Institution in the world over time.

EXPECTATIONS FROM THE INSTITUTIONS OF EMINENCE:

Notable features present in existing international institutions of global repute, which figure at the top in all reputed ranking frameworks, include the following:

- Highly qualified faculty, with freedom to hire from across the world;
- Existence of academic, administrative and financial autonomy;
- Excellence in research;
- High Quality of teaching;
- High levels of funding;
- Adequate financial assistance to meritorious students to support a need-blind admissions process;
- Selection of students through a transparent system so as to ensure intake of meritorious students;
- A significant proportion of international students;
- Autonomous governance structures;
- Well-equipped facilities for teaching, research, administration, and student life;
- Tangible and intangible contribution to the society; and
- Ability to leverage alumni and alternative funding sources, and the autonomy to utilize these resources
- It should preferably be multi-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary and have both teaching and research focus of an exceptionally high quality.
- It should offer inter-disciplinary courses, including in areas of emerging technology and interest as well as those of relevance to the development concerns of countries like India and also award degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions in such interdisciplinary areas.
- It should have a good proportion of foreign or foreign qualified faculty.
- There should be a reasonably good mix of Indian and foreign students.
- There should be a transparent merit based selection in admissions, so that the focus remains on getting meritorious students.
- The admission process should be need-blind – so that once a student gets admission purely on merit, such a meritorious student should not be turned away for lack of financial ability.
- The faculty student ratio should be not be less than 1:20 at the time of notification issued declaring an Institution as an Institution of Eminence and should increase over time so as not to be less than 1:10 after five years of this date. The faculty for this purpose includes the regular faculty, adjunct faculty, and long term faculty (for at least three years). Part time faculty shall not be counted for the purpose.
- There should be laboratory facilities to undertake cutting-edge scientific research for those Institutions of Eminence Deemed to be Universities doing scientific research. In case of humanities, social science and other interdisciplinary areas, the faculty should be engaged in research and field work in frontier areas using the latest methodologies.

- The Institution of Eminence should strive to achieve social impact by engaging in applied research and innovation in issues of concern to developing societies.
- The Institution of Eminence should develop teaching and research collaborations with a reasonable number of global universities figuring in the most reputed global rankings.
- The Institution of Eminence should be known for promoting a culture where faculty are encouraged to publish regularly in peer-reviewed journals and engage academically with the issues of concern to the society. It should have a record of research publications at the mean rate of at least one per faculty member each year in reputed peer-reviewed international journals based on publication made by top 100 global Universities in these journals. For this purpose:
- The Institution of Eminence should have a world-class library with subscriptions to reputed journals in the areas of courses it is offering.
- The Institution of Eminence should have student amenities comparable with that of globally reputed institutions.