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JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

Complaint fallout: JU test put off; teachers, researchers refuse exam duty

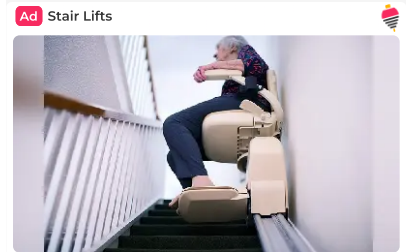
The university has started an investigation into the complaint of sexual and mental harassment lodged by the student, of the same department

SUBHANKAR CHOWDHURY | PUBLISHED 24.02.24, 05:52 AM



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An examination at a Jadavpur University department that was scheduled for Friday had to be deferred because the invigilators refused to do their job, a fallout of the complaint of harassment lodged by a student against a professor after she was frisked during a test.

The university has started an investigation into the complaint of sexual and mental harassment lodged by the student, of the same department.



Some of the invigilators on Friday accused the student of making trumped-up allegations to “cover up cheating”.

The acting controller of examinations at JU initially cancelled all the remaining exams at the department in the ongoing first semester. Later, the authorities decided to defer the test scheduled for Friday. The other tests will be held as scheduled.

A JU official said teachers and research scholars at the department who had been assigned invigilation duty sent separate emails to the head of the department on Thursday night saying they would not be able to conduct invigilation given what had happened.

A research scholar wrote: “The recent incident of malpractice by a student of the first-semester examination... conducted on 21st February 2024 and the ensuing events where the student in order to cover up her misconduct accused one of the professors of sexual harassment has made me cautious. It was noticed that the student has not only made allegations against the professor but also mentioned a research scholar as complicit to it.”

“In the light of this event I feel I will not be able to perform my duties as an exam invigilator... owing to fear of harm to person, harm to reputation and possibility of obstacles to the rightful fulfilment of duties.”

The student has written in her complaint that on February 19, the first day of the ongoing semester exams, she was “uncomfortably frisked”, following instructions from a professor, by a research scholar in front of the entire class on suspicion that she was in possession of chits.

The student said a female invigilator, who is a PhD scholar, had frisked her, “but no chits or any documents tantamount to unfair means could be produced”.

The student has said in her letter of complaint, addressed to the registrar, that while the exam on another paper was underway on February 21, the same invigilator stopped her from writing and took her to the chamber of the accused professor who alleged that she had written answers on her hand.

The scholar wrote to the head of the department: “The said student was copying information related to the subject of the day’s examination from the palm of her hand when I caught her red-handed. She accepted to have cheated.”



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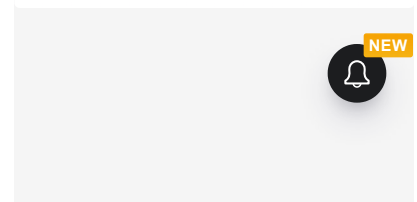
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“But to my utter dismay, I have come across a plethora of outright lies and allegations levelled against me by the student..... I would like to inform you that I have decided to forego the invigilation duty henceforth until justice is rendered,” the PhD scholar wrote.

The accused professor also wrote that he be relieved of examination duties.

The complainant told Metro: “The teachers and research scholars are trying to pressure me by refusing to do their invigilation duties.”

Late on Friday, the departmental head held discussions with teachers and research scholars and it was resolved that Friday’s examination would be held on March 1.

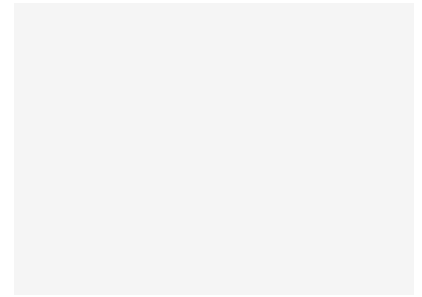
“The schedule of the remaining examinations on February 27 and 29 stands,” the head of the department said.

Parthapratim Roy, secretary of the JU teachers’ association said: “Let the internal complaints committee probe the allegations.”

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