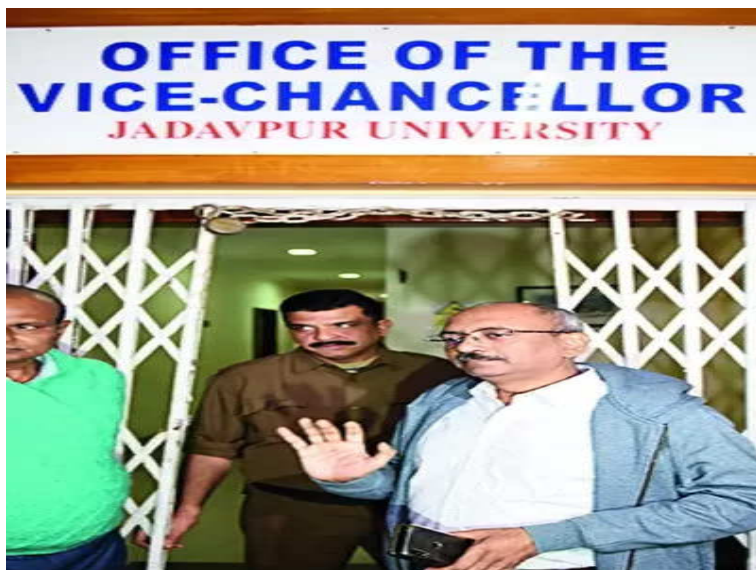


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# Defiant Sau takes VC car from quarters to VC's office

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Kolkata: His termination letter from governor C V Ananda Bose notwithstanding, Jadavpur University officiating vice-chancellor Buddhadeb Sau continued to perform his duties as the VC on Wednesday, stepping into his office at Aurobindo Bhawan around 1.45pm on Wednesday.

Sau left the professors' residential quarters on the campus around 12.20pm and boarded the VC's car, with a blue beacon, to take the short ride to the mathematics department, where he is a professor. He spent nearly an hour in the department with research scholars, signed some reports and finished pending work. From there, he took the car to Aurobindo Bhawan and went

straight to the VC's office on the first floor of the annexe building. Trinamool workers' union leader Binoy Kumar Singh and others met him there. Students also went to him to talk about the delay in the IR department PhD list. Sources, however, said no file was sent to Sau on Wednesday for his signature or approval.

State education minister Bratya Basu said on Wednesday, "Six months have passed, so all of them (governor-appointed VCs) should resign. Why only Buddhadeb Sau? I morally think his step against the governor is right."

On December 23, the eve of JU's convocation ceremony, Raj Bhavan had sent a letter, announcing Sau's immediate termination as the interim VC. But the higher education department sent a letter around midnight, saying Sau "may continue to exercise and perform the duties and let the convocation be held".

“The two letters — one from Raj Bhavan and the other from the higher education department — were placed before the court meeting. The court is the university’s highest policy-making body. They accepted the state’s letter and decided that I can continue as the officiating VC. I am respecting that decision,” said Sau.

However, the court members who were present at Sunday’s meeting, pointed out that it was not within the court’s purview to appoint, reappoint or remove a VC or decide whether a person could continue in the VC’s post or not. A court member said, “The court meeting was specific to the convocation as everyone felt the degrees should be awarded to recipients. We did not accept any orders, but merely noted the two contradictory orders. The court members instead asked him to delegate the powers to the pro-vice-chancellor to confer the degrees and continue the convocation process.”

But Sau claimed, “The court accepted me as the VC on the convocation day and requested me to open the ceremony. So it is implied.”

JUTA has written to JU registrar Snehamanju Basu, requesting her “to clear the air from a court of law on the legitimacy of Sau to continue as the VC to prevent the administrative functioning of the university from getting hampered”.

Sau pointed out that as a teacher, he was concerned about students. “They cleared their exams and their degrees are the result of their hard work. They have already got their marksheet. How come their degrees be invalid just because of a signature?... This is a disaster and when there is a disaster, the elected state government is the first to extend their helping hand. In this case, too, the state government tried to protect the students,” he added. According to him, it was according to the governor’s suggestions that the Isro chairman, UGC chairman and AICTE chairman were proposed at the EC meeting as convocation chief guests. “It was before the pujas that we spoke about convocation. When Isro chairman said he was busy, we had informed the governor about it. When I recently tried to communicate with him, I was not given any time.”

Sau left his office around 2.30pm, attended a programme at OAT and went back to the maths department.