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JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

Jadavpur University's deficit under non-salary heads for the 2022-23 fiscal exceeds received state grant



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Jadavpur University *File picture*

Summary

The university incurred an expenditure of Rs 46.21 crore in the 2022-23 fiscal

The deficit registered by Jadavpur University under non-salary heads for the 2022-23 fiscal “is more than the grant” it received from the state government, said an official of the university.

A summary statement drawn in May by JU’s finance office says the deficit under non-salary heads (such as electricity charges and hostel and library expenses) was Rs 24.05 crore in 2022-23. The university received a grant of Rs 21.74 crore from the state during the period.

“We received Rs 21.74 crore from the Bengal government as grant against the budgetary provision of Rs 24.99 crore,” a JU official said.

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Calls and text messages from this newspaper to education minister Bratya Basu failed to elicit a response.

The JU official said the “crippling financial constraints” have forced the university to ask the departments to reach out to former students for funds.

The university incurred an expenditure of Rs 46.21 crore in the 2022-23 fiscal.

A note attached with the summary statement says the “actual deficit will be more (than Rs 24.05 crore) for two reasons: (1) A sizeable portion of the essential expenditure is being booked after March 2023 and (2) A few major heads are not included in the non-salary claims sent to the government; where there will be further addition of Rs 5 crore to the deficit.”

The financial year ends in March.

“Non-salary expenses are essential for running a university. JU imposed a general embargo on spending in 2022-23. If a department’s annual budget was Rs 3 lakh or less, the allotment for heads such as lab teaching, departmental research and contingencies was only 70 per cent of the budgeted amount,” the official said.

“We cannot cut down expenses any further.”

Another official said the lack of support from the Union education ministry was adding to the woes.

The ministry has ignored JU’s claim for the status of Institution of Eminence (IoE) despite a recommendation from the UGC.

Originally, the IoE tag made an institution eligible for a grant of Rs 1,000 crore from the Centre over five years. Later, the Centre said they would pay 75 per cent of the amount and the respective state governments would have to bear the rest.

In 2020, JU sent a revised scheme of Rs 606 crore to the UGC, of which it sought Rs 454 crore from the Centre and proposed to raise the remaining Rs 152 crore.

In response, the education ministry wrote to state education department secretary Manish Jain on June 5 this year: “The Empowered Expert Committee of the IoE scheme considered the proposal and recommended such a steep decline in the budget is not conducive to realizing the targets set for IoE institutions and therefore not accepted the proposal.”

A copy of the letter was sent to JU interim vice-chancellor Amitava Datta, who declined comment when asked about the financial constraints.

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