

Dr. N R Banerjea
Vice Chancellor
Bengal Engineering and Science University, Shibpur

September 12, 2006

Dear Dr. Banerjea,

We are delighted to know that you had a very productive meeting with Sri Sudip Banerjee, Secretary, MHRD at the BESU campus. We understand that he had met the faculty, staff members and students and inspected laboratories and other infrastructure. It is reassuring to learn that he was, in general, quite satisfied with the present status of the university after visiting the campus on September 7, 2006. We sincerely thank you and your team for the success of Sri Banerjee's site visit to our Alma Mater.

From the published news/reports, we are encouraged to learn that the MHRD has accepted the report submitted by the Anandakrishnan Committee to upgrade BESU to an INI through an Act of the Parliament. Conversion of BESU to an INI (which is restricted to a group of only 13 elite Institutions including IITs, AIIMS, etc.) will be, in our opinion, the proper way to honour our Alma Mater for its prominent role that she has played and continue to play in the engineering education in India. The committee, comprising of prominent academicians, Prof. M. Anandakrishnan, Prof. Amitabha Ghosh and Prof. D. V. Singh, in its report, "Transformation of Selected Technical Institutions into a New System of Institutions of National Importance", recommended establishment of a newer system of National Institutes which will combine the best characteristics of IITs and IISc with a strong focus on research in science and engineering. Upon reviewing the report, we have also concluded that the conversion of BESU to IEST will be best not only for the State of West Bengal, but also for the country. We strongly believe that the group of IESTs will provide another option for the students who would be interested in top quality education and research in engineering and science. Conversion of BESU to IEST will be the first step in regaining its position as one of the premier technical institutions in India. We can also assure you that a large number of well known educational institutions both in India and abroad are looking forward to this transformation of the BESU and some of them are anxious to collaborate and assist in its future growth in many ways.

We understand that the Higher Education Ministry of West Bengal will respond to the MHRD's proposal within a month. We do not know whether the Higher Education Ministry of West Bengal will ask or have already asked for any recommendations from the BESU administration. In this context, discussion about other alternatives to the recommendations made by the MHRD in any forum at BESU may send a completely wrong message to the Government of West Bengal and MHRD. In the past, both AC & BESUTA accepted resolutions to pursue for the IIT/INI status for BESU. In the Special Academic Council meeting (http://www.becollege.org/IIT/AC_IIT101105.pdf) held on November 10, 2005, members unanimously agreed to support IIT status for BESU. The BESUTA also has appealed to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal to accept IIT status for BESU (http://www.becollege.org/IIT/BESUTA_CM1.pdf).

It is well-known that in India, educational institutions with INI status are considered to have the best facility and faculty and these institutions are recognized throughout the world for imparting top quality education to its students. As such, INI status is the most coveted one in India. We urge you and your administration as well as BESUTA to remain committed to the original resolutions passed by AC and EC of BESUTA on this IIT/INI issue. Any deviation from this agreed position at this stage will delay the overall process, and there will be a complete loss of credence nationally and internationally. As alumni, we are keenly interested in the welfare of BESU and would like to see that it gets its proper recognition for its contribution in the development of India over the last 150 years and becomes a national symbol for engineering education again. We request and appeal to you to lead the mission of converting BESU to IEST (an INI) and use your good offices to send one unified voice of the administration, faculty, staff members, students and alumni for the single goal – conversion to the INI status for our Alma Mater before the 150th anniversary celebration. This would be remembered as your contribution and legacy for the development of BESU as a top engineering institution again.

As GAABESU is still at a formative stage and the ad-hoc executive team is not in a position to take any critical decision with proper process, we, all GAABESU members from our country/local chapter organizations request you and those copied, to jointly approach WB Government to accept MHRD recommendations to convert BESU to an INI in the form of IEST before BESU celebrates 150th anniversary in less than 10 weeks. We request you to contact GAABESU Secretary to reach us.

Thanks,

Amitabha Ghoshal (57CE) President, GAABESU
Asit Palit (63ME), GAABESU Kolkata Representative
Syama Prasad Datta (67CE), GAABESU Salt Lake Representative
Asim Deb (77ETC), GAABESU Delhi Representative
Jayanta Lahiri (86EE), GAABESU Bangalore Representative
Partha Sarathi Bag (87ETC), GAABESU Life Member, Mumbai
Rajdeep Dutta (88EE), GAABESU Oman Representative
Santosh K Sinha (65CE), GAABESU Kuwait Representative
Somnath SinhaRay (87ARCH), GAABESU UAE Representative
Debabrata Pal (00EE), GAABESU Life Member, Japan
Jyoti R Sengupta (54CE), GAABESU Canada Representative
Arun Ghosh (61MetE), GAABESU Canada Representative
Arun Deb (57CE), GAABESU USA Representative
Tarun Basu (67CE), GAABESU USA Representative & Web Team Representative

CC

Dr. Sujay Mukherjea, Secretary, Bengal Engineering and Science University Teacher's Association (BESUTA)

Dr. Santanu K Karmakar, Secretary, GAABESU

All Participating Chapter Representatives & GAABESU Ad-hoc Executive Team