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Asia - India

Triple murder

Three newspaper employees murdered, police urged to act quickly

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Reporters Without Borders is appalled to learn that three employees of *Dainik Ganadoot*, a local Bengali-language daily based in Agartala, the capital of the northeastern state of Tripura, were stabbed to death at the newspaper's headquarters by two unidentified intruders on 19 May.

"We are shocked and horrified by this targeted triple murder of news professionals and we call for immediate measures to protect the victims' colleagues and families," Reporters Without Borders said.

"We also urge the police and judicial authorities to pursue their investigation with the aim of quickly identifying the perpetrators and instigators of these awful murders and then bringing them to justice without delay."

The police said two men entered the newspaper at around 3 p.m., stabbed proof-reader **Sujit Bhattacharya** and driver **Balaram Ghosh** and then went upstairs and stabbed office manager **Ranjit Chowdhury**.

No arrests have so far been made and no measures have been taken to protect the families of the victims, who fear for their safety.

According to the <u>Times of India</u>, three individuals forced their way into the home of the office manager's widow, Bina Chowdhury, on 20 May, refusing to identify themselves to her. The next day, two other unidentified youths went to her home to "investigate."

Dainik Ganadoot owner Sushil Chowdhury has announced that he will give the family of each victim 100,000 rupees (1,400 euros) in compensation. He has also offered a reward of 1 million rupees for information about the killers.

The opposition called a 12-hour general strike yesterday in Agartala in protest against the murders. The Communist Party of India (Marxist), which heads the Tripura state government, did not oppose the strike.

Photo: tripura4u.com