

## Blatant Discrimination in CAS Promotion to Professor in the Centre for English Studies: JNUTA demands immediate reconvening of Selection Committee

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On 30th May 2017, Dr. Saitya Brata Das, Associate Professor at the Centre for English Studies, appeared for the CAS promotion to Professor before a Selection Committee. Both the Centre and Dr. Das had reason to be confident, as the past four years had been a period of extraordinary productivity for Dr. Das. In this period, Dr. Das had published four sole authored books, including one from the prestigious Edinburgh University Press, and two edited volumes, four articles in top-notch international peer-reviewed journals, and a host of essays in reputed periodicals, delivered a score of invited talks at seminars and conferences, organised half a dozen major workshops and conferences, supervised four completed MPhil theses, run two major research projects, and faithfully supervised 6 PhD scholars (one completed and waiting viva voce examination). Many if not most of these formidable achievements were won while serving as the Chairperson of the Centre for English Studies. Dr. Das's CV can be found [here](#).

Dr. Das's interview went exceedingly well, and the three experts invited to evaluate his contributions were well satisfied. The JNU Vice-

Chancellor, Mr. Jagadesh Kumar, however, had quite a different agenda. After the interview was over and Dr. Das left the room, he was the first to take the floor. Rather than listening to the experts' evaluation, Prof. Kumar stated that Dr. Das could not be promoted, as no student has as yet been awarded a PhD degree under his supervision. Both the Chairperson and all three experts protested at this use of such an **illegal criterion** — with the Chairperson, CES pointing out that one PhD students' viva was to be scheduled shortly — the Vice Chancellor paid no heed, ruling that **Dr. Das must be asked to reapply after three months**. The observations of the experts were brushed aside saying that their role was only to comment on the quality of his work, and the Chairperson CES's protestations were acknowledged only insofar as his **note of dissent** was accepted.

**The JNUTA is incensed with this travesty of a proceedings. There is no legal basis for the denial of CAS promotion for Dr. Das, as the JNU and UGC rules in this matter are quite clear: Dr. Das needed only to have completed three years as an Associate Professor, have five publications, and the minimum cumulative API scores using the UGC's PBAS scoring proforma. Dr. Das has the years of service, the numbers of points and publications needed, a stellar publication and teaching record, and demonstrable service to the university. To deny him promotion is to denigrate him, his scholarship, and the process of selection itself.**

**The JNUTA cannot fathom whether this victimisation by the JNU Vice-Chancellor is because of caste and/or other suspected political differences — that is for the VC to explain — but its net effect is one of flouting the Statutes and Rules of JNU with the sole intent to discriminate against an individual. The JNUTA demands that the Vice-**

**Chancellor reconvene the same Selection Committee within a period of two weeks to re-evaluate Dr. Das's application for promotion to CAS. Failing this, JNUTA shall, along with Dr. Das, file complaints of discrimination by the Vice-Chancellor to all available bodies, including the SC/ST Commission.**

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