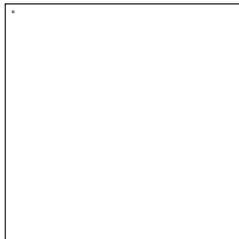




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IIT issue to hit Congress



Bhubaneswar:31/May/2007

Orissa Congress leaders have no face to save.

Failure on the part of the State Congress leaders to impress upon the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government at the Centre to set up an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) will have a humiliating effect on them, feel political analysts.

As the Budget Session of the Orissa Legislative Assembly (OLA) begins on June 1, the leading opposition party will face a determined Treasury Bench on various issues in general and IIT in particular, they say.

While the Gen X of the state is eagerly waiting for an IIT, the State Congress Party and its leaders have miserably failed to raise the issue of IIT and now some of its leaders are busy in patch works.

To the utter amazement of youth top leaders are busy in whodwinking the people.

After returning from New Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) President Jaydev Jena said "Prime Minister (PM) Dr Man Mohan Singh has agreed to visit Orissa soon.

Jena requested PM to visit Orissa shortly and review several ongoing Centrally-sponsored welfare program in the state to which the latter agreed."

There was a similar report about Union Minister of State (MOS) for Rural Development Chandrasekhar Sahu meeting the PM and Dr. Singh agreeing to come to Orissa.

And that he may announce some new institutes such as Indian Institute of Handloom Technology.

Lets compare an IIT with the Indian Institute of Handloom Technology (IIHT) in terms of investment, said an analyst.

As per the budget of the Department of Textiles the total money for human resource development is Rs 3 crores.

It seems like this Rs. 3 crore includes the budget for 4 existing handloom institutes and probably as well as the new one proposed in Bargarh.

In contrast there is Rs. 80 crores towards the groundwork for 3 new IITs and Rs. 1553 crores for the existing 7 IITs .

So annual budget of an existing IIT is Rs. 222 crores while for an IIHT (Indian Institute of Handloom Technology) it is at best Rs. 1 crore.

Similarly it takes Rs. 1000-4000 crores to make an IIT and for an handloom institute would be costing Rs. 5-10 crores at best.

IITs offer B.tech. M.Tech and Ph.Ds and IIHT offers only diplomas.

There is a genuine and urgent need for a top-notch IIT type technological institute.

Just in and around Bhubaneswar we have 30 plus engineering colleges, but it has been alleged that their faculty is sub-standard.

An IIT type institute will allow these engineering colleges to send their faculty for a higher degree thus having a huge impact on these colleges and their students.

So Orissa desperately and immediately need an IIT or an equivalent institute.

Sitting at a distance of thousands of miles in USA and other countries the Non Resident Oriyas (NRO)s impressed upon the Member of Parliament (MP)of BJD and BJP to raise the issue of IIT in the Parliament.

MPs of both the parties and NDA partners boycotted Lok Sabha recently in support of an IIT in Orissa.

But Congress MPs both in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha kept mum.

The other day when the Opposition Leader J B Patnaik was asked about IIT he said the State Government is not serious about the issue as they have not sent any formal proposal to open an IIT to the Centre.

But what prohibits you to raise the issue and impress the PM for an IIT, he engaged himself in the blame game.

The point is abundantly clear that the myopic and timid leaders of the Congress are not in a position to put their weight on the central leadership for an emotional and justified demand like an IIT.

This weakness of Congress has not only made a serious dent of their declining image among the educated youth of the state but also gives an added advantage to the ruling coalition to ride roughshod on them during the month long session the House, feel political pundits.

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