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Jadavpur University student's death: Have enough evidence to prove murder, public prosecutor tells court

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KOLKATA: The police have "enough evidence" that "corroborates" the allegations made by the first-year Jadavpur University student's father who had alleged that his son had been "thrown from the second-floor balcony" of JU Main Hostel on the night of August 9, public prosecutor Sourin Ghosal told a local court on Monday.

LEGAL TAKE

➤ Public prosecutor Sourin Ghosal told the court that cops have “enough evidence” that “corroborates” charges by the JU student’s father who had alleged that his son was “thrown from the second-floor balcony” of JU Main Hostel on August 9

➤ PP compared the case with the Bhowanipore murder case of 2004 when security

guard Dhananjoy Chatterjee murdered a student and the SC upheld the death sentence based largely on circumstantial evidence

➤ Investigators said that in the absence of CCTVs, they have collected witness accounts that more or less corroborate each other

Replying to the allegation from defence counsel that no one saw the student being thrown from the second floor, the public prosecutor claimed that even no one had seen Dhananjay Chatterjee murdering a student at Bhowanipore in 2004. "It was based on circumstantial evidence that the prosecution built the case and the Supreme Court of India upheld the death sentence," he said.

Investigators told TOI that in the absence of CCTV cameras, they have collected witness accounts that more or less corroborate each other. "It has been established that certain disturbing events took place on the balcony preceding the fall. We will not divulge the details as that is part of our evidence building and also significant in building the charge sheet," said a member of the probe team.

Ghosal also rebutted claims from the defence about delays in lodging the murder FIR. "The police were denied entry to the place of occurrence. Under these circumstances, we could not have lodged a case based on mere assumptions until the victim's father lodged a case. Once the probe was initiated, all evidence collected so far corroborate the allegations made by the victim's father," said Ghosal. The father, in the last line of his complaint, had alleged that his son was thrown from the balcony of the hostel.

The court proceedings on Monday took place after six, including JU students and alumni, were produced in court after the end of their police custody. The students are Md Arif, a third-year student of civil engineering, Md Asif Azmal, a fourth-year electrical engineering student, and Ankan Sardar, third-year civil engineering student. The former students produced in court were Saptak Kamilya and Suman Naskar of environmental science department and Asit Sardar of Sanskrit department.

The court reserved the judgment till late in the evening before sending all the accused to judicial custody till September 8. They will be produced in court with three other accused on that day.

Cops also claimed that the six accused were present on the same floor when the minor fell. The three former students had fled immediately after the incident after they influenced and tutored all hostellers to speak in the "same voice".