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BCL activists break head of RU student

RU Correspondent | Updated at 12:37am on November 17, 2019



Students of Rajshahi University go out on demonstration on the campus on Saturday in protest against torture of a student by two activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League at a hall of residence. — New Age photo

Two activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League, student wing of the ruling Awami League, severely beat up a student at his hall on the Rajshahi University campus for half an hour over a trifling matter on early Saturday some 40 days after engineering student Abrar Fahad was tortured to death by BCL members in Dhaka.

The victim, Sohrab Hossain, a third-year student at RU finance department, was interrogated and tortured at room 254 of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall by the BCL activists over an allegation of theft at about 1:00am, said witnesses.

The incident took place just one month and 10 days after Abrar, 21, a second-year student of electrical and electronic engineering at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, was beaten to death by BCL leaders at the university's Sher-e-Bangla Hall on October 7.

His murder following his critical views on Facebook over India-Bangladesh deals had triggered protests nationally and internationally.

Sohrab was now undergoing treatment at Rajshahi Medical Collage Hospital in a critical condition.

Doctors said he received fractures in his left arm and was given at least fifteen stitches in the head which was bleeding.

Witnesses said that a laptop and a power bank were stolen on Wednesday night from room 258 of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall where BCL activist Asif Luck used to reside.

Following the incident, Asif called Sohrab to the room on Thursday and interrogated him. At one stage of the interrogation, Asif slapped him thrice and the incident ended that day.

However, Asif and his friend BCL activist Humayon Kabir Nahid, followers of BCL RU unit president Golam Kibria, called Asif again to room 254 of the hall, said witnesses, adding that they went in front of the room hearing the Sohrab's screaming.

They found Sohrab bleeding profusely when the door of the room was opened with his head covered with clothes to stop bleeding, several witnesses said.

Talking to New Age on the hospital bed, Sohrab said that Asif had slapped him three days ago claiming that he stole Asif's laptop.

'At about 1:00 am on Saturday Asif and Nahid went to the roof of the hall, where I was chatting with some of my friends, and asked us to follow them,' Asif said.

'They took us to room 254, locked the room and asked me the same question whether I stole the laptop or not. At one stage, Nahid started beating me up with iron rods on the arms and legs', Asif added.

Later, Asif also joined in the beating and was relentlessly hitting his head with a piece of wood, he further added.

'They beat me indiscriminately all over the body. When bleeding started from my head, I cried out loudly and requested them not to beat me, but they threatened to kill me if I shouted,' Sohrab also told New Age.

He feared that he might be going to be another Abrar of BUET, he said.

Sohrab's friends, who had also been taken inside the room, witnessed the torture but did not dare to say anything, said one of the witnesses requesting anonymity.

When contacted, Asif Luck told New Age that Sohrab and his friends were taking drugs on the roof of the hall. 'I called him to the room to ask why he was taking drugs,' he claimed, adding that there was a scuffle between him and Shohrab that left the latter injured.

However, BCL activist Humayon Kabir Nahid, a final-year Bangla student, could not be contacted for his comment despite repeated attempts over mobile phone.

Following the incident, several hundred students of the university brought out a protest procession on the campus in the morning, and later blocked the Dhaka-Rajshahi highway in front of the university's main entrance at 11:00 am with their three-point charter of demand.

Their demands include immediate arrest of Asif and Nahid and expulsion of them from the university, resignation of Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall provost for failure to provide security to the students of the hall, and bearing full cost of Sohrab's treatment by the university authority.

The agitating students postponed their demonstration till 10:00am today after RU finance department teacher Kamruzzaman Bachchu, on behalf of the university administration, assured the students of meeting their demands soon.

A section of the university teachers have declared to form a human chain on campus at 11:00 am today protesting against the incident.

Arabic teacher Iftikharul Alam Masud told New Age that they would hold the chain in front of the university senate building under the banner of 'Nipiran Birodhi Chhatra Shikkhak Okya'.

Meanwhile, the Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall authority formed a four-member probe body headed by the hall house tutor assistant professor Omar Faruq to investigate i the incident.

Hall provost professor Julkar Nayeem told New Age that they asked the probe body to submit its findings within 72 hours.

Professor Jukar Nayeem said that they had also cancelled the Asif and Nahid's residence of the hall temporarily. He said the university authority would bear all the expenses of Asif's treatment.

When contacted, BCL RU unit president Golam Kibria told New Age that they had formed a four-member probe body to investigate the incident.

The probe body was asked to submit its finding within 24 hours, Kibria said, adding that they would take orgainsational action if the duo were found guilty.

A case was filed by Sohrab with Motihar Police Station in connection with the torture against Asif and Nahid, Hafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of the police station confirmed.

'We have detained four persons from the hall for interrogation,' the OC also said.

Earlier on February 6, 2018, Chhatra League activists of Salimullah Muslim Hall of Dhaka University beat up Ehsan Rafiq allegedly for seeking his calculator back. The torture damaged his sight in the right eye.



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