

# Sixty Years of International Statistical Education Centre, Kolkata

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## *Abstract*

Historically the International Statistical Education Centre, Kolkata, was founded in 1950 through the initiative of Professor P. C. Mahalanobis and is currently operated by the Indian Statistical Institute under the auspices of the Government of India. Actually, ISEC was opened in Kolkata by the agreement between the International Statistical Institute and the Indian Statistical Institute. The Centre was a co-operative enterprise of the International Statistical Institute and the Indian Statistical Institute and according to the agreement entered into between the two Institutes in this respect, the latter placed its existing facilities for teaching and training at the disposal of the Centre. The International Statistical Institute agreed to provide the services of teachers from outside to the maximum extent possible either by direct payment from the UNESCO grant or by arrangement with the various National or International Organizations.

Instruction at the Centre was initially shared between the staff of the Indian Statistical Institute, other statisticians from within India and visiting teachers from abroad who came under the sponsorship of the International Statistical Institute and the UN and its specialized agencies. Beginning with the third term, the Central Statistical Organization of the Government of India collaborated by organizing courses in Official Statistics and Statistical Organization.

The main purpose of the Centre is to provide courses in theoretical and applied statistics at various levels to selected participants from countries in the Middle-East, South and South-East Asia, the Far East and from the Commonwealth Countries in Africa. Most of the candidates are officials (from national statistical offices and other government departments or from financial and other business organizations) who have experience in statistical work.

The Centre offers a ten-month (June to March) Regular Course of training every year. Initially the terms were of six months duration, but some students of one term were given the choice of continuing in the next term on some specialized topics. From the eighth term (August 1954 -April 1955) onwards the terms were of nine months duration, but the choice of continuing in a subsequent term was no longer given to a participant. From the 20<sup>th</sup> term (1966 - 67) till to-date the terms are of ten months duration.

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## 1. Introduction

The experience of National Governments, Inter-Governmental Organizations and Non-Governmental Agencies during the late forties had indicated an increasing shortage of well-educated and well-trained statisticians, particularly in the economically less-developed areas of the world. This shortage was hampering the provision of statistics essential to the formation and control of national, economic and social policies, and was also impeding the reporting by national governments of information required by inter-governmental agencies. The Statistical Commission of the United Nations in 1949 summarized the need for more statisticians thus:-

"...the burden of statistical work in public and private institutions is large, will increase and will have to be met by the education and training of more and better statisticians"

To meet immediate needs, the United Nations initiated the Technical Assistance fellowship programmes and the opening of short term statistical training institutes in various parts of the world. To meet the long term need for increasing the general supply of highly qualified statisticians, the Statistical Commission and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations called upon UNESCO and the International Statistical Institute "to take appropriate steps to further the improvement on an international scale of education in statistics."

Under a contract entered into by UNESCO and the International Statistical Institute in January 1949, the Institute received a grant of \$5000 from UNESCO for the year 1949, with which to develop a programme of statistical education. The Statistical Education Committee of the International Statistical Institute, accordingly, prepared a full report on the proposed Statistical Education Programme for the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Institute in 1949. A shorter report containing specific proposals for an initial programme to be put into effect in 1950-51 was then submitted to the General Assembly of the Institute and approved. In accordance with this report, the development of the programme was to proceed along four lines, one of which was to start International Statistical Education Centres in the less developed areas of the world. UNESCO made action possible through the appropriation of \$10,000 for 1950 and \$15,000 for 1951 and 1952.

By agreement between the International Statistical Institute and the Indian Statistical Institute, the International Statistical Education Centre (ISEC) was accordingly opened in Kolkata in October 1950 with the purpose of providing courses in theoretical and applied statistics at various levels to participants from the countries of the Middle, South and Far East. The Centre was a co-operative enterprise of the International Statistical Institute and the Indian Statistical Institute and according to the agreement entered into between the two Institutes in this respect, the latter placed its existing facilities for teaching and training at the disposal of the Centre. The International Statistical Institute agreed to provide the services of teachers from outside to the maximum extent possible either by direct payment from the UNESCO grant or by arrangement with the various National or International Organizations.

In the beginning, the Centre used to be operated jointly by the International Statistical Institute and the Indian Statistical Institute, the general administration being vested in a Joint Board of Directors, consisting of Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis (Chairman), Dr. Stuart A. Rice (President, International Statistical Institute), Prof. R. G. D. Allen (Professor, London School of Economics), Prof. Goudswaard (Director of the Permanent Office, International Statistical Institute), Dr. S. K. Banerjee (retired Director General of Observatories), Mr. S. C. Sen (Joint Secretary of the Indian Statistical Institute as Administrative Officer) and Prof. K. N. Chakravarti (Registrar of the Indian Statistical Institute as Director of Studies and Secretary of the Board) and Dr. C. R. Rao of the Indian Statistical Institute as alternative member in the absence of any of the members from India.

The Board of Directors initially comprised representatives of the International Statistical Institute and the Indian Statistical Institute, but it was later expanded to include a representative of the Government of India.

Professor P. C. Mahalanobis was the Chairman since the inception of the Centre in 1950 until his death in 1972. Since then Professor C. R. Rao has been the Chairman of this Board. The joint Board of Directors now consists of Chairman: C. R. Rao, Members: Dr. T.C.A. Anant, Secretary and Chief Statistician of India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Dr. S.K. Das, DGCSO, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Govt. of India, B.K. Roy, Director, Indian Statistical Institute, Professor J.K. Ghosh, Professor Emeritus, Indian Statistical Institute and P. Pal Choudhury, Member-Secretary, ISEC. All members in the Board of Directors are Ex Officio members except Chairman, Member Secretary and Professor J.K. Ghosh. Member Secretary is appointed by the Director, Indian Statistical Institute.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the Member-Secretary shoulders the responsibilities of selecting the candidates for various courses, and of conducting the Regular and the Special Courses with the collaboration of different wings of the Indian Statistical Institute and of the Central Statistical Organization of the Government of India. Of course, he also participates in the teaching programme.

The Centre is an associated institution of the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata, and the administrative staffs of the Centre, including the Chairman and the Member-Secretary, Board of Directors, belong to the staff of the Institute. All the facilities of the Institute at Kolkata are made available to the Centre, including class-rooms, a data processing center equipped with electronic computers and a modern library with over 2,00,000 volumes.

## **2. Scope and Nature of Training**

From the beginning itself the Centre used to conduct Regular Course. The special courses were introduced three years later. Each term of the Regular Course training

initially was of six months duration. The Special Courses were designed to suit the need of the concerned trainees and were of varying durations. While the regular course of the Centre was essentially professional in character aiming at a balance between statistical theory and practice, supplemented as necessary with training at higher levels for the purpose of advanced students, the special courses, to suit group or individual requirements, were possible by making use of other teaching, research and applied work carried out at the Indian Statistical Institute. The regular course was kept amenable to revision or re-orientation to meet demands from time to time. But the general scheme was as follows. The training in the beginning consisted of:

- Refresher Courses in Mathematics and data processing.
- Lectures and Laboratory work on Elementary Statistical Theory and
- Lectures and Demonstration on the Different Stages of Work in Large Scale Statistical Projects, viz., Censuses and Sample Surveys.

This was followed by

- Visits to and in-service training at statistical offices of the Government of India and
- Visits to households, farms etc., for collection of actual data.

Towards the second half of the course, the trainees were given statistical theory at more advanced levels and allowed to specialize in applied fields such as

- Economic Statistics,
- Industrial Statistics & Statistical Quality Control,
- Agricultural Experiments,
- Population Studies,
- Education Statistics,
- Official Statistics, etc.

Courses on these topics consisted of lectures, laboratory work, demonstrations, assisted reading and seminar discussions. Concurrently trainees also used to carry out independently by themselves a sample survey or a similar statistical investigation, in order to acquire first-hand knowledge of applied work. There were provisions for trainees who completed one term to continue for another term for training at a more advanced level.

For participants who had already some previous background in statistics or were interested in special subjects, facilities existed for providing special courses of varying durations in several fields, either in conjunction with the other courses at the Indian Statistical Institute or separately, if necessary. Subjects in which such special courses were provided may be either of a mathematical type or of an applied type. Some such subjects were:-

- Sample Surveys
- Statistical Quality Control
- Economic Statistics
- Vital Statistics

- Design of Experiments
- Educational Statistics
- Biometric Methods
- Econometrics
- Probit Analysis
- Psychometric Methods
- Probability
- Theory of Design
- Statistical Inference, etc.

Special courses were also given through in-service training in any one or more departments of the Institute, on subjects such as:

- Field training as investigator
- Processing of data on punched card machines or hand and electrical desk calculators
- Presentation of material in tables and diagrams
- Planning and execution of sample surveys
- Detailed aspects of Indian National Sample Survey
- Crop cutting experiments
- Agricultural experimentation
- Statistical Quality Control
- Time study and cost accounting
- Writing, editing, publication etc., of statistical reports and
- Organization of Government Statistics

The main purpose of the Centre is to provide courses in theoretical and applied statistics at various levels to selected participants from countries in the Middle-East, South and South-East Asia, the Far East and from the Commonwealth countries in Africa. Most of the candidates are officials (from national statistical offices and other government departments or from financial and other business organizations) who have experience in statistical work; a few are teachers and research workers in statistics from universities and other institutions; and the remaining ones are officials in non-statistical fields, desiring to acquire knowledge in statistics.

The Centre used to provide a Regular Course of training in the beginning over a Term of 6 months duration. Seven such terms have been conducted in the past. From the 8<sup>th</sup> term duration has been extended to 9 months with a revised curriculum. The training programme has now an overall orientation towards planning and related subjects such as sampling which would be useful to the participating countries.

A symposium (with Professor A. Linder as Chairman) on the teaching programme of the ISEC was held in December 1956 during the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations of the Indian Statistical Institute at Kolkata where statisticians from various countries of the world were present. A six-member Expert Committee appointed from among the participants of the symposium made detailed recommendations on different types of

courses, system of evaluation etc., and some of these were given effect to from the 11<sup>th</sup> term. Later, in 1965, DR. P. J. Loftus, Director of the UN Statistical Office, suggested an expanded programme, and the Board of Directors revised the teaching programme in the light of these suggestions with effect from the 20<sup>th</sup> term (1966 – 67).

**Table 1: Duration of the Regular Course**

<b>Terms</b>	<b>1 – 7 (Oct. 1950 - July 1954)</b>	<b>8 – 19 (Aug. 1954 – Apr. 1966)</b>	<b>20 – 53 (June 1966 – Mar. 2000)</b>
<b>Duration</b>	6 months	9 months	10 months
<b>Comments</b>	Choice is given for continuing in the next term on some specialized topics.	No choice is given for continuing in the subsequent term.	No choice is given for continuing in the subsequent term.

At present, the Centre offers a ten-month (June to March) Regular Course of training every year. The Course is divided into two parts. The first eight months are devoted to training on general statistical methods including six-week training in Official Statistical Systems conducted by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Government of India, New Delhi. During the remaining two months, each trainee specializes in one selected branch of applied statistics, like Large Scale Sample Surveys, Data Processing, Statistical Quality Control and Operations Research, Vital Statistics and Demography. The course is offered through lectures, practical work and assignments, field visits and guided reading.

In addition to the Regular Course, a few persons are admitted from time to time, on an individual basis, for Special Courses of varying duration (usually 3 - 6 months) and in different fields.

Facilities are also available for research work and advanced study by senior visiting statisticians from abroad.

**Table 2A. The Courses and the Programme of Teaching  
(Regular Course)**

Duration	Place	Subjects	Comments
First four months	Kolkata	Mathematics, Data processing, Probability theory, Descriptive statistics, Sample survey techniques, Statistical methods, and Economic statistics	General statistical training. All are compulsory courses
Six weeks	Delhi <sup>1</sup>	Official Statistics	Conducted by the CSO, Govt. of India, New Delhi
Eight weeks	Kolkata	Mathematics, Data processing, Probability theory, Descriptive statistics, Sample survey techniques, Statistical methods, and Economic statistics	These are optional courses. <sup>2</sup> Some of the topics, studied by the trainees during the first four months, are taught more vigorously in this period.
Eight weeks	Kolkata	Statistical Quality Control and Operations Research, Large scale sample surveys, Vital Statistics and Demography, Data processing, and Economic Planning <sup>3</sup>	The trainees are specialized in a particular field of applied statistics (Each trainee can choose only one field)

1. The six-weeks training in Official Statistics which is part of the Regular Course is conducted by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Government of India, at Delhi, and partly, for some trainees, at other places like Bombay and Simla depending on their fields of interest.
2. A student can take as many optional courses as it is possible, but will be assessed on the basis of the best three of his/her performances. Data processing is treated as a compulsory course at this stage.
3. The specialization course on Economic Planning used to be conducted at Bangalore Centre of the Indian Statistical Institute. The course is now offered in Kolkata.

**Table 2B. Special Course**

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<b>Year when first Introduced:</b>	1954
<b>Level</b>	: Certificate
<b>Duration</b>	: 3-12 months <sup>1</sup>
<b>Location</b>	: At the Centre or at some suitable place in India, like the Central Statistical Organization, Government of India, New Delhi. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Language of Instruction</b>	: English
<b>Pre-requisites</b>	: The candidates should already have some background in statistics so that they need not attend the Regular Course – and should be interested in specializing in some branch(es) of statistics.

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1. Presently ISEC has started taking short courses of duration as less as two weeks.
2. Presently ISEC is planning to conduct special courses in other centres of ISI and also in other countries.

### **3. Sponsors, funding agencies and other sources of finance**

Majority of the candidates have been supported by Fellowships awarded by the Government of India, mainly under the Technical Co-operation Scheme (TCS) of the Colombo Plan, the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAAP), Indian Technical and Economic Co-operation (ITEC), Aid to Sri Lanka, Aid to Maldives etc. Some enjoy fellowships provided by the United Nations and other international organizations like Asian Development Bank (ADB). A number of trainees are supported by their respective national governments or employer organizations.

TCS of Colombo Plan was introduced from the beginning itself. From the 20<sup>th</sup> term (1966 – 67) onwards the Government of India awarded fellowships under the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAAP) to the trainees of the Centre in addition to the Colombo Plan fellowships. This meant that the Centre became open to the trainees from the Commonwealth countries of Africa.

Many of the fellowship programmes have been merged with the ITEC scheme. The most recent of these mergers is the TCS of the Colombo Plan, which has been merged with ITEC this year (2010).

### **4. Link with other organizations**

An integral part of the 10-month Regular Course is a six-week training module in official Statistics conducted by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Government of India, New Delhi. Senior officials of the CSO and of various Ministries of the Government of India participate in such teaching. Similar help is also obtained, where

necessary, in connection with the Special Courses. The trainees are sent to the CSO or other organizations for purpose of such training.

### 5. Languages of instruction

English is the medium of instruction. Course notes in English are sometimes prepared for distribution among students. No attempts have been made so far to translate standard text books in the languages into English. Special courses in English were arranged in some early years for those who needed to improve their proficiency in English. No such courses, officially, have been arranged in recent years. However, there has been attempt to provide volunteer teachers who teach English to the trainees in the hostel during first few months of the regular course.

### 6. Countries or regions served

Every year the International Statistical Institute invites the government of different countries to nominate candidates for the training courses offered by the Centre. The applications for admission are forwarded to the Centre through the respective Indian Missions and the final selection of the candidates is made by the Member Secretary on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Centre. Most of the trainees are deputed by the government departments, and some by organizations like banks, for the Regular and Special Courses.

The following shows the list of the countries served by ISEC during the last 60 years.

**Table 3. List of countries served by ISEC Since Inception**

Afghanistan	Israel	Somalia
Australia	Japan	Solomon Island
Bangladesh	Jordan	South Africa
Bhutan	Kazakhstan	Sri Lanka
Brunei	Kenya	St. Christopher
Burkina Faso	Republic of Korea	Nevis-Angolla
Cambodia	LAO PDR	Russia
Cuba	Malaysia	Sudan
Republic of China (Taiwan)	Malawi	St. Lucia
People's Republic of China	Mauritius	Swaziland
El Salvador	Maldives	Syria
Ethiopia	Mongolia	Seychelles
Fiji Islands	Myanmar	Tanzania
Gambia	NAMIBIA	Thailand
Georgia	Nepal	Tonga
Ghana	New Zealand	United Arab
Grenada	Nigeria	Republic of Uganda

Hong Kong	Oman	UAE (Abu Dhabi)
India	Pakistan	Uzbekistan
Indonesia	Philippines	Vietnam
Ivory Coast	Papua New Guinea	Western Samoa
Iran	Sarawak	Zambia
Iraq	Singapore	Zimbabwe
	Sierra Leone	

## 7. Examinations

For the Regular Course, examinations are held at the end of the four phases of the training programme. The examinations on the last phase devoted to specialization in particular fields are held towards the end of March 2000. While most of the examinations are written tests, the evaluation of the specialization training is partly carried out through project work and assignments. All successful trainees in the regular course get “Statistical Training Diploma”. Others get “Certificate of Attendance”.

## 8. Golden Jubilee Celebration of ISEC

The Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the International Statistical Education Centre (ISEC), Calcutta was successfully organized during 13 – 18 October, 2000 by the International Statistical Institute, the Indian Statistical Institute and the Government of India.

The Inauguration Ceremony was held at India International Centre in New Delhi on 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2000. Dr. Arun Shourie (Minister of State, Statistics and Programme Implementation) was the Chief Guest and delivered the Key Note address. Professor M. G. K. Menon (President, Indian Statistical Institute) presided over the meeting and delivered the welcome address. Professor J. L. Bodin (President, International Statistical Institute), Professor B. Phillips (President, International Association for Statistical Education), Professor I. Yoshimura (Former Visiting Professor from Japan) and Professor K. B. Sinha (Director, Indian Statistical Institute) addressed the gathering in the Inauguration Ceremony. Dr. M. Pal (Member Secretary, ISEC) offered the Vote of Thanks.

The Inauguration Ceremony was followed by a Conference on “Policy Issues in Demography, Health & Education, and Economics” during 13-14 October, 2000. There were three sessions: Policy Issues in Demography, Policy Issues in Health & Education and Policy Issues in Economics. A number of distinguished delegates – Professors A. Bose, K. Srinivasan, P. Visaria, P. Singh, B. Phillips, P. Holmes, K. S. Parikh, J. L. Bodin, D. Bond, L. Biggeri and D. Vere-Jones – presented papers of high standard. Professors J. L. Bodin, K. C. Seal and A. Sharma chaired the three sessions. Professors N. Bhattacharya, T. J. Rao and A. B. Raha acted as rapporteurs.

Another Conference was held in Calcutta on “Contemporary Issues in Statistical Education” during 17-18 October, 2000. Professor K. B. Sinha (Director, Indian Statistical Institute) inaugurated the Conference and delivered the Welcome Address. Professors J. L. Bodin (President, International Statistical Institute), R. Mukherjee (Chairman, Organizing Committee, Calcutta) and Dr. N. S. Sastry (D. G. & C. E. O., Ministry of Statistics & P. I., Government of India) addressed the gathering in the Inauguration Ceremony of this Conference. Dr. P. Bharati (Programme Coordinator, ISEC) offered the Vote of Thanks.

There were six sessions (including a concluding session) in the Conference. Professors D. Vere Jones, L. Biggeri, B. Phillips, M. P. R. Van den Broecke, R. Teekens and S. B. Rao chaired the sessions. All the invited participants, namely, Professors B. Phillips, J. Roy, S. K. Chatterjee, M. P. R. Van den Broecke, J. L. Bodin, N. S. Sastry, D. Vere-Jones, D. Bond, R. Teekens, P. Holmes, L. Biggeri, D. Berze, A. B. Raha, M. Pal, T. J. Rao, A. M. Goon and N. Bhattacharya presented papers in the different sessions. A concluding Session was organized to summarise the recommendation emerging from the different sessions.

The distinguished delegates from abroad, especially those associated with ISEC, noted the great contributions made by ISEC in the past fifty years to the spread of statistical education and capacity building in the countries served by ISEC and wished it success in the next fifty years.

## **9. Diamond Jubilee Celebration of ISEC**

Since ISEC has completed its 60 years, we are currently celebrating its Diamond Jubilee. For this purpose the Centre is organizing two conferences, one in Kolkata during 4-5 February, 2011, and one in New Delhi during 11-12 February 2011. These meetings will cover different areas of Official Statistics and other statistical topics of current interest. The theme for the Kolkata conference is "Statistics, Science and Human Development", while the theme for the New Delhi conference is "Statistics, Economic Development and Public Administration". Besides, ISEC is organizing a session in the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of Commonwealth Statisticians to be held between 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2011, at New Delhi, India. The topic of the session is “Building Sustainable Statistical Capacity: What has Worked, What has Not, and Why”.

## **10. The Changes Over the Last 10 Years**

At this point it is relevant to point out the changes which have occurred during the last ten years.

Due to operational difficulty in looking after the day to day activities of ISEC, **The International Statistical Institute** has disassociated itself from ISEC. ISEC, at present, is run by Indian Statistical Institute under the auspices of Government of India.

A new international building for ISEC is being constructed in the 202 campus of ISI in Kolkata. This building is expected to be complete by May 2011 and it has all the office, class room and hostel facilities at one place. It is hoped that the coming batch of ISEC Regular Course will be able to be put up here and utilize all its facilities.

**Visiting Teachers:** The list of visiting teachers in ISEC is very long. There were more than one visiting teachers, on the average, per year, during the sixty year span of ISEC. However the number of visiting teachers has come down drastically during the last 15 years. We have had only two visiting teachers during this period and both of them were from Bangladesh.

The list of visiting teachers include famous academicians like Professors K.S. Banerjee, J. Durbin, R. Goodman, P.M. Hauser, T. Kitagawa, H. Theil , Dr. Nathan Keyfitz, C.I. Bliss, S.H. Khamis, H. Morimoto, Isao Yoshimura, T.P. Speed, Haruo Yanai, Masaki Taguri, Sanpei Kageyama, W.S. Periman etc. It is to be noted here that one of the visiting teachers namely Professor Isao Yoshimura was present in the inaugural session of Golden Jubilee Celebration of ISEC in 2000. We can also boast of having two visiting teachers of ISEC to be with us in the Diamond Jubilee Celebration of ISEC. They are Haruo Yanai from Japan and T.P. Speed from Australia.

**Special Courses:** Fortunately, the numbers of special courses have increased a lot during the last ten years. The special courses were of duration 1 month to 8 months. The largest batch was from Maldives. The topic of the special course was “Basic Statistics” and the duration was 8 months.

**The Development and Syllabus Committees of ISEC:** During these ten years, three committees have been set up to look into the different administrative and academic aspects of ISEC in order to improve and expand the activities of ISEC. The first committee was set up in 2002 by the then Director of the Institute to examine the syllabi of the ISEC Courses and to make recommendations for suitable revisions if necessary. The committee was headed by Professor A. B. Raha. The other members were Professors T. J. Rao, S. Bandyopadhyay, N. Bhattacharya, R. Mukherjee and Dr. M. Pal and Dr. P. Bharati. Later Professor S. C. Kundu of CSSC was co-opted as one of the members.

The Committee met several times and reviewed the existing syllabi and the syllabi proposed by the different sub-committees formed in 1996 or before by the earlier syllabus review committee. After careful scrutiny of the contents of the various syllabi and substantial deliberation the Committee has finalized the syllabi of those proposed by the sub-committees. Data Processing I was suggested to be taught in the first four months and Data Processing II (DP-II) in the two months after the trainees return from Delhi. In view of the rising demand of the computer aided data processing, DP-II was recommended to be made a Compulsory Course. Mathematics II and Probability II, though optional, were suggested to be offered at the phase 2 of the Regular Course, i.e., during the third and fourth months of the course (August and September).

The second committee, set up by the Director of ISI in 2008, was headed by Professor S. P. Mukherjee. The other members were Professors P. K. Ray, A. B. Raha, R. Chakrabarty and M. Pal. There were as many as five areas on which recommendations of the Committee had been sought viz. (i) management, (ii) syllabus, (iii) evaluation system, (iv) expansion of ISEC programmes and (v) liaison of ISEC with CSO. The Committee submitted the interim report in 2009.

The third committee has been set up by the present Director of ISI in 2010. The committee has also finalized the recommendations of all the aspects except the syllabus and has submitted its interim report very recently. The Member-Secretary proposed some revision in the structure of the course curriculum proposed by the earlier committee headed by Prof. S.P. Mukherjee. He suggested that instead of 12 month, the course duration should be brought down to 10 months as in the existing curriculum to make the curriculum viable from the administrative point of view as well as from the point of view of the trainees. Moreover, 10 papers may be increased to 12 papers in order to accommodate some of the existing syllabi not covered in the proposed syllabus.

The Committee members agreed that recruitments may be made for ISEC keeping in mind full time teaching responsibility. Such recruitments can be made as Project linked position with some appropriate pay protection, and/or deputation basis.

The committee recommends expansion of ISEC by offering courses in other centres of ISI and also in other countries if asked by the respective Governments or relevant organizations. It also proposes to form a core group of teachers for ISEC. The report is yet to be submitted. To cope up with the present day needs, the committee is expected to bring some major changes in the syllabus of ISEC Regular Course.

Director is very much hopeful of the improvement of research and academic consultancy for governments outside India through ISEC. In fact, Director said that ISEC should be the umbrella to provide the services of statistical training and research to various governments, UNESCO, UNDP, ILO, ADB, and similar other multi-lateral organizations.

We look forward to a brighter future for ISEC in its Diamond Jubilee celebration.