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Nandankanan
now boasts of
yellow

State wants UCE in the elite club

Sunday October 15 2006 10:45 IST

BHUBANESWAR: With Vice-President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat by his side, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Saturday seized the opportunity by urging the Centre to accord University College of Engineering (UCE) Burla the status of Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology (IEST).

Addressing the Golden Jubilee function of the college here, the Chief Minister said the Anandkrishnan Committee, constituted by Ministry of Human Resource Development, had shortlisted five institutes for upgrading them into IEST.

But, an institute of UCE's repute has not been included.

Naveen requested the Centre to send an expert committee to assess UCE for giving it the status of IEST, he said.

Principal of UCE Prof K C Singh said HRD Ministry had set up Joshi Committee which shortlisted seven colleges to get the status of Institutes of National Importance (INIs). Subsequently, the Ministry appointed a three-member committee, headed by Dr M Anandkrishnan to prune the list.

The committee, Singh said, submitted its report earlier in February and it had narrowed down the colleges to five. The Engineering departments of Jadavpur University and Aligarh Muslim University were left out because of land problems, but were given bloc grants of Rs 50 crore each to be developed as centres of excellence.

In fact, some of the engineering colleges received massive financial support from HRD

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Ministry. The Andhra University College of Engineering got an allocation of Rs 408.15 crore while Benaras Hindu University received Rs 545.95 crore for 2007-12.

After 2012, the five shortlisted institutions will get annual funding of Rs 100 crore each, close to what an IIT gets. Subsequently, the institutions would be called IEST, a new facility different from IITs and NITs, Singh said.

Currently, UCE is facing financial constraints despite possessing excellent teaching faculty and infrastructure. It gets annual grant of Rs 4.21 crore.

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