



Anju Seth

## Anju Seth resigns as IIM-C director

**SUBHANKAR  
CHOWDHURY**

**Calcutta:** Anju Seth, IIM-Calcutta's first woman director, has resigned, almost a year before her term was scheduled to end, said an official of the institute.

Seth, who is on leave since Thursday, sent her resignation letter to the Prime Minister's Office and the IIM-C board on Sunday night.

Prashant Mishra, dean (new initiatives and external relations), who has been officiating as the acting director since Seth left for Gurgaon, was on Monday morning asked by the board to continue as the acting director for the time being, sources on the campus said.

IIM has a tradition in which whenever the director goes out of station, the director nominates one of the deans as the officiating director.

“Mishra was apprised by a senior member of the board that the board has accepted the resignation of Anju Seth and he has to continue as the acting director till further announcement,” said an official of the institute.

On March 10, IIM-C had called for applications for a new director who, the advertisement said, “is expected to provide strong academic leadership”.

An official of the institute said Seth’s “position became untenable as she embarked on a collision course” with a large section of the teachers and members of the board, including the chairman of the board, Srikrishna Kulkarni.

Last year, several teachers of the B-school had written to the Centre and the institute’s board of governors twice, accusing Seth of lacking leadership quality, eroding the autonomy of the institute’s academic council and conceding space to peers like IIM-Ahmedabad and IIM-Bangalore.

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# IIM-C director steps down

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Seth had of late alleged that chairman Kulkarni was infringing on her executive powers. The board, in response, had accused her of improper conduct.

A full-scale turf war over the governance of IIM-C broke out between Seth and Kulkarni.

“The board had dropped a broad hint that they wanted her to leave when the search for her successor started 10 months before her term was to expire in February 2022. Usually, the selection process commences three to four months before the expiry of the tenure of the existing director,” said the official.

Seth had relocated from the US and joined the institute in August 2018.

She will turn 65 in January 2022. The IIM Act, 2017, sets the age of director’s superannuation at 65.

Repeated calls to director Seth went unanswered. She did not respond to text messages either.

Metro had reported on December 6 last year that 60 of 76 teachers of IIM-C had written to the Union education ministry, raising concerns about the “decline in academic and research environment” and “systematic undermining” of the academic council, the institute’s principal academic body.

On June 24 last year, 51



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teachers had signed and sent a letter to the board, pointing out what they termed “deficiencies in the current administration” and an “absence of plurality of views on the campus”.

“Even the students were not happy with the director,” another official said. The students’ council wrote to her last month alleging that the institute did not have “facilities to provide a stable Internet connection in their hostel rooms”.

Following the absence of stable Internet connections at home amid the pandemic, some IIM-C students, who had returned to the campus, had complained that the premises of one of India’s premier B-schools was lacking in IT infrastructure.

“A combination of all these factors created a situation where she was forced to put in her papers. Her relation with the board became so strenuous that late last month, the board had passed a resolution against her and stripped her of powers to make appointments and initiate disciplinary actions,” he said.