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ORISSA

Jan 27, 2008

Don't let us down: Naveen to PM

Friday May 11 2007 11:15 IST

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BHUBANESWAR: Strongly reacting to the Centre's rejection to set up a Greenfield IIT in Orissa, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has demanded that such an institute be set up in the State during the 11th Five-Year Plan.

In a letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the Chief Minister has raised strong objection to the Centre's decision saying that the recent reply of the Minister of State for Human Resource Development in the Lok Sabha has come as a shock to the people of the State.

Alleging that the claim of Orissa for establishment of an IIT has been ignored despite repeated requests, Naveen maintained that the move for setting up the institute had been initiated during the NDA government.

Besides, Minister of State for HRD M M Fatmi had also announced at Patna last year that Orissa had been included in the proposal for three Greenfield IITs during the 11th Plan. It is indeed painful that the decision has now been reversed, he said.

Criticising the Centre's step-motherly attitude towards the

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State, Naveen said though there was a proposal to open a branch of IIT, Kharagpur at Bhubaneswar for which the State Government had promised 300 acres of land, it appeared even this proposal has now been turned down.

The decision to locate IITs in States which already have the benefit of many Central institutes indicates that objective criteria have not been followed in deciding the locations of the three IITs, he said, adding that the people of the State feel let down by this.

The State unit of the BJP also organised a dharna in front of the Raj Bhavan here protesting the Centre's decision.

State unit president of Samajwadi Party Baisnab Charan Parida threatened that his party would launch an agitation to protest the decision.

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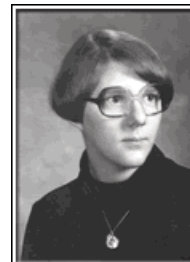
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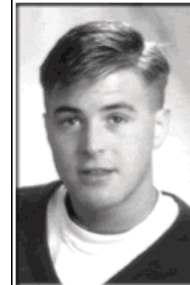
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