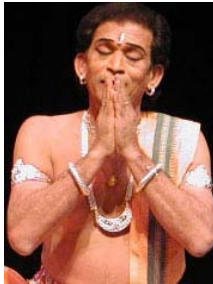


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pur, Via. Uppalada, Paralak

Unleash pressure or perish

New Delhi: 16/May/2007

Politicians make promises to coolly back out later.

Similarly, when Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik met the Union Human Resources Development (HRD) Minister Arjun Singh on May 15 here, he also gave a word to include an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) to the state.

And Naveen came back on a happy mode to issue a statement, which has been widely covered in the media.

It is said that people's memory is short.

But in case of an IIT it seems our memory is too short.

On May 8, when BJD and BJP MPs demanded a reply from the HRD Minister of State D.Purandeswari on the floor of the Lok Sabha, she out right rejected the demand for an IIT.

And the HRD Minister Mr.Singh after a week promises us the moon which we believe it.

Before we accept his words as true, it is high time to have a look at the attitude of HRD Ministry under the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government towards Orissa during its stay at the Centre.

Since UPA government came to power in the Centre, the Ministry of HRD has already announced for funding 23 institutions of higher learning like Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Indian Institutes of Engineering Science and Technology (IIEST) also referred to as IIT clones and Central Universities.

The Congress ruled Andhra Pradesh is leading the pack.

The MHRD has provided an IIT, SPA, upgraded Andhra University of Engineering College and Osmania University of Engineering College to IIT clone (IIEST) and CIEFL Hyderabad made to a Central university.

To set up an IIT the MHRD spends around Rs1000-Rs4000 crores.

Bihar and Rajasthan also got an IIT each.

West Bengal received an IISER with an investment of Rs.500 crore and MHRD has upgraded Bengal Engineering and Science University to an IIT clone, IIEST.

Kerala got an IISER and has been able to upgrade the Cochin University of Science and Technology to IIEST.

Maharashtra, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh also received IISER one each.

Meghalaya also received IIM from MHRD kitty, which will cost more than an Rs.1000 crore.

The MHRD has sanctioned two SPAs in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

Tamilnadu also got an IIIT at Kanchipuram from the MHRD.

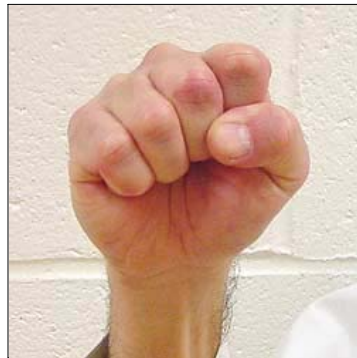
While Orissa is crying for a Central University, Sikkim got a new one and Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh also Tripura have been able to receive MHRD fund to upgrade their universities to a Central University status.

Then where is Orissa?

It seems the state does not exist for MHRD so far funding of the higher educational institutions are concerned.

Over these years MHRD under Arjun Singh has been unkind to Orissa and political pundits feel that his political bias against the state is abundantly loud and clear.

They feel that unless a strong pressure builds up for the cause of higher education development, the state will remain at the lowest ebb of the priority list of the MHRD.



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