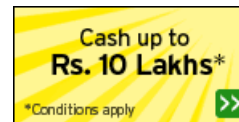




# The Telegraph

calcutta, india



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## Pitroda nod to IIT hope

OUR CORRESPONDENT

**Bhubaneswar, Jan. 11:** Chairman of National Knowledge Commission Sam Pitroda today lent his support to Orissa's hope for an Indian Institute of Technology, saying the state "deserved" one.

Orissa-born Pitroda, who ushered the telecom revolution in India in the eighties, today joined chief minister Naveen Patnaik's long-standing demand, and said: "It's high time. But, I am not the right person to comment on this matter. The HRD ministry should take a decision."

Pitroda had come to Orissa to discuss the recommendations of the NKC, an advisory body to the Prime Minister on matters of higher education, with chief secretary T.K. Tripathy. Pitroda's support went down well with Naveen, who has time and again reiterated his demand, but has been "refused" by the HRD ministry.

The Centre had proposed three new IITs, 20 Indian Institutes of Information Technology, five Indian Institutes of Management, three IISERs and four Schools of Planning in the 11th Five-Year-Plan. Last year the Union HRD ministry decided to set up IITs in Bihar and Rajasthan and IISERs in Pune and Calcutta. The decision angered Orissa, which doesn't have a single centre of excellence.

Non-resident Oriyas have been petitioning and writing to the ministry to set up an IIT in Orissa. While organisations have launched agitation against the Congress-led UPA and staged demonstrations before the Parliament over the issue.

Naveen has written several letters to Singh protesting the Centre's decision of ignoring Orissa's claim. The BJD-BJP MPs from Orissa had also staged a dharna before Parliament last week to protest against the Centre's "step-motherly attitude".

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