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# Retired judge on Jadavpur University probe panel submits resignation over student 'misbehaviour'

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KOLKATA: Retired Judge Pranab Kumar Chattopadhyay, who chaired a panel investigating alleged irregularities in PhD admissions at Jadavpur University's international relations department, submitted his resignation to interim vice-chancellor Bhaskar Gupta on Tuesday following alleged misbehaviour by and confrontation with some students on Monday, who demanded a speedy and fair probe.

The university requested Chattopadhyay not to step down but he said he would not withdraw his resignation.

Gupta did not respond to TOI's calls.

In his letter to Gupta, Chattopadhyay reportedly cited persistent harassment by certain students, which, he claimed, made it

embarrassing for him to carry out his duties. He pointed out he reached his decision under "compelling circumstances". Chattopadhyay told TOI, "The university had requested me to inquire into alleged irregularities in the admission process of PhD in the IR department in 2023-25, and it was an absolutely honorary service. It was so unfortunate that some students entered the meeting room and started shouting, demanding that the probe process be wrapped up immediately. I am pained that a few teachers, an ex-interim VC among them, were also present but they refused to help or cooperate to rescue me from the humiliation. I will never again step inside the campus, where a guest was ill-treated and the university was unable to provide proper security."

# INVESTIGATION INTO IR DEPT

- **Dec, '23:** Irregularities in admissions to PhD in IR dept came to light
- **Jan '24:** Irregularities in admissions to PhD in the School of International Relations and Strategic Studies came to light
- The two inter-linked cases pertained to a student leader, allegedly with the help of some teachers, getting PhD admission despite submitting applications after the deadline
- **March '24:** In an audio file, two profs were allegedly heard discussing the PhD irregularities

## Irregularities

➤ **Oct '24: Inquiry committee with a retired judge was formed**

One of the protesting students claimed, "The university is not providing any supportive document to probe the allegations against the authority. As these are not public documents, it is beyond students' access. The issue has been going on since last year, so we wanted the process to be sped up. We have seen in the past that such inquiries don't lead to any conclusive report."

A day earlier, on Monday, mass communication department students had locked the cabin of two of their teachers-assistant professor Abhishek Das and professor Santwan Chattopadhyay-as a protest against them for allegedly not checking semester as well as internal exam papers but marking them. JUTA met interim VC Gupta on Tuesday over the students' "misbehaviour". JUTA general secretary Partha Pratim Ray said, "We have demanded a fair probe. But locking professors' cabin is unprecedented and is an insult to the teachers. It sours the cordial teacher-student relationship and a smooth teaching-learning environment." He pointed out a repetition of such an act would force them to refrain from evaluating papers and that external examiners would

check answer scripts. "The interim VC admitted that the controller of examination's office did not scrutinise semester answer papers," Ray added.

In the evening, students belonging to SFI, DSF and FAS were engaged in scuffles, in which seven of them were injured.