

# Gang attack fails to deter bold RTI activist

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G Manjusainath, Bangalore, September 28, DHNS:

**A life-threatening attack on him with lethal weapons has not daunted an activist, who sought information under the Right to Information (RTI) Act on road projects of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).**

S Channabasappa Patil was set upon by three motorcycle-borne men armed with a machete and a steel rod in the Gandhi Nagar area. The attack has left him with injuries to his right hand that required 37 stitches. The assailants hit him on his head with the steel rod, which could have killed him but for the helmet he was wearing. Such was the impact of the blow on his head, that the helmet split into two.

## Misappropriation of funds

Channabasappa never dreamt that seeking information from the major roads section of the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike would nearly cost him his life. His RTI application revealed a gross misappropriation of funds.

For instance, BBMP spent Rs 27 lakh on tarring a stretch of 500 metres on Gangammagudi Road whereas it hardly costs Rs two lakh to tar the two-kilometre stretch. Another glaring case was that of the Major Roads Department, which was found to have spent Rs 49 lakh to tar a stretch of 6.5 km on Shivaram Karanth Road.

Expenditure on construction of highrise pedestrian crossings, bus bays, cast in-situ RCC medians across the city and painting of roads was disproportionate, alleged Patil.

He had even lodged a complaint with the Lokayukta in this regard. On September 16 evening, between 7.30 pm and 8 pm Patil was riding his scooter in Gandhi Nagar, when three men on a motorcycle accosted him. As soon as Patil stopped his two-wheeler, one of them attacked him with a machete leaving his hand bleeding profusely.

The second assailant hit on his head with a steel rod, breaking the helmet into two. The assailants then fled.

## No one arrested

Even as he bled, Patil rushed to the Upparpet police station. Policemen at the station provided him with immediate medical assistance and based on his complaint, registered a case, but under Section 324 of the IPC instead of Section 307 of the IPC for murderous assault. None has been arrested in

the case so far.