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IITs plan for expansion scrapped

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ministry. "We are against the concept of opening satellite campuses as it may dilute the standard of education in premier institutes like IITs," a senior ministry official told HT.

IIT Kharagpur, which has a small campus functioning in Bhubaneswar, offering post-graduate diplomas, wanted the ministry's permission to expand the existing campus and convert it into satellite campus offering undergraduate courses. Even Orissa Chief Minister Navin Pathnaik had written to the HRD minister Arjun Singh requesting a IIT in Orissa or providing full-fledged IIT like facilities in the existing campus to improve higher education in the state.

Rejecting the proposal, the HRD ministry officials say that Orissa as 12 Centrally funded educational institutes and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had already announced opening of a National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER) at Bhubaneswar.

A similar proposal from IIT Mumbai to open a campus in Ahmedabad to tap huge influx of JEE pass-outs from Gujarat was not approved, although there allegations that the proposal was rejected as IIT Mumbai had selected a BJP ruled state. But, a HRD ministry official gave a different explanation. "Opening a satellite campus requires funds equal to opening a new IIT. So, it is better to open new IITs," he said.

The HRD ministry has got, in principle, approval for opening three new IITs

The HRD ministry has snowballed the plan of IITs to open new campuses. The first to be hit are the top three IITs of the country at - Delhi, Mumbai and Kharagpur.

In a policy directive, the HRD ministry has rejected the idea of opening satellite campuses in places far off from the main campus, citing huge costs involved. The decision was taken after number of IITs approached the HRD ministry seeking its views on opening new campuses.

While IIT Delhi was formulating a plan for Gurgaon, the proposal of IIT Mumbai for Gujarat and IIT Kharagpur for Bhubaneswar have already been rejected by the HRD

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in Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar. HRD minister Arjun Singh has requested Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YSR Reddy to provide 500-600 acres of land.

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The state government has informed the ministry that they are in the process of finalising land with civic amenities and air and rail connectivity, a ministry official said. Similar, requests have also been made to Bihar and Rajasthan governments, he added.

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