

---

# The Telegraph *online*

Tuesday, 28 January 2025



[HOME](#) [OPINION](#) [INDIA](#) [KOLKATA](#) [MORE](#)



---

[Home](#) / [West Bengal](#) / [Kolkata](#) / Fresh start in winter years: Back for Masters after retirement

Brinda Sarkar meets neighbours for whom age is just a number

## Fresh start in winter years: Back for Masters after retirement

DL Block's Ranjan Kumar Mandal enrolled for his Masters degree at Jadavpur University (JU) post-retirement and graduated this winter, fourth in his class

---

**Brinda Sarkar** | Published 10.01.25, 08:16 AM



Ranjan Kumar Mandal enrolled for his Masters degree at Jadavpur University (JU) post retirement and graduated this winter, fourth in his class.

**Brinda Sarkar**

**f** His classmates thought he was the professor. And why not? It's not everyday that one has a 62-year-old studying with them.



**DL** DL Block's Ranjan Kumar Mandal enrolled for his Masters degree at Jadavpur

**U** University (JU) post-retirement and graduated this winter, fourth in his class.

ADVERTISEMENT

ADVERTISEMENT

"I always wanted to do my Masters but once I had entered the industry I had started enjoying that life too and never got a chance," says the 1983 B.Tech graduate from IIT Kharagpur. He retired from Tata Consultancy Services in 2020 and in 2022 returned to study electronics and telecommunication engineering at JU.

Wife Rupa wasn't so sure of the idea to start with but daughter Ratnakshi gave him the push. "I had by then done my Masters and Babai would joke that he wouldn't be able to argue with me now that he was only a Bachelor's degree holder," smiles Ratnakshi.

So in 2022, Mandal cleared GATE, the examination for postgraduate admissions in engineering, and got college-hunting. He did not make it to the IITs but still qualified for premiere institutes. "One such institute refused me saying their cut-off age was 45. Then when I went to Shibpur's BE College with Ratnakshi, I was told that parents were to wait outside! We were rather amused and corrected them," he smiles.

Given how far BE College is, Mandal enrolled at JU. "Even JU is a quite a distance away but I never took my car to college as Ratnakshi felt this would create a distance between me and my classmates," says the engineer who took the S9 and AC 9 from Karunamoyee instead.

He made a conscious effort to be part of the crowd, even at times, taking the lead to speak to the teacher when the others wanted to bunk a class. Some teachers addressed him as "sir," while students called him "uncle," and beyond academics, often sought his guidance for industry orientation.

"I enjoyed myself to the hilt! I was most comfortable with the projects and assignments since I had done similar tasks during my career. What struck me as new was how students today, if they don't grasp a concept, immediately turn to YouTube to watch a video on it," he remarked.

The problem he did have was sitting at a stretch for three hours to write tests. "It was tiring, I wanted to take breaks and my hands would ache as I hadn't written that much in decades," says the student who finished with an impressive CGPA of 8.94. He also sat for a campus placement, landed the job and is now teaching at UEM (University of Engineering and Management) in New Town.

Having been both a recent student and teacher, Mandal finds the youth today under tremendous parental pressure. "Parents only crave success without ever teaching children to deal with failure," he says. "There's room at the top for every subject — professors of physics and Bengali earn the same salary — but you have to be the best at it.

## YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

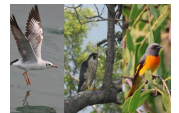
**Yesterday: This day from Kolkata's past, January 28, 1808**



**Midnapore doctor questioned by CID: Quizzed about 'absence' during C-section**



**154 species sighted at Sunderban Bird Festival**



**Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee to inaugurate 48th Kolkata Book Fair today**



**Supreme Court hears school jobs case: Entire hiring process was vitiated, say lawyers**



ADVERTISEMENT

“For that you have to put in effort. You can only do so if you love the subject. So one shouldn’t be forced to take up engineering if one doesn’t like it.”

And he walks the talk. Ratnakshi, in her Boards, had scored way more in other subjects but wanted to study chemistry as that’s what she liked. “We let her and now she’s doing Ph.D in chemical engineering from the US,” Mandal says.

The girl, in fact, came to town this winter to watch her father graduate. “When I told my Ph.D guide the reason I wanted to take leave she not only sanctioned it, but also sent a graduation gift for my father that he treasures,” Ratnakshi beams.



RELATED TOPICS

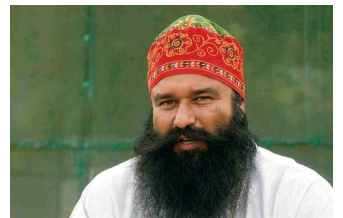
- Masters Degree
- Jadavpur University

Follow us on:

ADVERTISEMENT

# Mumbai: Fadnavis govt sets up committee to discuss possible ban on petrol, diesel cars

Bombay high court says automobiles are a major contributor to the city’s worsening air quality



Dera Sacha Sauda chief and rape convict Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh granted 30-day parole