

## South Asian University Expels Bangladeshi Student Over Shivratri Food Clash



The South Asian University (SAU) has expelled a Bangladeshi doctoral scholar and levied a fine of Rs. 5,000 on the students' mess secretary following a clash that occurred over the serving of non-vegetarian food on the Hindu festival of Maha Shivratri. The disciplinary action, announced by university officials on Friday, July 18, 2025, comes after a detailed investigation by the institution's proctorial committee.

The incident in question transpired on February 26 when an altercation erupted in the university mess. Reports indicate that a group of students, affiliated with the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), had requested that only vegetarian food be provided on Maha Shivratri, a day of fasting for many Hindu devotees. However, fish curry was reportedly served, leading to a confrontation where ABVP members allegedly attempted to remove the non-vegetarian offering from the serving counter. This action escalated into a heated exchange and a physical scuffle, during which a female member of the mess committee was reportedly manhandled.

Following the investigation, the SAU found doctoral candidate Sudipto Das guilty of "serious misconduct" due to "multiple instances of indiscipline." The university has ordered his immediate expulsion, permanently disqualifying him from applying to any future programs at SAU, and has instructed him to vacate the hostel premises within 24 hours. The expulsion notice also referenced a prior suspension in 2022 for similar disruptive actions. Additionally, mess secretary Yashada Sawant was penalized Rs. 5,000 for failing to maintain order within the dining facility.

While the Students' Federation of India (SFI) accused ABVP members of attempting to impose their dietary preferences and termed the incident an attack on secular values, the ABVP

maintained that serving non-vegetarian food on a fasting day was "insensitive" and disruptive to religious harmony. Local police had responded to a call regarding the disturbance at the time but found no active clash upon arrival, and no formal complaint was filed, leaving the university to handle the matter internally.

This incident underscores the sensitivities surrounding religious observances and dietary practices within educational institutions. The university's decision highlights its stance on maintaining order and addressing misconduct stemming from such disputes on campus.