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Tata-Changi vying to modernize Kol, Chen ariports *HTIL's EGM on Ma

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ABVP gheraos Raj Bhawan, opposes IIT shifting

Pioneer News Service | Bhubaneswar

Stepping up its agitation against the shifting up the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) from the State, the ABVP on Wednesday *gheraoed* the Raj Bhawan here and sought the direct intervention of Governor Rameshwar Thakur in the issue.

The ABVP activist staged a day-long *dharna* in front of the Raj Bhawan, during which they had a scuffle with the police. About 100 demonstrators were arrested by the police when they tried to enter the Raj Bhawan forcibly.

The ABVP leaders submitted a memorandum to the Governor, urging his direct intervention in the issue. The Congress-led UPA Government had earlier promised location of National Institute of Sciences (NIS) in Orissa, but subsequently it was shifted elsewhere. This time the proposed IIT has also been shifted from the State. In fact, two IITs were promised to Orissa, but not even one is being located in the State, ABVP State general secretary Nirmal Sarangi said, adding that such a move is purely politically motivated, as the Centre wants to satisfy the UPA allies.

"We have urged Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, President APJ Abdul Kalam and Congress President Sonia Gandhi to look into the matter seriously and take into account Orissa's interest," Sarangi said.

Despite Union Minister of State for Human Resource Development Fatmi's promise in August last year, Orissa has been ignored in the matter of location of an IIT, ABVP activists pointed out.

"Union Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh is anti-Orissa and the UPA Government is more worried for the States which are governed by the Congress," ABVP national executive member Mahesh Mishra alleged. He warned that unless the Union Government's decision is reversed, ABVP would intensify its agitation.

The agitation over the IIT issue is likely to gather further momentum as Agami Odisha will hold a preparatory meeting on February 26 to decide its further course of action on the issue. Persons associated with different organisations are expected to participate in the meeting.

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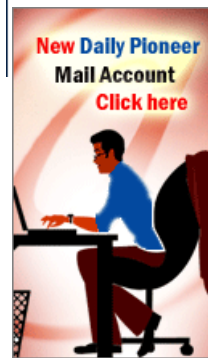
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