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## 50 university teachers demand release of Maidul Islam

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Fifty teachers of different public universities demanded the immediate release of Chittagong University teacher Maidul Islam who was sent to jail in a case filed over making 'derogatory remarks' on prime minister Sheikh Hasina on Facebook.

'We have come to know that Assistant Professor Maidul Islam of sociology department of Chittagong University was sent to jail on Monday. We are surprised, angered and saddened at the incident,' said a joint statement issued by the teachers on Wednesday.

A release signed by Fahmidul Haq, an associate professor of Dhaka University's Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, said, 'According to newspaper reports, Bangladesh Chhatra League took position against Maidul Islam and another teacher following their Facebook posts during the quota reform movement across the country and declared them 'persona non grata' in their departments on July 17. Facing threats from BCL, Maidul was forced to leave campus and submitted a letter to the proctor seeking his security. Later, a former leader of BCL filed a case against Maidul with Hathazari police station under Section-57 of the ICT Act.'

The statement also said that Maidul was granted anticipatory bail for eight weeks from court on August 6. He surrendered before the court on Monday after his bail term expired. The court sent him to jail, denying his bail petition.

The teachers, in the statement, demanded Maidul's release from jail with honour as soon as possible.

They also demanded that the person/s who had threatened him be identified and brought to trial.

Economics professor Anu Mohammad of Jahangirnagar University, Professor Giti Ara Nasreen and Professor Robaet Ferdous of mass communication and journalism department of Dhaka University, and Samina Lutfi, associate professor of sociology department at Dhaka University, were among the signatories of the statement.

Chittagong University authorities on Tuesday suspended Maidul Islam over his post on Facebook in support of the quota reform movement and alleged demeaning of the prime minister.

On July 24, a former leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League and CU student Md Iftekhar Uddin Ayaz filed the case with Hathazari police station under the Information and Communication Technology Act.

On July 15, the sociology teacher had to leave the campus along with his family following 'continuous threats' from BCL activists over his post.



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