

Assault on Polytech Principal: Police identify 12 BCL men who were 'directly involved'



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Police yesterday said around a hundred Chhatra League men were found involved in the humiliation of Rajshahi Polytechnic Institute Principal Farid Uddin Ahmed, while 12 of them directly pushed him into the pond on Saturday.

“The incident didn’t occur without a plan,” Sub-inspector Towhidur Rahman of Chandrima Police station told The Daily Star yesterday, adding that police identified all those involved from video footage.

Law enforcers received two video footages from CCTV cameras of the institution, and gathered several other videos from unofficial sources that suggest the incident was pre-planned.

One of the clips shows nearly 100 men celebrating near the spot of the incident, hours after the incident, he said.

All the involved persons are leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatral League, said Golam Mostafa, officer-in-charge of the police station, adding that they found some outsiders there as well.

The numbers of involved BCL men given by the police is higher than those accused by the principal.

In the case filed with the police station on Sunday, the principal had accused a total 58 persons, among which he named eight BCL men -- including the unit joint secretary Kamal Hossain Sourav.

Police arrested four more BCL activists yesterday, raising the total number of arrests to nine so far in connection to the case.

However, all of the 12 persons who police say were directly involved in pushing Ahmed into the pond, are still at large, including the eight named in the case.

The OC said several police teams and detectives have raided different areas in the city and outside to arrest the accused. "Tracing their phone numbers and other clues, we know they are outside Rajshahi. We are closing in on them; they will be caught soon," he added.

Meanwhile, students of the institute continued their demonstration on campus yesterday, demanding immediate arrest of the culprits.

They also demanded cancellation of studentship of the involved students, politics-free campus, restriction on outsiders on campus, and safety of students, teachers and officials of the institute.

Some of the demonstrators alleged that many general students were scared to take part in the demonstrations, as BCL men have threatened them of consequences for taking part in demonstrations.

Abu Ahammad Al Mamun, deputy commissioner of Detective Branch of police in Rajshahi, said, “We talked to the students and heard their allegations. We will ensure their safety.”

Meanwhile, a three-member committee formed by Directorate of Technical Education visited the campus for the second day yesterday.

Led by its director SM Ferdous Alam, the committee measured depth of the pond where the principal was pushed into, and found it to be 15-feet deep, enough to cause anyone’s death.

They also talked to students, teachers and staffers of the institute, Alam said.

“We will submit our findings in due time”, he said.

Talking to The Daily Star, Principal Farid Uddin Ahmed said, “I am glad that police and detectives are working on this case sincerely.”

On Saturday, some youths, led by the institute unit BCL Joint Secretary Kamal Hossain Saurav, intercepted Principal Farid Uddin Ahmed of Rajshahi Polytechnic Institute near a pond, when he was walking towards his office, dragged and pushed him into it.