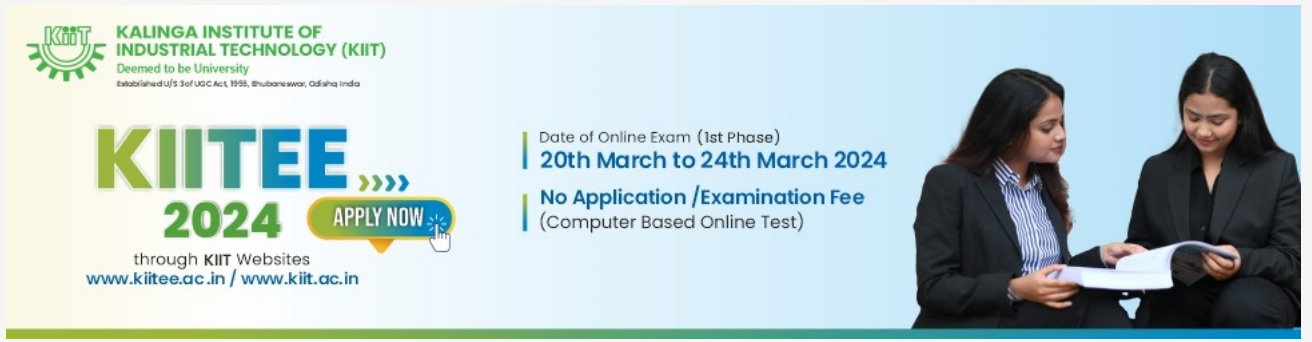


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JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

No anti-ragging steps at Jadavpur University yet: UGC

UGC has written to JU that university teachers be given charge for administering hostels against proper remuneration and other facilities instead of poorly paid contractual hostel superintendents

SUBHANKAR CHOWDHURY | PUBLISHED 21.01.24, 05:54 AM



File picture of students protesting on JU campus

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A communication from the UGC seeking details of action taken by Jadavpur University following the death of a first-year student because of alleged ragging has highlighted the steps that are yet to be taken by the university to curb ragging.

The UGC has written to JU that the university teachers be given charge for administering hostels against proper remuneration and other facilities instead of poorly paid contractual hostel superintendents, who the regulatory body thinks, “are not capable of preventing instances of ragging”.

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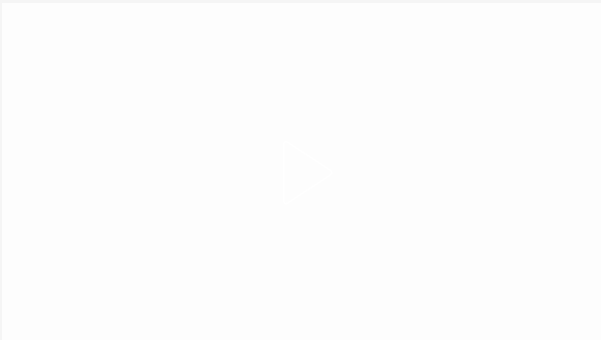
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The UGC had earlier said that contractual individuals working as hostel superintendents had no authority or means to control students and so senior students were running the hostels.

A JU official said that the UGC, in its latest December 17 communication, said at least two faculty members should be designated for 100 students in a hostel as resident tutors or may be given administrative posts for one year to take care of the duties of hostel superintendent and “keep a check”.

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The UGC has also said that the anti-ragging committee and anti-ragging squad of the university “must regularly patrol” the university’s ragging-prone zones and make surprise visits.

JU registrar Snehamanju Basu said as the VC was the chairman of the anti-ragging committee they are looking forward to his presence in the office to decide on these suggestions.

“It is strange that, unlike most universities, the teachers have not been associated with the affairs of hostels at JU. The meek and poorly paid contractual hostel superintendents are in charge of the hostel affairs at JU. They are not capable of preventing the incidents of ragging there,” says the letter signed by Vipin Kaushal, a UGC joint secretary.

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The letter addressed to registrar Basu adds: "It is strongly recommended that teachers be responsible for administering hostel against proper remuneration and other facilities, as prevalent in different universities."

A Presidency University teacher officiates as hostel superintendent of Eden Hindu Hostel.

The 17-year-old first-year JU student whose death triggered the communication from the UGC was allegedly thrown off a second-floor balcony of the main hostel by senior students on August 9 last year. He died early on August 10.

The state child rights panel, which visited the main hostel in the aftermath of the death, said in its report that the contractual hostel superintendents did not dare to go to the upper floors of the hostel out of fear of being humiliated by the senior students.

Asked about the UGC recommendations, registrar Basu told The Telegraph: "Engaging teachers as hostel superintendents is a policy decision which requires approval of the state government. Prior to that, such a decision has to be approved by the vice-chancellor and the executive council (EC)."

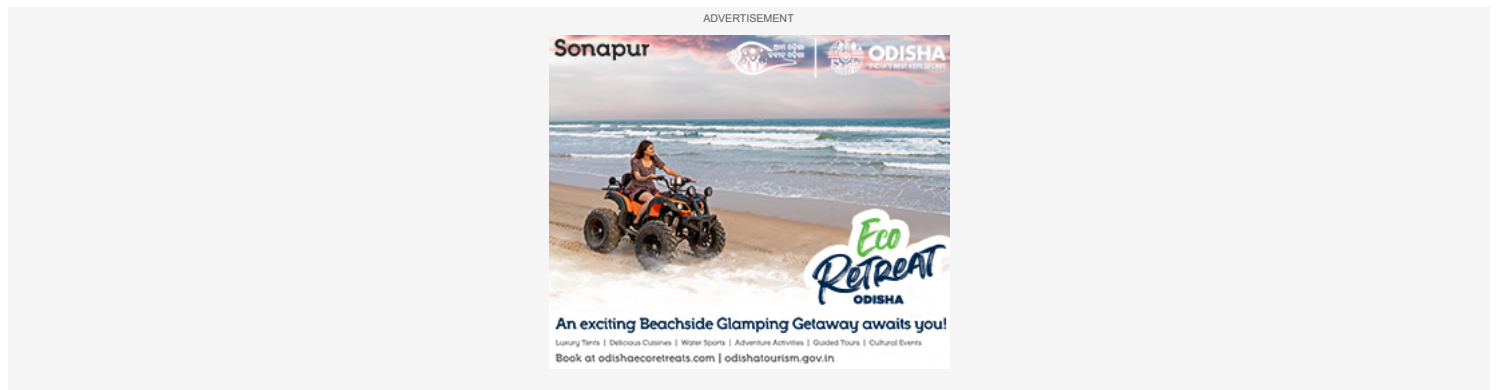
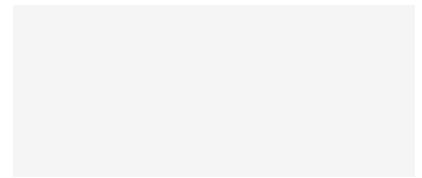
JU's officiating VC, Buddhadeb Sau, has not been attending office in the wake of conflicting orders issued by the Bengal governor, who is the chancellor of state-aided universities and the higher education department. While the governor has ordered his removal, the government has asked him to keep officiating as VC.

The Telegraph reported on January 16 that the absence of a working vice-chancellor at Jadavpur University had come in the way of awarding punishment to those who were found guilty of ragging the first-year student in the main hostel.

LAST UPDATED ON 21.01.24, 06:02 AM

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