

Status of Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management (EILM) (Private University), Jorethang, District Namchi, Sikkim

Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management University (EILM), 8th Mile, Malbasey, Budang, West Sikkim-737121 was established by an Act of State Legislature of Sikkim as a Private University and was empowered to award degrees as specified under Section 22 of the UGC Act through its main campus in regular mode with the approval of Statutory Bodies/Councils, wherever its required.

Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management University (EILM), 8th Mile, Malbasey, Budang, West Sikkim-737121 was not authorized to open study centre/ off campus centre beyond the territorial jurisdiction of the state as per the judgment of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in case of Prof. Yashpal Vs. State of Chhattisgarh. The University was not permitted to open its centre(s) even within the state as per the provision of UGC (Establishment of and Maintenance of Standards in Private Universities) Regulations, 2003 without the approval of UGC. The UGC has not granted any approval to the University to open off campus/study centre.

Complaints were received by UGC from individuals across the country against Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management (EILM) University (Private University), Jorethang, District-Namchi, Sikkim about numerous programmes run through distance mode, opening of unauthorized study centre(s), franchising of higher education, issuing degrees to students without conducting any exams or practicals, misleading students by promoting wrong information on website, selling degrees by charging money instead of providing classes or conducting exams, selling degrees in India, conducting programmes through collaborative mode with Industries/firms/companies and abroad by conducting courses in one sitting and establishment of off-shore campus at Mauritius.

A Fact Finding Committee was constituted by the UGC to:

- (i) Look into the above complaints
- (ii) To examine whether Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management (EILM) University (Private University), Jorethang, District-Namchi, Sikkim is conducting programmes in accordance with UGC (Establishment of and Maintenance of Standards in Private Universities) Regulations, 2003 and fulfilling criteria in terms of programmes, faculty, infrastructural facilities, financial viability, etc. as laid down from time to time by the UGC and other concerned statutory bodies.
- (iii) To enquire into the adherence by the University to the guidelines of the erstwhile Distance Education Council (DEC), approvals/recognition given by DEC to the University, the policy of territorial jurisdiction laid down by UGC and DEC, and fulfilment of other quality standards for offering programmes in distance mode.
- (iv) To visit the University and its various offices/premises, inspect such documents as it may consider necessary, and take copies thereof, record statement and have discussion with such functionaries and other persons of the University as it may deem fit.

The Fact Finding Committee visited the University from 27-29th April, 2015. Since the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Controller of Examination and Director of Distance Education Programmes were absconding (as informed by the State Government officials), the Committee met Dean, one Administrative Staff and two Assistant Professors of Management.

The Fact Finding Committee recommended as under:-

- a. The Committee recommends dissolution of the EILM University in accordance with relevant section of EILM University Act. Director (Higher Education), Human Resource Development Department, Government of Sikkim (present during visit) was also taken on board on this. He intimated that state Government was progressing in this direction and this proposal shall be placed in the forthcoming cabinet meeting. Now, Human Resource Development Department, Government of Sikkim, vide their letter No. 84/DIR(HE)HRDD dated 15.05.2015 have intimated that:-

“The State Government of Sikkim has accorded approval for the dissolution of EILM University in its cabinet meeting held on 28th April, 2015. As per Section 48 of EILM University Act, 2006, the Government has appointed interim management to conduct the affairs of the University till the completion of the process of dissolution.”

- b. Being a unitary university, EILM did not have any mandate to affiliate any college/institute. UGC never granted any permission/approval to EILM University to establish any off-campus centre(s)/study centre(s)/off-shore centre(s).
- c. The State Government may be requested to take steps to protect the interest of unsuspecting students of EILM University residing in Sikkim who have taken admission on regular basis. On campus students may be accommodated by the State Government in different close by colleges and universities; till completion of their courses.
- d. Director (Higher Education), Human Resource Development Department, Government of Sikkim may validate the degrees of 2009-10 in three disciplines i.e. B.A. (Hospitality & Tourism), BCA and MBA for students admitted within the territorial jurisdiction of State of Sikkim based on the admission records available with the university's Sikkim campus/State Government. Degrees in other disciplines except in three as specified in preceding lines and beyond academic year 2009-10 shall not be valid.
- e. A public notice may be issued by UGC for public in general, students and parents in particular indicating dissolution of the EILM University and advising them not to take admission in EILM University or any of its off campus centres/study centres, etc.
- f. UGC may communicate with Ministry of Information and Technology for banning and blocking the site of EILM University which has been misleading students.

The report of the Fact Finding Committee was considered by the University Grants Commission in its 508th meeting (Item No. 5.01) held on 27.07.2015. The Commission resolved as under:-

“Noted and Approved. The Commission further resolved to issue a Public Notice in this regard and also approach the Ministry of DEITY for banning the website of EILM.”

Accordingly, a Public Notice was issued on 05.08.2015 (available on UGC website www.ugc.ac.in) cautioning the students not to take admission in EILM University and/or any of its centres/campuses/distance education programmes. The State Government of Sikkim has been requested to take necessary action on the recommendations of the UGC Fact Finding Committee vide letter dated 05.08.2015.

Students are suggested to approach Director (Higher Education), Human Resource Development Department, Government of Sikkim, Gangtok, Sikkim for any information related to EILM University, validity of its courses and verification of degrees.

The UGC received a letter dated 11.08.2015 from Shri R.P. Sharma, Acting VC of EILM University that the University has filed a Writ Petition before the Hon'ble High Court of Sikkim under Article 225 of the Constitution of India bearing No. W.P.(C) 33/2015 against the Human Resource Development Department, Government of Sikkim and the State of Sikkim challenging and setting aside of the notification dated 30.03.2015 (No. 55/DIR(HE)/HRDD) whereby the State Government had approved the dissolution of EILM University. Shri Sharma has also informed that the Writ Petition has been admitted by the Hon'ble High Court of Sikkim and the Court issued directions to the State of Sikkim not to take any further steps in pursuance of the notification dated 30.04.2015. He requested the UGC to withdraw the notice posted on the UGC website failing which appropriate legal proceedings would be initiated against UGC.

In view of the above letter, the UGC (i) sought legal advice in respect of blocking EILM website in view of the court orders and (ii) requested the Higher Education Department of Sikkim vide letter dated 04.09.2015, 30.10.2015 and 04.12.2015 to provide the following information:-

1. Whether EILM University has been dissolved?
2. Current status of EILM University.
3. Status of Writ Petition (civil) No. 33/2015 filed by EILM University before Hon'ble High Court of Sikkim.
4. Status of the students enrolled with EILM University.

In response to the UGC letters, the State Government of Sikkim vide letter No. 995/Dir. (HE)/HRDD dated 17.03.2016 informed as under:-

S.No.	Query by UGC	Response from State Government of Sikkim
1.	Whether EILM University has been dissolved?	The matter is sub-judice in the Hon'ble High Court of Sikkim.
2.	Current status of EILM University.	The University is not functioning since December, 2014
3.	Status of Writ Petition (civil) No. 33/2015 filed by EILM University before Hon'ble High Court of Sikkim.	Sub-judice
4.	Status of the students enrolled with EILM University.	All regular students have been relocated.