

Shujaat Bukhari's killers being identified



Days after journalist and Rising Kashmir's editor Shujaat Bukhari's killing in Srinagar, the Jammu Kashmir police has tracked down suspects and three individuals involved in the daylight shooting have been identified - including one allegedly associated with LeT and the other two are locals from a Kashmiri village.

On June 14th, when Shujaat Bukhari, the editor of Rising Kashmir, along with two personal security officials had just left office in Srinagar and got into car for an iftar party with family. Meanwhile, three unidentified men on motorcycle rained bullets at the journalist from close range - hitting Shujaat with 17 bullets and all three including his two PSOs died on spot. The killing of Shujaat Bukhari that showcased the vulnerability of journalists and free press had spread outrage among the entire media and press community, as well as common people.

Police had been continuously trying to track down the three killers who were seen on CCTV cameras in the city, carrying a sack full of weapon on motorcycle, but their faces hidden. As per latest reports from Jammu Kashmir police, the three armed men riding a bike were captured on CCTV cameras near Lal Chowk and are now "being identified". The police and intelligence is working on piecing footages from various locations together to trace the route used by the killers and identify them as soon as possible. Retrieval of the "lost" CCTV footage at the spot where Shujaat was killed using at least 60 high-calibre bullets is also undergoing.

While identification is still subject to investigation, one of the three killers is believed to be have much resemblance with the Lashkar-e-Taiba militant Naveed Jatt who had escaped from police custody from the Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) hospital in Srinagar, earlier this year. Whereas two others are believed to be locals from some village in southern Kashmir, but are "yet to be identified". In contrast to these findings, both United Jihad Council (UJC) and the LeT have denied any involvement in the assassination of the peaceful voice of Kashmir's real face. It is likely that even if the killers are tracked down, we would never know who actually got Shujaat Bukhari killed.