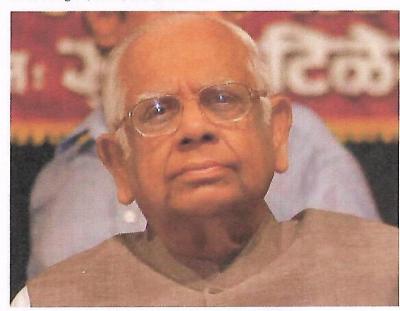
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Somnath Chatterjee's body follows mentor Jyoti Basu's to SSKM Hospital

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KOLKATA: It may be a coincidence that Somnath Chatterjee's body was donated on Organ Donation Day, a movement for which the veteran parliamentarian vouched for. His body reached SSKM's anatomy department on Monday evening, the same place where his mentor Jyoti Basu's body was taken eight years ago and where his remains are still used for education and research. Chatterjee had pledged his body on September 8, 2002, at the age of 73.

Immediately after his body reached the hospital, a team from the plastic surgery department retrieved his skin and put it in the hospital's skin bank. Chatterjee's corneas, which have been donated to Priyamvada Birla Aravind Hospital, are already in the hospital's eye bank.

"We will try to use every bit of his body — from organs to bones — for education and research, just like the way we did in case of Basu's body," said Dr Asis Ghoshal, anatomy head at SSKM Hospital. Apart from benefiting medical students, Chatterjee's skin will also be used for grafting while treating burn patients.

Sayan Chakraborty