

Its Director hemmed in, IIM-C puts out ad for her successor

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ITS CURRENT director Anju Seth at the centre of a controversy, her powers clipped by the Board of Governors and her functioning criticised by a significant section of the faculty in a letter to the Government, the Indian Institute of Management (IIM)-Calcutta has initiated its search for her successor.

The Board advertised the Director's post last week with almost a year left in Seth's term.

Board chairman Shrikrishna Kulkarni is learned to have writ-



**Anju Seth
completes
her term in
Feb 2022**

ten to chairpersons of other IIMs, too, seeking nominations of suitable candidates for the post.

The IIM Act 2017 states that an institute's Board should initiate a new director's appointment nine months ahead of the post falling vacant. Seth turns 65 in February 2022 and completes her term at the end of the same month.

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IIM-C puts out ad

The search for her successor, as per the Act, was expected to begin only in June.

This ratchets up the pressure on her given that Seth has accused Kulkarni of infringing on her executive powers, and the Board, in turn, has accused her of improper conduct.

The confrontation snowballed into a full-blown crisis last month after the Board passed a resolution against Seth and divested her of the powers to make appointments and take disciplinary action.

The Board is learned to have sought legal opinion on Seth's allegation — to ascertain whether the BoG is overstepping its mandate -- and to interpret the IIM Act rules in connection with the institute's autonomy.

In December, over 75% of the IIM-Calcutta faculty had, in a letter to the Ministry of Education, alleged that Seth had centralised powers and usurped their administration and decision-making role.

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Last week's job advertisement calls for applications from distinguished academicians with a PhD or "equivalent having at least 15 years teaching or research experience" and they should have worked as a full Professor at a reputed institution for at least seven years. Candidates with "industry experience at a higher level for at least 15 years" are also eligible to apply. Applications have been invited until April 10, 2021.

"The individual is expected to provide strong academic leadership so that the institute is recognised for its excellence in management research and education; as a significant contributor to the 'nation building effort' and the making of policy at the National level," the advertisement states.

Seth was appointed as the first woman head of IIM-Calcutta in November 2018. She is an alumna of IIM-Calcutta (1978) and has a doctorate from University of Michigan (1988). She joined Virginia Tech in 2008 and headed its department of management from 2008 to 2013. Previously, she was with University of Illinois and University of Houston.