

UP RTI activist killed after query on village work

TNN | Nov 29, 2022, 01.00 PM IST



Aligarh: A 32-year-old RTI activist in Aligarh was beaten to death allegedly by eight men, including the village head and his son, on Sunday evening for questioning the quality of public projects underway in the area. His brother has been left critically injured in the vicious attack.

The victim's family has told police that Devjeet Singh, a resident of Gorai village under Aligarh's Iglas police station, was killed while he and his brother were tending to their farm for his attempts to expose corrupt practices of the sitting gram pradhan Devendra Singh. DSP Raghvendra Singh said, "An FIR has been registered against the gram pradhan, his son Kartik and six others named in the complaint."

Village head, 7 others booked for murder

They have been under various sections of the IPC including 302 (murder), 147 (rioting), 506 (criminal intimidation) among others. The accused men are absconding. Efforts are being made to arrest them." Devjeet's father Mahendra Singh told TOI: "My son had filed an RTI query two months ago seeking information on the quality of development work done by the village pradhan. He had also filed multiple complaints with various authorities alleging substandard quality material being used for construction in the village and sought appropriate action.

Since then we have been getting death threats. We approached the police last month to file a complaint against Devendra but no action was taken. Now, I have lost my son due to their negligence." The victim's uncle Ramvir Singh added: "The village

pradhan and his relatives brutally attacked my nephews with lathis and sharp-edged weapons. When we heard about the assault, we rushed to the spot only to find the two lying in a pool of blood. Devjeet had grievous injuries on his head and he died on his way to the Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College. His younger brother Surendra is in critical condition and undergoing treatment at the same hospital.”

As news of the murder spread, hundreds of villagers along with the bereaved family staged a protest with the victim’s body on Monday demanding immediate arrest of the culprits. Later, after senior police officials gave assurance of time-bound action, the body was cremated. According to villagers, Devjeet used to run a computer centre in the village besides supporting his father in agricultural activities. He also helped local residents apply for various government schemes and document their grievances. He is survived by his 28-year-old wife and two minor kids -- a 3- year-old boy and a daughter who is not yet two years old.