

## **Houston Police arrest NRI's murderer: By Hindustan Times**

The Houston Police have arrested the alleged killer and six others in connection with gruesome murder of NRI Akhil Chopra.

The young computer professional from Ahmedabad, Akhil was shot dead at point blank range mid-afternoon on August 11 in a Houston park near his office of Star Pipe Products, where he had gone to mediate after lunch.

In his first media-interview after solving the case, investigator Curtis Scales said, "The killer Howard Dale Bellamy, aka "Peanut" was arrested from a hideout at 12200 Fondren at 7-45 pm on August 24. He was nabbed along with his girlfriend without much resistance."

Bellamy, 22 is now lodged in a city jail and was expected to be shifted to Harris County Jail on Thursday evening. Houston police, which had earlier announced a award of \$10,000 (about Rs 4.5 lakhs) for tip offs leading to Bellamy's arrest, would soon initiate trail against him for capital murder. If convicted, he might get a death penalty as Texas has provision for this.

Bellamy was arrested following a tip-off from Crime Stoppers. A team of officials from various organizations including Gulf Coast Violent Offender Task Force, US Marshals and Fondren Division Officers, besides investigators from the Homicide Division of Houston Police and Crime Stoppers were involved in his arrest. In all 30 to 50 people were involved in the fortnight-long investigation, he said.

Police said six other people have also been arrested by the police for fraudulence. They used the credit card and bank account of Akhil, which Bellamy got after the murder. Scales said Wells Fargo Bank helped police in tracing the use of Akhil's credit card. This resulted in initial arrest of three people whose interrogation helped police to reach out to the alleged killer and others, he said.

Names and details of the six others arrested, however, were not released by the police.

Scales - known for solving several similar cases in the past - said Bellamy had allegedly been involved in such robbery cases in the past: "This time he got the wrong person and we got the right arrest."

"I am greatly relieved to know that Howard Dale Bellamy, the suspect in the murder of Akhil Chopra, has been arrested and is held being without bail," said Vijay Pallod, close friend of Akhil and also his colleague at Star Pipe Products.

"Thank God! I am certainly relieved after Akhil's assailant has been caught. The console is that at least in future we can save wonderful people like Akhil. My congrats to Houston Police for arresting the murderer," said Kirti Jain, roommate of Akhil for three years.