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Non-resident Oriyas root for IIT, Central varsities

Pioneer News Service | Bhubaneswar

'Take cue from Bihar, don't miss chance to stake claim'

The Orissa Society of the Americas (OSA) has given a clarion call to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to push forward the demand for an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and two Central Universities (CUs) for the State.

The OSA, the main organisation of the Oriyas in North America, has urged the Chief Minister in a memorandum to address urgent issues like IIT and CUs for the growth and progress of the State. OSA president Pratap Das, vice-president Asutosh Dutta, general secretary Priyadarsan Patra, and treasurer Sandip K Dasverma have impressed upon the CM to not miss the chance as the Eleventh Plan formulation will be finalised within a couple of months.

"If we miss the chance now, we will face a much harder struggle to get this accomplished," the leading Non-Resident Oriyas (NROs) have warned. Reminding the CM about the Prime Minister's announcement on the Independence Day for establishment of eight IITs in the country, the NROs have urged the CM to submit a Vision Paper for an IIT and stake the claim strongly. States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have taken similar initiatives in this regards, Priyadarsan Patra said.

Similarly, the Prime Minister in his August 15 speech also mentioned that there would be 30 new Central Universities, with 16 of them in the States that do not have any.

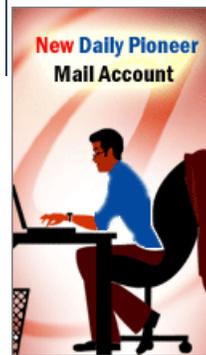
That means Orissa would get one, and since the State has been asking for a Central University in the KBK (Kalahandi-Balangir-Koraput) region, it should go to KBK.

"Since KBK is a vast area and the most backward district cluster of India, we request that you make certain specific requests regarding this university." Particularly, the CU in KBK should be a multi-campus one with campuses in all the district headquarters towns in the KBK districts, i.e., the eight KBK districts and the adjacent Gajapati and Kandhamal districts, the NROs have pleaded.

"In addition to it, we must ask for not one but two Central Universities for the State keeping in view the education promotion agenda of the Central Government. We should take a cue from Bihar, which has already been granted a new IIT and is asking for a greenfield Central University and up-gradation of the Patna University to a CU, Das Verma said.

A detailed memorandum in this regard on behalf of the OSA has also been sent to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

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