

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. Letter dated 29.10.2014 addressed by Thiru O. Panneerselvam, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to Thiru Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India is reproduced below

"I understand that the Central Board of Secondary Education has announced a new scheme called UDAAN which is to mentor girl students to compete for admission to Premier Engineering Colleges including Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs). Under the scheme, 1000 girl students studying in class XI and XII under all Boards of education are to be selected on merit, for receiving special online and direct coaching for entering into IITs and NITs.

The application form has a leading question which requires the applicants to opt for cities for contact class centres out of those listed in the brochure and Tamil Nadu has only two cities in the list. Tamil Nadu, as a leading State in education would have a number of students who would be eligible under the scheme. Hence it is surprising to note that out of the 151 contact class centres, only two centres have been provided for Tamil Nadu. On the other hand, a much larger number of centres have been provided in many other States. Two centres in a large State with substantial girl student population in the science stream is very inadequate and this by itself would act as a dampener for participation by girl students. Apprehension about having to travel long distances to go to contact classes, will undoubtedly reduce response from eligible candidates. Even more surprising is the fact that Chennai, which is the largest city in Tamil Nadu and a leading metropolis, does not have a contact centre unlike other large Metropolitan cities. This will also deprive a large number of eligible girl students of an opportunity to participate. Hence eligible students may be allowed to opt for contact class centres at their respective District headquarters.

I request you to kindly have these design flaws in the UDAAN scheme examined and increase the number of contact centres in Tamil Nadu including one in Chennai. May I also request you to kindly extend the last date for applications for the programme to at least 30th November, 2014, to enable eligible girl students from Tamil Nadu to apply for admission under the scheme?"

Issued by: DIPR, Chennai

Dated: 29.10.2014