

IITBBS coastal observatory hits land acquisition hurdle

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Bhubaneswar: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar had in 2015 planned to set up a one-of-its-kind Coastal Ocean Observatory for the Bay of Bengal in the state to understand the air-sea-land interactions as also to predict extreme events arising out of the sea.

Though nearly four years have passed since the plan was originally mooted, the much hyped observatory of the premier institute is yet to see the light of the day reportedly due to the delay caused by the state government in acquiring the land for the project and completing the paperwork for the same.

"The state government had



IIT Bhubaneswar

allotted the land to us a year ago. But due to some problem, the land has now been reassigning to us once again, which is causing the delay in going ahead with the project. The equipment for the observatory has already been procured. Once we get the land, we will start the construction work," RV Raja Kumar, director

of IIT Bhubaneswar, said.

The institute had in 2015 entered into an agreement with the ministry of earth sciences to build the observatory. Initially, the observatory was planned to be set up in Puri, but later the plan was amended and an alternative land at Gopalpur in Ganjam was allocated to the institute to go ahead with the project.

Sources said the state government has earmarked 40 acres of land in Loudigaon village in Gopalpur for the project. "There are some problems at the Tahsil level. We are in talks with them and will soon resolve the issue. The assessment of the land will be done and it will be handed over to IIT Bhubaneswar in a few months," a revenue department official said.