

Goans need to realise importance of IIT: CM

He says benefits will be known in 25 years

Staff Reporter

Panaji

Stating that people do not understand the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) campus issue, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Monday said the benefit of a permanent campus for the prestigious national institute in Goa will be known to Goans in 25 years.

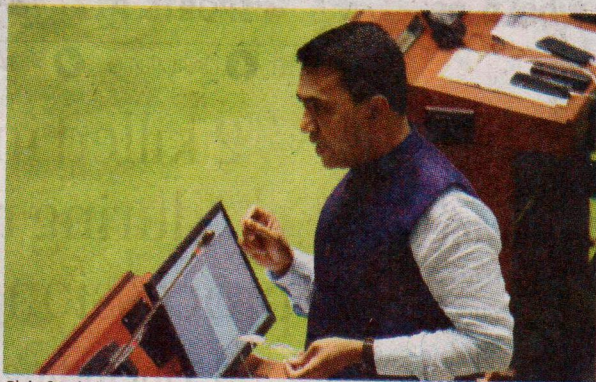
Replying to the discussion held on education during the monsoon session of the Goa legislative assembly, Sawant on Monday said that he feels bad that the government could not provide land for the IIT campus.

"The government is making efforts to identify land for a permanent campus for IIT-Goa, as it currently functions from a temporary campus. In the past, we had identified two pieces of land, but everyone knows why they could not be finalised," he said.

Sawant added that the permanent campus for IIT in Goa is needed, as contribution of this prestigious national institute to the education field is huge. He maintained that the actual requirement of land for the IIT campus is 10 lakh square metres; however, the state government was ready with 8 lakh sq. mt. of land, which the Centre has also agreed upon.

"Nylon 6,6 project was also opposed in Goa. But when it was shifted to another state, it received awards as the best project," Sawant noted.

Speaking on school education, the Chief Minister said the education department has received complaints that managements



Chief Minister Pramod Sawant speaking during the question hour on Monday. ■ Nandesh Kambl

House roots for IIT

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In a display of solidarity, ruling MLAs during demand and discussion on the education sector have demanded the swift establishment of an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in the state, aiming to transform Goa into a prominent educational hub.

While Poriem MLA Deviyan Rane called for unwavering support from all stakeholders to make the dream of an IIT in Goa a reality, former Chief Minister Digambar Kamat recalled previous instances of opposition when establishing the National Institute of Technology (NIT) in 2007 but urged people to consider the immense

benefits an IIT would bring to the state.

He noted that many eminent personalities from Goa have graduated from IITs and have successfully led various educational institutions.

Taleigao MLA Jennifer Monserrate voiced demand to set up an IIT in Goa, emphasising the state's untapped potential in the field of education.

Vasco MLA Krishna Salkar highlighted the presence of national-level universities in Goa and stressed that an IIT would boost its academic reputation.

Navelim MLA Ulhas Tuenkar succinctly expressed his support for the establishment of an IIT in the state.

Sawant reiterated that Goa is the first state to implement the National Education Policy 2020 as it is being implemented at the foundation course level and at higher education level.

"I have given instructions to the department that ad-

ditional teachers be given to those schools, which are implementing NEP 2020," he said. He also said that the government has tried to retain primary schools by amalgamating them with nearby schools where the number of students is less.

The Chief Minister added that the government has stressed on safety and security of the students in schools. On mid-day meals, he said the government is insisting on quality meals for the students and has raised the rates of the food items.

Sawant said the department has not cancelled the contract of any of the SHGs. However, it is a fact that the government has floated a tender allowing NGOs to participate in the mid-day meal supply, he said.

"There are some genuine self-help groups providing quality food. But few groups are trying to dictate terms to the government. If such groups leave contract midway, we will not hesitate to sign contract with NGO for a long-term basis," he said.

The Chief Minister also said that he will give directions to the higher education to create awareness about competitive exams and start weekly classes for those interested in these exams. He also announced that the government will build new buildings for the College of Art, Architecture and the College of Pharmacy.

On shortage of teachers, he said the process of recruiting primary teachers has begun and added that in future, recruitment of teachers would be done through the Goa Staff Selection Commission.