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[WATER RESOURCES](#)

2 more IITs; none for Orissa

New Delhi:2/March/2008

Sending letters and sitting tight is going to cost Orissa dearly.

In all probability if the state leadership does not take up the case in a determined way by bulldozing the Centre, Orissa is certain to miss IIT bus.

While all other states are proactively vying for the new Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Orissa has only opted for sending letters demanding the same.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, known for his penchant in writing letters has sent only 4 letters to the Prime Minister and Union Minister of Human Resources Development (MHRD), requesting for an IIT in Orissa.

After Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan, now Kerala and Himachal Pradesh has been given go-ahead with IIT.

Behind the scene proactive steps taken by these two states have helped them in receiving the IITs, said a senior official in MHRD.

A K Anthony, Union Defence Minister has been pressing Arjun Singh, Union Minister HRD for quite some time for an IIT.

And the Leftist leaders along with the officials of the state have already presented their case with facts and figures, impressing the mandarins of the MHRD.

So an IIT at Palakkad in Kerala has been granted by MHRD, said sources.

Similarly Himachal Pradesh, which tried hard during the Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh's regime.

Though Congress lost power in Himachal Pradesh, MHRD Minister in all likelihood will keep his commitment, said the sources.

While politics and lobbying is playing a major role in deciding the fate of IITs, Orissa confined itself to only sending missives.

Though leading civil society organization, Agami Orissa has been in the forefront to demand an IIT, but the agitation was left half way.

Media played the matter in a low key and politicians never bothered about the setting up of an IIT in the state.

After repeated request from the leading Non Resident Oriyas (NRO) like Chitta Baral, Dharendra Kar, Sandip Kumar Dasverma, Deba Nayak and several others, our Members of Parliament hardly raised their voice.

And resulted is, forget about getting one, no body in the MHRD is even dropping a hint on the Orissa's claim for an IIT.

Really a sad state of affairs, commented a senior IAS officer holding a top post in the MHRD.

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