

The Telegraph *online*

Tuesday, 28 January 2025

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Jadavpur University ragging case: Approach Calcutta High Court to punish accused, VC told

In late September, JU informed 17 students that they had been 'rusticated for one semester' and expelled from JU hostels permanently on charges of ragging the first-year student

Subhankar Chowdhury | Published 31.10.24, 06:19 AM



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Two members of Jadavpur University's executive council told the vice-chancellor on Wednesday to approach a division bench of Calcutta High Court so the students implicated in the varsity's probe into the ragging of a first-year student can be penalised.

In late September, JU informed 17 students that they had been "rusticated for one semester" and expelled from JU hostels permanently on charges of ragging the first-year student.

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However, action could not be taken against 15 other students against whom JU's anti-ragging committee recommended penal measures as they had moved a single-judge bench of the court.

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Kaji Mashum Akhter, a member of the executive council, the university's highest decision-making body, said: "During the council meeting held late on Tuesday, when we sought to know from the VC why action could not be taken against these 15 students, we were told that a single bench of the high court has restrained the university from taking any action. We asked the VC why the university was not moving a division bench challenging the order of the single bench."

"The university must explore every option to ensure that those found guilty of ragging in the university's probe get punished."

The first-year student died on August 10 last year after allegedly being ragged by senior students at the university's main hostel.

Manojit Mandal, another council member, said: "We have witnessed how protests have broken out across the city seeking justice for the RG Kar rape-and-murder victim. JU authorities should do everything to ensure justice for one of its students who died last year after being subjected to ragging. The university cannot remain inactive because of what the single-judge bench has said. The varsity authorities must be proactive and move the division bench."

Calls and text messages to VC Bhaskar Gupta went unanswered.

JU has been accused of dithering on acting against those implicated in the report of the university's anti-ragging committee time and again.

In late September, a section of JU students started protests against the authorities' alleged failure to act against those found guilty.

It was only after these protests that JU, on September 27, informed the 17 students individually about the quantum of punishment depending on their degree of involvement in ragging the student.

On Wednesday, a meeting of the university's anti-ragging committee decided that the departments and the varsity's placement office would be informed about the punishment slapped on the 17 JU students.

On July 27, education minister Bratya Basu said he would speak to the JU authorities about why no action had been taken against those held responsible for

ragging.

The father of the deceased student said: “We fail to understand what prevented them from moving the higher court to ensure that these 15 students are also punished.”.

The list of 15 students includes the five against whom the committee recommended rustication for four semesters and permanent expulsion from the JU hostel because they were directly associated with the ragging.

Against the other 10, the committee recommended rustication for one semester and permanent expulsion from the hostel.

Six JU students, former and present, identified as “raggers”, and four JU students described as being “fully involved in ragging” are outside the remit of punishment as they are in judicial custody.

A JU official said the executive council decided that the university will hold its annual convocation on December 24.



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