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[Orissa Plus]

Decision on IIT & IIM soon, Arjun tells CM

Statesman News Service

BHUBANESWAR, Jan. 23: A decision on setting up of an IIT/IIM in Orissa would be taken soon by the Union government, said the Union minister for HRD, Mr Arjun Singh, when the chief minister, Mr Naveen Patnaik, called on him in New Delhi today.

Mr Patnaik had iterated the demand for the elite technical institute and the B-school and pointed out that since Orissa is on the verge of a rapid industrial movement, it would provide a big potential for research and development activities.

It may be noted that a sustained campaign by the state government and the ruling party MPs on this issue had failed to evoke a positive response till date. To assuage the feelings of the state government, Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, has promptly laid the foundation stone for an elite science institute in Bhubaneswar under the atomic energy department.

The establishment of an IIT, during the 11th five-year plan, will greatly facilitate in intensifying the process, Mr Patnaik observed, while repeating his plea to the HRD minister today. The IIT would become the hub for quality managerial professionals required for various sectors of the economy.

Given the current industrial boom in the state, it is necessary to bring in a professional culture and management, Mr Patnaik said and demanded the establishment of a Greenfield Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Orissa. Mr Patnaik also demanded the setting up of a Central university in the KBK region, which would educate youths in both traditional as well as modern disciplines.

Since the quality of human resource holds the key to the development of any region, there is an urgent need to set up a top-class multi-disciplinary Central university in the KBK region, covering disciplines like basic sciences, humanities, law, medicine, agriculture

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and horticulture.

The chief minister observed and hoped that the Central university in KBK will indirectly help in combating left-wing extremism in the region.

Later, Mr Patnaik called on the urban development minister, Mr S Jaipal Reddy to voice certain demands of the state relating to his ministry. Mr Reddy is said to have assured Mr Patnaik to extend maximum assistance to improve urban infrastructure and environment in the small towns of the state.

He also stated that the centre will help the state in building housing complexes at a affordable rate for the economically weaker sections of the society.

Bhubaneswar and Puri will be developed as world-class cities, Mr Reddy said.

The chief minister requested Mr Reddy to increase the allocation of funds to the state to at least Rs 2,500 crore under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Rs 1,000 crore under the Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for the Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT).

So far, only Rs 504 crore under the Urban Infrastructure Governance (UIG) component of JNNURM and Rs 144 crore under UIDSSMT have been sanctioned, the chief minister informed.

The chief minister reiterated the state government's commitment to undertake various mandatory and basic reforms in order to strengthen the resource base and delivery system of the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of the state.

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