

## Business school for Assam, but Telangana 'ignored'

# 'BJP bias' cry on IIM allotment

**BASANT KUMAR MOHANTY**

**New Delhi:** The Centre is poised to set up an Indian Institute of Management in Assam while denying one to Telangana despite a decade-old legal commitment, attracting allegations of discrimination against non-BJP-ruled states.

The Union education ministry is working on a proposal to set up an IIM in Guwahati, and Assam's BJP government has offered 300 acres of land on the city's outskirts, a state official said. It will be the country's 22nd IIM and is expected to open for the 2025-26 academic session.



**KR Suresh Reddy**

A bill is likely to be tabled in Parliament during the winter session to make the necessary amendment to the IIM Act, central government sources said.

Telangana has, however, long been demanding an IIM in Hyderabad. The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, which carved the state of Telangana out of undivided Andhra Pradesh, provides for the establishment of several new higher-education institutions in Telangana, including an IIM.

When the Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS) was in power in Telangana, it wrote several letters to the Centre seeking an IIM in Hyderabad. The present Congress government in the state has also followed up on the demand.

However, the Union education ministry recently wrote to the state government saying no such proposal was before it, a Telangana government official said.

A source in the central government said the education ministry felt that Hyderabad already had enough educational institutions while Gu-

wahati, an emerging business centre in the Northeast with good connectivity, needed and deserved an IIM.

BRS Rajya Sabha member K.R. Suresh Reddy told **The Telegraph** that the decision to deny an IIM to Telangana while giving one to Assam was politically motivated.

"It's a fact that the non-BJP-ruled states are not being encouraged. All the commitments made under the AP Reorganisation Act should have been fulfilled within 10 years. This is 11th year," Reddy said.

"The state government has identified land in Hyderabad but the Union government is not interested. This is clear discrimination against the non-BJP state."

Reddy disagreed that Hyderabad had enough educational institutions.

"If there are many institutions in Hyderabad and an IIM is not required, then the government should have set up a semiconductor plant in Hyderabad since no such plant is there," he said.

"The BRS government had been demanding a semiconductor plant for the last several years, but it went to Assam. All these decisions are taken on political lines."

In 2019, the then Union human resource development (HRD) ministry (now education ministry) had agreed in principle to set up an IIM in Hyderabad.

But late that year, the ministry changed its stand and told the Prime Minister's Office that it would focus on strengthening the existing IIMs to help them increase their strength rather than set up new ones, a central government source said.

Coincidence or not, this was just after the then ruling Telangana Rashtra Samiti (now renamed as BRS) — which had nine members in the Lok Sabha and six in the Rajya Sabha — had expressed its opposition to the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

An email has been sent to higher education secretary Sanjay Murthy seeking the reason for the ministry's change of heart and its stand on the allegations of ill-treatment to Telangana. His response is awaited.