

India arrests three over killing of Mumbai attacks lawyer

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Mumbai, PAB-Online

Three alleged contract killers have been arrested over the murder of a defence lawyer representing one of three men on trial over the 2008 Mumbai attacks, police said.

The trio, aged 25, 28 and 32, were detained in a Mumbai suburb and are being questioned over the death of Shahid Azmi, who was shot repeatedly at point blank range in his office last Friday.

The 32-year-old lawyer was defending one of two Indian nationals accused of providing key logistical support to the 10 Islamist extremist gunmen who stormed the city in November 2008, killing 166 and injuring more than 300.

Mumbai police's crime branch chief Rakesh Maria told a news conference Tuesday that the men had been arrested but the motive for the shooting was still unknown, the domestic Press Trust of India news agency said.

A senior police source told AFP last week that the crime was not connected to the high-profile trial.

Maria said an underworld gang leader paid the three men in custody 100,000 rupees (almost US\$2,200) to kill Azmi.

One of the suspects was wanted for questioning in connection with eight criminal cases, including two murders, the officer added. (AFP/IP)