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Campus upgrade on track

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The state government on Monday announced that it was willing to accept the Centre's offer to upgrade the status of Bengal Engineering and Science University (Besu), Shibpur, and the engineering faculty of Jadavpur University (JU).

According to the Union human resource development ministry's proposal, the two institutes will be upgraded and renamed Indian Institutes of Engineering, Science and Technology, billed as better than the IITs.

The state's stand was made known to the institutes at a meeting between their representatives and higher education minister Sudarshan Roychoudhury on Monday.

Following the minister's statement, the Besu teachers' association "temporarily" called off its agitation. The group had set October 30 as the deadline for the authorities to spell out their stand on the upgrade proposal.

At a meeting in Delhi in September, the ministry had asked Besu and JU representatives to hold "detailed discussions" with the state government and submit a report on the admission procedure and governance they would like to follow, post-upgrade.

The deadline for submitting the report is October-end.

Roychoudhury reportedly said at the meeting that the government was agreeable to the "participatory model of governance", as followed by Indian Statistical Institute (ISI). It has discussed the issue with defence minister Pranab Mukherjee, who is also chairman of the governing council of ISI.

As for the admission procedure, the government wants to stick to existing joint entrance format.




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The Union ministry had asked the institutions to state whether they were ready to adopt the IIT-joint entrance or the All India Joint Engineering Entrance Examination system for admitting students.

"Talks are on between the state government and the ministry," Roychoudhury said.

At another meeting during the day, the government finalised its decision to introduce some changes in the state joint entrance system, including the question pattern.

Roychoudhury said the JEE board will soon hold a meeting of its members and work out the changes to be introduced from 2007.

"The government has stated its stand on the proposed changes and it is up to the board to take a final decision," the minister added.

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