

# Reservation will not lower academic standards: Arjun

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Kolkata: Merit has nothing to do with caste or class, said Union Minister for Human Resource Development Arjun Singh.

"It will be wrong to presume that just because the Other Backward Classes (OBC) were getting admission, the status [of premier institutions] will be lowered," he said here on Tuesday.

He was responding to a query as to whether such institutions would suffer due to the reservation policy.

Mr. Singh was talking to presspersons after participating in the Foundation Day ceremony of the Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute, a deemed university set up a year ago in Belur Math, Howrah.

He pointed out that some southern States had reservation of around 60 per cent for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Castes, and yet those admitted in the reserved category were on par with the rest and could easily compete with anybody.

The Bill extending 27 per cent reservation for the OBCs would be tabled in the monsoon session of Parliament as earlier decided and the proposed law would have provisions for dealing with the creamy layer among the OBCs.

<http://www.thehindu.com/2006/07/05/stories/2006070507161200.htm>