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Fatal Assault in High Road

By Alison Roberts

A murder inquiry has been launched after a minicab driver was brutally attacked in East Finchley High Road, receiving injuries from which he later died.

Police found 60-year-old Modiuddin Bhuiya in the early hours of 13 July, lying in the street near the entrance to St Pancras cemetery. He had suffered injuries to the head and body. His car had been left a short distance away in the middle of the road.

Mr Bhuiya was taken to Whittington Hospital and later transferred to the Royal Free Hospital, where he died from his injuries the following morning. A post mortem established the cause of death as brain haemorrhage, due to a fracture of the skull.

It is understood that he



Victim - Modiuddin Bhuiya was making his way back to his minicab office in Flower

Mews, Archway, after dropping off a customer.

Road Rage?

DCI Martin Lee, who is heading the inquiry, said, "We are keeping an open mind as to what happened. We believe Mr Bhuiya may have been involved in an altercation with another driver resulting in him being assaulted, because of the way that the car was left in the road and because there is no suggestion of robbery."

"We are anxious to trace any witnesses or anyone who was in the High Road in the early hours of Saturday 13 July, to help us find out how Mr Bhuiya was injured."

Mr Bhuiya of Chesterfield Gardens, N4, had lost his business and was working as a minicab driver in order to pay for his daughters, Afsana (21) and Shampa (19), to attend university. He and his 47-year-old wife, Jahanara, also had two sons: Zahangir aged 24 and nine-year-old Jaffar.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Incident Room at Hendon on 020 8358 0200; if you wish to remain anonymous call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Does this scene jog your memory? Mr Bhuiya's car abandoned in the High Road on 13 July.

Cultural Centre or Tower Block?

By Daphne Chamberlain

News that the Arts Depot, the Tally Ho site still advertised as North London's cultural centre, might become a glorified tower block of flats evoked an angry response and several unanswered questions at the last Finchley Forum.

If approved, a new planning application would oust the expected two theatres, dance studio and Barnet College multi-media facilities, replacing them with a library and a meeting-room. Community Focus, the disability arts group, would retain some rooms but lose performance space.

Call for public meeting

The Forum wanted to know why nobody seemed to have heard about the planning application, even though it was dated a week earlier and there was only a three-week consultation period. Even the Arts Depot Trust apparently knew

nothing about it. In addition, it was pointed out that July was in the worst time of the year for public consultation.

In reply to the protests, Councillor Salinger wanted to know where people's priorities were. The arts had received plenty of money when there was not enough for the vital services of housing and education. So was additional accommodation being planned? This was unclear, though no reason was given for proposed "changes to elevation".

It was suggested from the floor that the Council should hold a public meeting to discuss the long-awaited Arts Centre being turned into a huge tower block.

Chair Leslie Sussman did concede that the consultation time should be extended.

The Forum was held in June at the Green Man Centre. For news of topics concerning East Finchley, see *Direct Bus to Royal Free* on page 4 and *Forum News* on page 3.



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