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## My way or the highway! AP politicians fight over IIT

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**New Delhi:** Getting into the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology is every engineering aspirant's dream. But getting the IIT into their state seems to be every politician's ambition.

At least that's what is happening in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, with both the southern neighbours fighting it out over getting the institute within their territorial boundaries.

A day after Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik took strong exception to the reported move of the Centre to shift the establishment of an IIT from Orissa to Andhra Pradesh, a political battle of sorts has broken out in Andhra.

Highway traffic has been badly hit on two National Highways after both the Opposition parties and the ruling Congress called for a blockade over where the proposed IIT should be established.

While the Opposition parties have called for a blockade of NH-9 - demanding an IIT at Basar in Adilabad district - the Congress is blocking NH-7 as it wants an IIT to be set up elsewhere!

"We are blocking the highway as we want an IIT in Medak district of Andhra Pradesh," confirmed Medak Zila Parishad Chairman, Patan Cheru.

However, Congress is not having it easy either. All the political parties of state have come together to oppose CM Y S Rajasekhara Reddy's stand of locating the IIT in Medak district.

The Centre had announced establishment of three greenfield IITs in the country during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. Orissa was included in this proposal, which was also announced by Union Minister of State for Human Resources Development MM Fatmi on August 28 last year at Patna.

The move did not go down well with Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who on Wednesday shot off a letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh demanding that a greenfield IIT should be sanctioned for the State.

Describing the move by the Centre to establish the IITs in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan as "shocking", the Chief Minister has sought the intervention of the Prime Minister in setting up such an institute in Orissa.

Drawing the Prime Minister's attention to the proposal of the IIT, Kharagpur for the upgradation of their extension centre in Orissa to a full-fledged IIT campus, Naveen said that the State Government has also formally recommended the proposal to the Ministry of HRD and conveyed

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