

Advocate, PSO shot dead

BY A STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, JUNE 13— UNIDENTIFIED EXTREMISTS SHOT DEAD AN ADVOCATE OF THE GAUHATI HIGH COURT, SRI SURAJIT MITRA AND HIS PERSONAL SECURITY OFFICER (PSO) SAILEN PATHAK IN THE DHIRENPARA AREA OF THE CITY THIS EVENING, WHILE THE DRIVER OF THE CAR IN WHICH THEY WERE TRAVELLING WAS ALSO INJURED IN THE INCIDENT.

According to information available, Sri Mitra picked up three youths from different localities of the Fatashil Ambari area this evening and they all went to the premises of the Champawati High School in the Dhirenpara area. After a brief discussion between Sri Mitra and the youths, two youths came out of the car and shot at the PSO Sailem Pathak killing him at the spot. The driver of the car tried to flee but he was shot at his legs and he has been shifted to the Guwahati Medical College Hospital for treatment. The youths then



Bodies of (left) Surajit Mitra, advocate and (right) Sailem Pathak, his PSO, who were killed by unidentified extremists in the Dhirenpara area of the city yesterday. —AT photo

drove the car to the Ganeshpara area and abandoned it there. The bullet ridden body of Sri Mitra was later recovered from the car. Police recovered cartridges of .38 revolver and M 20 pistols from the premises of the Champawati High School and the car. The incident took place between 5.30 to 6 pm.

The extremists also took away the revolver of the PSO along with 12 rounds of ammunition.

Though the police is yet to ascertain the identity of the militants involved in the incident, police sources did not rule out the possibility of links between the killing and Sri Mitra's efforts to mediate

between the Government and the NDFB.

It may be mentioned here that Sri Mitra, who is known for his political connections, reportedly acted as a mediator between the Central Government and Bodo militant outfit (NDFB) for a dialogue and during his last visit

to the State the Union Defence Minister George Fernandes visited the house of Sri Mitra to have a discussion on the subject.

Sri Mitra, aged about 35 years, left behind his wife and a son. Son of late Santi Mitra, Surajit Mitra started his career as a lawyer as a junior to noted advocate JB Bhattacharjya about eight years back but in the last couple of years or so, he rarely attended the court. Sri Mitra also acted as the legal adviser to the Bodoland Autonomous Council after the PDF was given the responsibility of ruling the Council.

Sri Mitra became the second person to be gunned down while trying to mediate between the Government and the ultras. In 1991, former AJYCP leader Bipul Mahanta, who tried to mediate between the Government and the ULFA for a negotiated settlement of the problem, was gunned down in his residence in the Silpukhuri area of the city.

The Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta has condemned the incident.

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