

Dated: February 21, 2006

Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharya
Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal
Govt. of West Bengal,
Writers' Buildings,
Kolkata - 700001, India

Re: Appeal to accept MHRD proposal for conversion of BESUS to an IIT/INI

Dear Sri Bhattacharya:

India is moving towards the knowledge economy together with the developed world. In this economic environment, knowledge rather than physical resources is main driver of economic growth. The contribution of knowledge-based industries to total value added has steadily increased in the OECD countries. The Economist reports, "Best companies are now devoting at least a third of their investment to knowledge-intensive intangibles such as R&D, licensing and marketing. Universities are among the most important engines of the knowledge economy. Not only do they produce the brain workers who man it, they also provide much of its backbone, from laboratories to libraries to computer networks."

With that in mind, we, the alumni/alumnae, students, faculty, staff, administrators and well-wishers of Bengal Engineering & Science University (erstwhile BEC/BECDU), welcomed your recent initiatives to set up more national institutes in West Bengal and to allow top colleges to gain more autonomy so that these institutes become true center of excellence and become the engines of new economy in West Bengal. It is very heartening to note that the WB Government under your able leadership has convinced the Ambani Group to set up an Institute of Information and Communication Technology in West Bengal. The conversion of BESUS to an IIT or equivalent will complement the efforts you have already initiated in the field of education. Conversion of BESUS to a world-class educational institute that it once was will strengthen the core competence of West Bengal in the technology area.

It is our understanding that MHRD's expert committee on visiting the campus on 2nd of December 2005 has spoken highly of BESUS as a candidate for conversion to IIT. MHRD has invited VC, BESUS to discuss the conversion process on 23rd. of February 2006. The Central Government is expected to announce the name of the schools to be upgraded to IIT and how much grant each school will get to improve its infrastructure. However, this conversion will only be possible if the Government of West Bengal Government agrees to MHRD's proposal.

We are sure that you are aware why the conversion of BESUS to an IIT is so very important for our State. We nevertheless would like to recap those rationales below in our own way and the benefits from this upgradation to the state will be quite obvious from those.

1. The financial and other support that it will receive to upgrade to an IIT (somewhere between Rs. 300.00 Cr. and Rs. 900.00 Cr.) will be very essential for the development of infrastructure, laboratories and testing facilities. Improved facilities will attract a lot of talent, both as faculty and as students, from within the state as well as outside.
2. Being within the fold of a group of competent IITs of very high standard will bring in a sense of competition which is so very essential in building a culture of excellence. This

will foster research and development that in turn will be beneficial to the industries at large.

3. With a center of excellence that is world class and has the support of the Central Government, West Bengal will be able to attract industries from within India and abroad for setting up their shops. Knowing fully well that there would not be any dearth of talents to operate the businesses would be a strong incentive for the industries to move to West Bengal.
4. As the state is showing all the signs of being a prime FDI destination, there would be requirement of technical personnel for those future industries that the state will be able to fill with the sons of the soil. As the demand for technocrats would very definitely rise with development, having more than one IIT will indeed be a very strong point for the State when in competition with others.
5. The investment (at least Rs. 100.00 Cr./yr) that the Central Government will make will free up the resources of West Bengal (about Rs. 16 Cr./yr). The money, thus saved, could be diverted to other state supported engineering schools for upgrading their infrastructure, resulting in better facilities, and attracting better students.
6. The students of West Bengal will have another reputed organization to turn to before deciding to go out of the state if they do. Likewise, graduates of the institute will have one additional prospective destination for a faculty position before opting to go out.
7. Sharing the brand name of IIT, the graduates of the institute will be able to bring new business and employment to the state as entrepreneurs.
8. Once the State has a number of premier institutes it could attract other institutes from both the public and the private sector, such as medical and nuclear sciences, which is essential for overall development as science and technology has become more and more multi-disciplinary in nature.
9. IITs with greater financial strength provide incubation facilities of high-tech ventures. As a result, the graduating students from IITs are not only working for reputable corporations but they are also creating jobs with high income potential through such ventures. They, thus become engines of economic development for the state.
10. BESUS has an unparalleled location advantage by being close to the developed infrastructure of Calcutta and Howrah with a large developed residential campus. However, BESUS has not been able to utilize this fully. This advantage can be properly exploited by the state if it becomes a national institution.

Considering those facts, we would, therefore, urge you to make a decision in favor of conversion of BESUS to an IIT, as we are sure it will turn out to be one of historical importance which Bengalis will remember with pride in days and years to come. In addition, as BESUS will be celebrating 150th anniversary next year, the upgradation will be the proper way to honor the contributions of our college in the development of pre- as well as post-independent India. West Bengal will be in a unique position to have three top-tier engineering schools (Shibpur, Kharagpur and Jadavpur) of India. We believe, as Chief Minister who is trying to bring economic prosperity to the people of West Bengal and develop West Bengal into a top-tier state in the 21st century, you will agree to accept MHRD's recommendations to convert BESUS to an IIT. We thank you for your time and look forward for a positive response.

Best regards,

Students, Faculty, Alumni and Well Wishers of BESU

The Undersigned or http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?besu for complete on-line signatures list

CC:

- Shri Gopalkrishna Gandhi, Chancellor, BESU and Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal
- Prof. Satyasadhan Chakraborty, Hon'ble Minister-In-Charge, Dept of Higher Education, West Bengal
- Dr. N R Banerjea, VC, BESU
- Prof. Santanu Kr. Karmakar, Secretary, Global Alumni Association of BESU (GAABESU)
- Prof. Manas Hira, Secretary, BESU Teacher's Association
- Correspondents of print and electronic media
- All Members of BESU Alumni

Encl:

1. A complied copy of on-line signatures of students, faculty, alumni and well wishers of BESU
2. A copy of the letter of General Secretary, BESU students' Union

Disclaimer: Prepared by the following persons and distributed by BESU Alumni Web Team, a group of alumni volunteers representing Asia, Europe and North America.

Dr. Debasish Ghosh, Professor and Dean of Faculty of Engg , Arch. and TRP

Dr. Biswanath Datta, Professor and Dean, RCIII

Prof. Anjan Kr. Ghosh, Dean of Students

Prof. Manas Sanyal, Head, HRM

Dr. Dipak Sengupta, Professor, Dept. of Applied Mechanics

Mr. Tarun Basu, GAABESU Web Team Volunteer

Dr. Swapan Saha, GAABESU Web Team Volunteer

Mr. Sudhangshu Sekhar Chakraborty, MD, CES

Mr. Amitabha Ghoshal, President, GAABESU & Chairman, Stup Consultants

Mr. Santanu Chatterjee, Working President, GAABESU & ED, CESC Ltd.

Dr. Santanu K Karmakar, Secretary, GAABESU & Head, Mechanical Engineering

Dr. Nilratan Bandyopadhyay, President, BESU Teachers' Association

Prof. Manas Hira, Secretary, BESU Teachers' Association

Dr. Amitava Roy, Executive Committee Member, BESU Teachers' Association

Manas Hira 21/02/2006
(Manas Hira)
Secretary
BESU Teachers' Association

Santanu Kumar Karmakar 21.02.2006
(Santanu Kumar Karmakar)
Hony. Secretary
Global Alumni Association of BESU

Enclosure-1

Excerpts from the Online Petition to Shri Buddhadev Bhattacharya, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of West Bengal, for upgradation of BESU, Shibpur to an IIT

Ref:

http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?besus&l

Name	Role	State & Country	Comments
Prof. Sankar K. Sen	Graduate from B.E. COLLEGE (now BESU) in 1948; Served as a GOI-research fellow for 2 years, as a Faculty of BEC for about 31 years	West Bengal, India	The under-graduate teaching in the Bengal Engineering College was comparable to that of any engineering institution in the world; the only lacuna was and still is post-graduate education and research. It must be appreciated that without sound post-graduate education and research, undergraduate education and teaching is bound to suffer how hard the teachers try to keep it up. During the last thirty years or so, with the advent of computers, robotics, optical fiber communication, bio-informatics, nano-science and technology etc., the barrier between various disciplines have broken altogether, newer tools in information and management science have changed the global scenario and the requirement of engineers with innovative mind is the order of the day. Whereas, the IITs have been able to continuously keep pace with the change because of massive financial support of the Central Government, B.E.COLLEGE (& BESU) remained static and its product is turning into mediocrity. The opportunity has arrived at its doorstep
Jyoti Ranjan Sengupta	Alumnus 1954 Civil	Ontario, Canada	A golden, once in a lifetime, opportunity. Please seize it. All stakeholders win. A 150 year old institution gets a brand name recognition, Center invests and builds on a well established institution, West Bengal benefits from spin-off influx of knowledge based industries
Prof A.M. Ghosh	Former Professor, CST Dept, BECollege	Kolkata	BE College must be given IIT status immediately. What Pt.Nehru wanted to do some 50 years before, still remain undone due to lack of vision.
Apurba Narayan Das	Graduate of Elec Engg - 1971	Calgary, Alberta, Canada	There is nothing additional to state as it is so obvious that the status of IIT to our beloved Institution, will bring much better faculty members, improve infrastructure and technical facilities, higher quality students and finally the reputation which will provide graduating students recognition world wide. It is true that students of Bengal, will face stiffer competitions but that is what is required to improve the qualities in every front of engineering education of our future students. I believe, everybody including the concerned persons at the helm of affairs would whole heartedly support the move.
Partha Sircar,	Ph.D. Alumnus - Civil Engg. 1967	California, USA	Elevating to IIT status will attract the best students from all over India. Since a large number of them are from West Bengal, now going away to other states, this will be a great boon. Also, it will attract greater support from our illustrious alumni, since they will feel more proud to help a quality institution of learning.

Enclosure 1

Page 4

Phone-9433217682(G.S)

BENGAL ENGINEERING COLLEGE STUDENTS' UNION

BENGAL ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE UNIVERSITY, SHIBPORE
P.O-BOTANICAL GARDEN
HOWRAH-711103



Ref.No-

Date: 02nd September, 2005

To,
The Vice Chancellor
Bengal Engineering And Science University, Shibpur
Howrah-711103

Sir,

The Students' Union of our esteemed Bengal Engineering & Science University, Shibpur (BECSU), in its general body meeting held on the 01st of September, 2005, **resolved unanimously that the students of our University are totally in favour of the upgradation of this University to an IIT.**

BECSU also resolved, to request you to communicate this to appropriate authorities for further actions in this regard i.e., upgradation of this University to an IIT.

Our University will be celebrating 150 years of its foundation on 24th November, 2006, and such upgradation will add glory to this University. It will indeed be a matter of pride for the University that has produced some of the best and respected technologists and academicians for the country and we are looking forward to this recognition for our contributions.

Thanking You,

Yours Sincerely,

Arindam Das

(Arindam Das)
General Secretary,
BECSU 2005-06

Enclosure 2

Page 5