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Sonepat village sarpanch guns down RTI applicant

The deceased, identified as Ashish Dahiya, was killed when he along with his cousin were working out in a gym near his village

PUNJAB (HTTPS://WWW.HINDUSTANTIMES.COM/PUNJAB/) Updated: Jun 26, 2018 12:07 IST

Hardil Hindu

Hardik Anand (https://www.hindustantimes.com/columns/hardik-anand) Hindustan Times, Rohtak



Deceased Ashish Dahiya(HT Photo)

The sarpanch of Pipli village in Sonepat district allegedly shot dead a 24-year-old man on Sunday night, reportedly over suspicion that he had sought details against him through an RTI application.

The deceased, identified as Ashish Dahiya, was killed when he along with his cousin were working out in a gym near his village.

This was the second attack by sarpanch Ram Nivas within last one month on persons he suspected to have filed the RTI application. Earlier on June 12, a 35-year-old man identified as Ramavtar Singh was shot at by the sarpanch, but he survived the attack and is currently undergoing treatment at PGIMS in Rohtak.

Dahiya's cousin Akash said they both had been living in New Delhi's Mukherjee Nagar to prepare for competitive exams after pursuing engineering. "Around two weeks ago, the sarpanch issued us a death threat on a phone call, following which we lodged a complaint with the Delhi Police," Akash said, adding that their family members then asked them to return to the village.

"On Sunday evening, my brother and I had gone to a gym when sarpanch Ram Nivas along with his aides reached there and entered into an argument with us over the RTI application. He then opened fire at Ashish and managed to flee in a car with his associates," Akash said.

The root of dispute

As per Akash, the dispute was over a property belonging to previously injured Ramavtar Singh. "Ramavtar had lodged a case against sarpanch after the latter illegally occupied some property owned by him. Another local youth Pradeep had also filed an RTI seeking the registration details of the property to help Ramavtar. We also lent our support to them, which did not go down well with the sarpanch," Akash said, adding that Ram Nivas had then threatened to kill all the people who went against him.

The family has also alleged that they had approached the police seeking security cover for their sons after the death threat, but in vain. The family members have now expressed their worry stating that the sarpanch, if remained out of police net, could target Akash as well.

On contacting, Kharkhoda station house officer (SHO) Wazir Singh said they have registered a case of murder against the sarpanch, who continues to be at large.

However, when asked why did not they provide security to the cousin duo, he said the complaint of death threat was registered with the Delhi Police, not them.

Meanwhile, The concerned Delhi Police officials could not be contacted.

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