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Naveen shoots off letter to PM over central varsity in KBK

Pioneer News Service | Bhubaneswar

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday once again stood up against the Centre's continuous apathetic attitude towards the State and shot off a letter to Prime Minister Monmohan Singh on Tuesday over the Centre's decision not to set up a central university for tribals of KBK region.

It may be noted that the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government has decided to set up a central university for tribals in Madhya Pradesh

In his letter, Patnaik stated that recent newspaper reports indicated that the Centre had already approved establishment of a Tribal University in Amarkantak, Madhya Pradesh but it seemed, Orissa, which deserves establishment of such a central University, had been overlooked. "Orissa's claim for establishment of a central University in the tribal-dominated KBK area of the State may please be given a favorable consideration," Patnaik stated in his letter. He further said that 38 per cent of the total population belonged to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, out of which the Scheduled Tribes population alone was about 22 per cent. Considering the concern for improving the quality of lives of SC and ST tribes, Patnaik said he had already taken up the issue of setting up a Central varsity in KBK with the Ministry of Human Resource Development so that poor meritorious students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes would have access to research facilities and training courses available in Central universities. And this is the logic based on which the Government has opened Central universities in the north-eastern States.

He further said it was needless to reiterate that Orissa had not only got high concentration of SC and ST population but about 48 per cent of the people were estimated to be living below the poverty line. As a result of this, meritorious students of Orissa were finding it difficult to study in advanced universities due to their poor financial condition.

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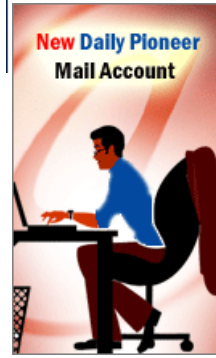
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