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## IIMs need to pass Arjun's 'ifs n buts' to go global

### Press Trust of India

Posted online: Wednesday, January 18, 2006 at 1627 hours IST  
Updated: Wednesday, January 18, 2006 at 1636 hours IST

**New Delhi, January 18:** In an apparent softening of his stand, HRD minister Arjun Singh on Wednesday said the prestigious Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) should have to first amend their Memorandum of Association (MoA) if they want to open campuses abroad.

"If such a Memorandum of Association allows opening branches outside the country, we will not come in their way. If it does not, then first have it amended and make an effort," he said at the sixth Editors' Conference on Social Sector issues.

IIM-Bangalore's ambitious plan to open a campus in Singapore got a jolt on January 11, when the Human Resource Development Ministry denied permission to the prestigious business school, asking it to first cater to the demand at home considering the huge demand-supply gap in IIM seats.

Denying the charge that his ministry's response to IIM-B's proposal came "too late", when Bangalore institution had already started the groundwork, he said that the IIMs have to consider any review in the moa and once it was done, "we will certainly look at it".

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To a question on the presence of government officials, when the IIM-B board of governors took the decision to establish a campus at Singapore, Singh said, "I would only request you to address this question to the Board of Governors whether it was a fact that such a decision was taken by the board in the presence of government official. It was not."

Asked whether the government has any proposal to increase the number of seats in IIMs, he said there was no move from his side in this direction. "There is not a single instance the role in any institutions of higher learning, I have interfered. I have respect for their autonomy", he said.

Replying to a question on foreign universities operating in the country, the minister said that the government has already drawn up a Bill, which would take care of such requirements.

"We are not against these universities coming to the country. They will have to function within the framework. In the next session of parliament the Bill should be passed", he said.

Observing that the government was not in a position to open any new IITs in any part of the country in the near future, Singh said that since the government was not having resources, private sector should supplement the efforts.

Denying the charge that the centre has shifted the National Institute of Science, proposed at Bhubaneswar, to Kolkata, Singh said that the University Grants Commission (UGC) had announced setting up four NIS. When the law department, which felt that UGC was only a funding body and cannot set up any institution, examined the matter the issue became infructuous.

"It was incorrect to say that the institute proposed in Orissa has been shifted to Kolkata", he said adding that as part of Government's proposal to strengthen science education, three National Institute of Sciences have been proposed at Kolkata, Pune and Chandigarh.

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