

Why one of the National Institute of Science (NIS/IISER) should be established in Bhubaneswar, Orissa

- Currently Orissa does not have a central university, an institution of national importance (such as IITs, ISI, etc.), a reputed centrally funded institute such as an IIM, or a centrally funded IIIT or IIITM. It also does not have an autonomous science and technology institution of the department of science and technology.
- An IISc like institution (referred to as NIS or National institute of Science or an IISER) of higher learning and research is very important to the region or state where the institution is located.
 - It increases awareness, leading to greater success of students from that region;
 - it allows locally qualified people already in a job (in an industry or in a teaching position in a local college) to pursue high quality research without quitting their job completely;
 - it has significant impact on established industries, and attracts new industries; and
 - it facilitates new interaction between NRI scientists of local origin who have homes or relatives in that area and the NIS/IISER in that area resulting in cross-fertilization of ideas and greater R & D output of such an institution.
- More arguments on [the impact of having an NIS/IISER in Orissa](#)
- In the overall context of India, there seems to be a recent consensus that we need more high quality education and research institutions in science like the IISc in Bangalore.
- The government of Orissa and the private sector have tried their best to build a science and technology infrastructure in Orissa. For example, in the greater Bhubaneswar area (which includes Puri and Cuttack) there are now 2 state funded and 19 private engineering colleges, and several state government initiated small research institutions such as Institute of Physics, Institute of Life Sciences, Institute of Material sciences, and Institute of mathematics and application. Among them Institute of Physics is now a grant-in-aid institution funded by the Department of atomic energy and Institute of Life Sciences is now a autonomous institution of the Department of Biotechnology. Both of the above, although small, are of high quality. In addition Orissa has two STPs (at Bhubaneswar, Rourkela), one more STP in Berhampur in the making, big operations of Infosys and Satyam, and planned operations of TCS, and Wipro. But we need the center's help to be not left behind from the next level of growth. In particular, brand-name institutions like an IISc/IIT/IIM/ISI/IISER/IIIT/Central-University can *only* be established by the central government.
- [The Institute of Physics](#) and the [Institute of Life Sciences](#) can be the starting point of an NIS/IISER. In particular, the picturesque [Institute of Physics campus](#) can be used to start an NIS/IISER right away. Bhubaneswar also has the *beginning* of an [Institute of Material Science](#), and an [Institute of Mathematics and Applications](#), which may be folded into an NIS/IISER. If an NIS/IISER is started in Bhubaneswar, the Institute of Physics and Institute of Life Sciences faculty can form the initial core faculty and teach the first classes until the institute hires additional faculty. The researchers at [Regional medical research center](#), and [Regional research laboratory](#) can also chip in.
- In summary,
 - Orissa is not only under represented, but *does not have any* centrally funded institution of higher learning of the scale of an IIT, ISI, IIM, IIIT, or autonomous Science and Technology institution;
 - an institution such as a NIS/IISER in Orissa would have a tremendous impact on Orissa as well as India;
 - the state government and the private citizens have over the years done their best in building a science and technology infrastructure but need the central government's help to take it to the (next) level, where most of the other states are already in; and
 - brand name institutions like IIM/IIT/IISc/IIIT/ISI/Central-Universities can *only* be established by the central government.
- Because of the above mentioned reasons, Bhubaneswar should be one of the initial locations where one of the proposed National Institute of Science is established.
- References:
 - 1. [\[1:UGC-announcement\]](#)
 - 2. [\[2:pib\]](#)
 - 3. [\[3:TOI\]](#)
 - 4. [\[4:IndExp\]](#)
 - 5. [\[5:Deecan Herald\]](#)
 - 6. [\[6:Frontline\]](#)
 - 7. [\[7:TOI\]](#)

- 8. [An article in Oriya from "The Samaja", Aug 18, 2005.](#)
- 9. [An editorial of "The Samaja", Aug 20, 2005.](#)
- 10. [An article in Oriya from "The Samaja", Aug 19, 2005.](#)
- 11. [An article in Oriya from "Sambada", Aug 19, 2005.](#)
- 12. [An article from "NewIndiaPress.com", Aug 24, 2005.](#)
- 13. [List of Central Universities](#) (NONE in Orissa)
- 14. [List of Institutes of National Importance](#) (NONE in Orissa)
- 15. [Distribution of Central Universities, Institutes of National importance \(except medical ones\), and IIMs across India; and a note on AIIMS and the proposed AIIMS-like institutions.](#)
- 16. [List of autonomous Science and Technology Institutions](#) (NONE in Orissa)

Postscript

- Sept 20'05: The aim of the above document and the pointers at [the location](#) is to put forth some strong arguments in favor of BBSR/Orissa which the committees (SAC-PM, etc.) might have overlooked. In particular, there must have been some reason why Bhubaneswar was in the initial list, but not in the recent list. Even though we do not know those reasons, and the deliberations the committee had, it is our attempt to bring to light some factors which they may not have considered.
- Sept 20'05: Some people may have the impression that Orissa begs for this and that. It may appear so when one is being overlooked continuously and keeps pointing that out. Also, some people do not articulate their *pointing out* properly, giving the impression of begging. But the fact remains, as clear from the pointers above, Orissa has been overlooked in central funding for higher education and research. This imbalance needs to be corrected.
- Sept 20'05: Some may ask why Orissa does not do things by itself. Why does it often asks center for this and that? The impression that Orissa does not do things by itself is a misconception. (First see the above bulleted item.) The pointers at [the site](#) is a list to give a glimpse of Orissa's efforts. But in the context of this document, we can point out that Orissa government collaborated with a private (religious) organization to create [XIMB](#), which is now [one of the top Buisness schools in India](#). This was done decades earlier than Nirma, or ICFAI or ISB Hyderabad. Similarly Orissa govt created the Institute of Physics, and Institute of Life Sciences, which only recently became centrally affiliated institutions. So its a misnomer to say that Orissa government and its people do not do things themselves and just beg the center for this and that.

But there are things, which the center is the only one who has the authority to do them. This includes creation of institutions like IITs, IIMs, IISc, NIS/IISERs, ISIs, Central Universities, etc. With respect to them, it is our request that they be balanced across the country and its regions and states, and for that reason some of them should now be established in Orissa, as currently it does not have any of them.

- Oct'08 2005: Recently, someone wondered, if Orissa and Bhubaneswar have the environment for top notch research. Following are some of the highlights of research in institutions around Bhubaneswar. This shows that indeed Bhubaneswar has already and can in the future nurture a top-notch research and educational institution like an IISc or NIS or IIT.
 - Research at Institute of Physics is top notch by international standards. Its alumni have gone on to many good institutions all over the world. Many of its faculty and students have preferred it over an IIT. Its [annual report](#), [publication list](#), [faculty vita](#), and [alumni biography](#) are good starting points to learn about the quality of this institution in Bhubaneswar.
 - [The publications of ILS](#) are also of very good quality. Its a newer institution, but is doing very good research and has some very good researchers.
 - [Publications at RRL](#), [Publications at RMRC \(see page 123 – 125\)](#), [accomplishments of CRR](#), [research at CIFA](#), [research with practical use at Olatpur](#), and [language technology research at ILTS, Utkal University](#), are some examples of good and useful research done in and around Bhubaneswar.

Contact

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- These are personal views of [Chitta Baral](#). For any suggestions, pointers, corrections, ideas on what more to be added etc., please send me an email: chitta-aat-gmail-dot-com.