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HOME   OPINION   INDIA   MY KOLKATA ⌄   EDUGRAPH ⌄   STATES ⌄   WORLD   BUSINESS   SCIENCE & TECH   ENTERTAINMENT   SPORTS ⌄

Home / West Bengal / Jadavpur University student death case: Police change grilling strategy as arrested men not cooperating

JU student death case: Police change grilling strategy as arrested men not cooperating

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Jadavpur University
File image

The police have lodged the 12 people arrested for their "involvement" in the alleged ragging and sexual harassment of a first-year student of Jadavpur University leading to his death, at different police stations as they are not cooperating with the investigation, a senior officer said on Sunday.

The police also claimed that they got evidence that one of the arrested men, who is also a student association leader, had made the deceased sign a "fake" complaint against a senior student belonging to a rival body about his involvement in ragging.

"They (arrested people) are not dreaded criminals, but educated young men. They are not at all cooperating with our officers. For a crime where collective involvement is found, we generally question the accused people making them sit together.

"But here we have decided to change our strategy and talk to them separately as they are parroting each other. For that reason, we have kept them separately," the officer told PTI.

Officials said it appeared the accused had been coached to give exactly an identical version of the event. Usually, there are minor variations of the same incident in the testimony given by different witnesses.

As these people are trying to mislead the investigators, the police are looking for a "gap" in the versions of the 12 arrested, all of whom are former and current students of JU. Besides them, another ex-student was apprehended on Saturday.

A few of the arrested accused are in the central lockup at Lalbazar, the Calcutta Police headquarters, while others are at lockups in different police stations.

"These people are constantly trying to mislead us. They are giving us corroborating versions," he said.

The officer claimed that it was an "organised crime" and the victim "has probably broken down due to the immense mental trauma" he had to face continuously for two to three days.

Meanwhile, the police on Saturday night arrested one former student of the varsity for allegedly obstructing the police to enter the hostel campus on August 9 night when the 17-year-old boy fell from a second-floor balcony of the main boys' hostel. He died the next day.

The arrested person is a former student of the International Relations department. He was summoned for questioning at Jadavpur Police Station after which he was arrested, the officer added.

His family alleged he was a victim of ragging as well as sexual molestation.