

Sir/Madam,

I am sorry to bother you through this mail but certain extreme unavoidable circumstances have forced me to write this to you. I would like to introduce myself to you: I am Dr. Sauradipta Banerjee, resident of Kolkata, West Bengal. Sir, I have completed my PhD. from Calcutta University (Department of Biophysics).

Last year, I was awarded with prestigious DST-SERB National Post-doctoral Fellowship (N-PDF) and activated the same through IIT Kharagpur (Department of Chemistry) from April this year, once the funds were released. However, in course of my research work, due to a series of unexpected events initiated by the HOD of concerned department (Prof. Manish Bhattacharjee) supported by my mentor (Prof. Mintu Halder) over the last few months, I have been mentally devastated and totally traumatized, which has almost threatened to finish my academic career ahead. A few months back, (dated September 13<sup>th</sup> last year) the HOD called me in his office, mentally harassed and tortured me over my academic credentials, qualification and publications by arranging a conference along with other faculty members. I had earlier applied for a faculty position at the concerned department of IIT: one of the faculty members present there pulled out my application and made fun of the same and insulted me in front of other faculty members.

Following this, the HOD wrote a mail to me with a copy of the same to concerned officials of my funding body (DST-SERB), asking me not to enter lab and work, the reason for which is not clear to me till date.

On November 16, I was **not allowed to enter** the research lab of my host institute, IIT Kharagpur and was **driven out with the help of security guards** under the instructions of my mentor, **Dr. Mintu Halder**. Shortly after this, Prof. Bhattacharjee issued me a letter (**attached herewith**) mentioning that **as per instructions of SERB my N-PDF project has been withheld and accordingly forced me to vacate the campus on the same day, itself, i.e. November 16.**

It goes beyond saying that I was **utterly surprised, shocked and traumatized** by the entire event within a single day and was almost **prompted to commit suicide by such inhuman behaviour, insult and humiliation by IIT Kharagpur**. Moreover, the entire event has **affected my family** and **my parents have become physically and mentally ill** after being aware of the entire incident and **damage** done to a **poor fellow** like me **without any valid reason or justification, whatsoever**.

Moreover, since I was **thrown out of my room and campus on that very day like a street person**, I **did not get the minimum time** to take all my necessary commodities (which I had purchased with the plan of staying for 2 years as per the terms of the award), in the process suffered a **heavy financial (around Rs. 40,000) and mental damage** due to such extent of **unnecessary harassment and torture** by the institute **as per instructions of Prof. Bhattacharjee**. I had **research chemicals bought from my own grant and other belongings kept in lab**, but **did not get the minimum opportunity** to take care of those, being **forcefully driven out from lab as per directions of Dr.**

**Mintu Halder**. However, the **most significant thing** is that throughout the episode I **did not come to know what crime have I done to get rewarded with such heavy punishment at government level**.

I am sure that **such inhuman things do not happen** even at private concerns. I really do not understand the justification behind **penalizing a poor fellow like me so heavily** by the institute **WITHOUT ANY REASON**. Being the PI of a government sponsored project (which I had earned on the basis of my academic credentials, publications and hard work etc.), I am expected to have a **minimum self-respect** within a government funding body; but that has all **tarnished within a single day**. Is this the reward against availing such a prestigious post-doctoral fellowship? **The damage done to me physically, mentally and financially is beyond repair**.

I had earned the N-PDF award through some really hard work, design the project by virtue of some good publications, subsequently wanted to utilize this opportunity to full extent to further excel in my future academic career. But this has all ended up drastically through some terrible inhuman treatment at government level due to a dirty conspiracy initiated by HOD of Chemistry, Dr. Manish Bhattacharjee, supported by my mentor, Dr. Mintu Halder by successfully influencing my funding body, DST-SERB who did not allow me to work by withholding my project and fellowship.

However, till date, I am in total darkness of what fault/crime I have done at government level to get such an extent of punishment (without any reason) and no one from any source have pointed me the same except giving punishment. After thorough analysis, I find that my only fault was that I wanted to work and complete my project within the stipulated time frame (2 years) with lot of enthusiasm and utilize the facilities provided to me to full extent to materialize the project objectives. But that is all history now.

I expected the director of IIT Kharagpur (who is appointed by the MHRD officials) to at least investigate the extent of injustice done to me but from the letter issued to me by IIT Kharagpur it is clearly evident that the administrative body of the institute is regulated by some people (e.g. HOD of Chemistry) who can do anything with life and career of student/researchers as per their wishes and whimsies at government level and it is clearly beyond the control of director. And unfortunately, there is no one to look on such dirty corruption and inhuman malpractices at higher academic level which forcefully drives a matured post-doctoral fellow out of the room and campus against all government norms on the same day by simply issuing a letter like this. I am in real doubt whether such things even happen at private concerns.

I have never ever experienced such tremendous level of humiliation, insult and disrespect at academic level throughout my life and career like this (most importantly, without any reason) which almost prompted me to commit suicide on that particular day. Not only me, but my parents as well have become mentally and physically ill after learning about the entire incident.

Sir, I want a valid justification behind such an extent of humiliation, dirty conspiracy and injustice done on a poor fellow that threaten to finish his life and career like this.

Moreover, since the instructions of SERB were not produced to me, I want to see the same where it is "clearly written" that SERB directed IIT Kharagpur to throw me out of campus. If that turns out to be untrue, either HOD of Chemistry/IIT Kharagpur has to produce TOTAL COMPENSATION for damaging me financially and mentally to all extent.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Sauradipta Banerjee

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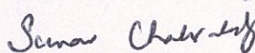
No. : IIT/SRIC/ASSO.DEAN/2018  
November 16, 2018

Dear Dr. Banerjee,


We have received instruction from SERB to withhold the NPDF project until the decision of SERB-ICSEP. Therefore, you are requested to proceed on leave without fellowship with immediate effect and leave the campus. It may also be noted that your fellowship is withheld with effect from November 01, 2018 till further instruction received from SERB.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

  
( Suman Chakraborty )  
Associate Dean (SRIC)

To  
Dr. Sauradipta Banerjee  
NPDF Fellow  
Department of Chemistry  
IIT Kharagpur

  
M. Banerjee  
16/11/18

Through : Head, Department of Chemistry