

**Summary Report of Discussions in the Union Territory of Chandigarh on 23rd
October, 2013 under the chairmanship of Mr. K.K. Sharma, Adviser to the
Administrator, UT of Chandigarh**

The UT of Chandigarh is yet to form the UT Innovation Council (UTInC). As a matter of fact, all the other six UTs have already formed the Innovation Councils (the recent entrants from among the UTs/NCT being the NCT of Delhi, and the UTs of Dadra Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu). Since the UT of Chandigarh is the face of modern and contemporary India, and has a globally celebrated network of educational institutions, its non-formation of the UTInC was indicative of a situation that called for immediate remedial action. Accordingly an interactive meeting was organized between Mr. K.K. Sharma, Adviser to the Administrator, UT of Chandigarh, his team of officers and other key persons, and Ms Veena Upadhyaya, former Secretary, GOI, and Expert, National Innovation Council (NInC), as a precursor to the formation of the UTInC, on 23rd October, 2013 under the chairmanship of the Adviser to the Administrator.

2. The UT being a relatively small administrative entity has only two Principal Secretaries/Secretaries, and the various Departments are divided between the two of them. The meeting was attended by both the Secretaries, i.e Mr. V.K. Singh, the Principal Secretary handling the Dept. of Finance and several other Depts, and Mr. Anil Kumar, Pr. Secretary handling the Dept. of Home and a number of other Departments. Among other officers who attended were Mr. Sandeep Hans, Director, Higher and Technical Education, Mr. Santosh Kumar, Conservator of Forests, Mr. Upkar Singh, Director, IT, Ms. Bhawana Garg, Special Secretary, Finance and Planning, Mr. Ajay Ram, Director, NIC in the UT, and Mr. M. Singh, Chairman, Chandigarh Chapter of CII. The undersigned and Mr. Deeptanshu, the Associate from NInC had participated.

3. **The Expert, NInC** said that there was no reason why the UT of Chandigarh be the only UT remaining to form the Innovation Council. The UT symbolizes excellence in town planning and architecture; is an education hub; and is the epitome of contemporaneity and sophistication. One knows about the various initiatives that the UT has taken already as evident in the setting up of the Jawahar Lal Nehru Chandigarh Education City; Entrepreneurship Development Center; and Modern Trade Market. Since the UT had not yet entered the fold of Innovation Councils, the undersigned provided the macro level background to the start of emphasis on innovation agenda, initiated by the recommendation of the National Knowledge Commission (NKC); declaration of the Innovation Decade by the President of India; establishment of the National Innovation Council; the then FM's Budget Speech announcement on setting up of the Sectoral innovation and State Innovation Councils; and the recommendation of the XIIIth Finance Commission; and the directions of the Planning Commission as enunciated in the XII Five Year Plan Document. The rationale for the establishment of the SInC even for a UT like Chandigarh, relatively small and quite innovation-oriented was stressed. It was pointed out that the forum will be a platform for convergence; concerted pursuit; creation of eco-system (its ingredients were dilated upon); hardwiring of the approach into the system, both in planning and budgetary terms; a confluence of cross-current

of ideas, being semi-governmental in complexion; revisitation of regulatory regime and promotional mechanisms; and developing a culture that is conducive to risk-friendliness. Besides the formation of UTInC will help develop cross-sectoral synergic links and collaborations for the promotion of entrepreneurship, and bridges between the academia and industry, and generate more employment, thereby boosting economy.

3.1 On the aspects of the composition and structure of SInC, it was suggested that the Dept. of Planning being the umbrella sort of Dept, encompassing all Depts, may be better suited to anchor the UTInC. The Depts of S&T and Education may be the nodal agencies, and the Dept. of IT could be the vehicle for the realization of the objectives.

3.2 The details of the national level initiatives were provided. The example of Karnataka where a multiple number of initiatives have been taken in the field of education by way of setting up of Innovation Clubs in the Colleges and Innovation Centers in the Universities was given. The call given by the president of India for according priority to the setting up of the Innovation Clubs/Centers in the Universities was also drawn attention to. The importance of setting up of the Technology Incubation Centers in the institutes of technology and engineering for support to the start-ups was flagged. Establishment of a University Innovation Center in the Punjab University for creation of an innovation eco-system was also stated. Request was also made for setting up of Tod-Fod-Jod Centers and starting of State Innovation Scholarship Scheme Considering the somewhat not so strong industrial base in the UT, a start could be made with formation of one industrial cluster to begin with.

3.3 Ms Veena Upadhyaya also said that blessed with the modern infrastructure, and having the advantage of being a small-sized UT, and consequently lesser problems of governance, they could set higher benchmarks for themselves, and seek to emerge as a role model for an innovative city.

4. **Mr. K.K. Sharma, the Adviser** said that they welcome the idea of forming the Innovation Council in the light of the rationale dilated upon by the Expert, NInC. He said that the UT ranks the problems of urban transport, solid waste management and the development of the UT in the light of the Master Plan for the city as high, and would welcome application of innovative approaches in these areas. He specifically requested for the mentoring by Mr. Arun Maira, Member, Planning Commission, and a Member of NInC since in his capacity as Member in-charge of the UT of Chandigarh in the Plg Commission, he is fully familiar with the issues and challenges the UT is confronted with. He also requested for NInC's help in suggesting a well-informed expert for the resolution of urban governance problems, especially those of urban road transport.

5. During the discussion that ensued, the following points emerged:

(i) It will be useful to set up the UTInC. It will create a pro-innovation climate on a macro basis. Innovations carry an element of risk. As such, the decision-makers, and bureaucracy in general are wary of innovations as the fear of failure is viewed as a daunting factor. The coming

into being of the UTInC will also help overcome the fear of risk by encouraging an atmosphere that supports risk-friendliness. He spoke about the innovative practice which has been taken up in Jails is by providing STD facility with biometric authentication of the prisoners. This has reduced costs, both economic and psychological, and improved security in terms of recording of conversations. The Administration is trying to be paperless as done by some Depts of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

(Mr. Anil Kumar, Pr. Secy, Home)

(ii) The formation of SInC will be a very welcome proposition as it will consolidate the focus on the agenda of innovation in an effective manner. A number of sectors will benefit from the innovation-driven approaches, especially urban management, environment and education.

(Mr. V.K. Singh, Pr. Secy, Finance)

(iii) The need for innovation in the Govt., Universities and Schools, and requirement of a forum to disseminate new practices and ideas make the setting up of the Innovation Council a desirable proposition. The State Innovation Council would be a good place to initiate such innovation practices, for Government process Re-engineering and for delivery of e-services. It is important that non-governmental persons also have access to the forum.

(Mr. M.S. Kohli, Chairman, Chandigarh Chapter of CII)

(iv) He informed that a sub-group can be formed at the S&T Department which can channelize innovation happening in technology area. It may be useful to have a small secretariat for the pursuit of the innovation agenda.

(Mr. Santosh Kumar, Conservator, Forests, and Director S&T)

(iii) Innovation needs to be fostered in the field of education. He supported the idea of starting Tod-Fod-Jod, and setting up of Innovation Clubs and Centers in the colleges and universities.

(Mr. Sandeep Hans, Director, Technical & Higher Education)

(iv) The Department has already taken certain innovative initiatives such as publishing of all the notifications after scanning on the websites. The UT has also been awarded as the 2nd best eGovernment state in the Country. Through use of NKN, 42 schools are being taught through a single teacher wherein the lectures are also recorded for later viewing.

(Director NIC)

(v) The Dept. of Planning does not have adequacy of human resource. As such the Innovation Council be anchored in the Dept. of IT. The Depts of S&T and Education may be the nodal agencies as suggested. The Dept. of Planning will be sensitive to the innovation-led fund requirements of the various sectors.

(Ms. Bhawana Garg, Spl. Secy. Finance and Planning)

5. The following **key decisions** were taken during the course of the meeting:(

(i) The Innovation Council will be set up within the next one month. It will be anchored in the IT Department under the chairmanship of the Adviser to the Administrator, UT Administration. Depts of S&T, and Education will be the nodal agencies. The Dept of Planning will act as the facilitating agency.

(ii) The Innovation Action Plan for the Twelfth Five year plan period will be formulated by January, 2014.

(ii) It will be a semi-governmental body and have academicians, and representatives of industry, CII, R&D organisations and medical and engineering professional as members. A member or nominee of the NInC will also be associated as a Member.

(iii) A separate Tab for 'Innovation' on each of the department's websites, which would contain information about innovations concluded or being undertaken by the Department, would be provided.. He also mentioned that a book can be published on innovation in the UT.

(iv) The NInC will consider the request made by the UT Administration for mentoring of the Council of the UT by Mr. A. Maira, member Planning Commission, and member, NInC.

(v) The NInC would also suggest an expert on urban management, especially urban transport.

6. The meeting ended with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

Veena Upadhyaya
Expert, NInC
07.11.2013