

World & Nation

Former Panther faces death in Atlanta murder trial

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Shouts. Shots.

Sneakers and blood hit the ground running. One officer dead, the other wounded.

It is now two years, a recanted third-party confession, tainted evidence, and contradictory testimonies later. The accused stands facing death if twelve consciences decide he is to suffer the fate of a cop killer.

On the stand is the accused, Jamil Al-Amin. He is a 58-year-old Muslim cleric once known as black militant H. Rap Brown.

On March 16, 2000, two Atlanta deputies went to a store that Al-Amin owned to serve him an arrest warrant that was due to his failure to make a court appearance on the charge of theft by receiving stolen property.

The deputies were greeted with gunfire from a man sheltering himself behind a black Mercedes-Benz. Deputy Richard Kinchen was fatally wounded and died in the hospital the next day. The other officer survived to report that the gunman had been wounded, and that there was a blood trail.

Dogs, Helicopters, and SWAT teams followed the trail

until it went cold in a vacant, west Atlanta house. On March 20, Al-Amin was arrested without a scratch on him, 175 Miles away from Atlanta in Lowndes County, Alabama.

The trial is now underway, and testimony of the surviving officer, Aldranon English, is bringing more confusion than clarity. While charges of racism still persist, they have been slightly muted by English being black also.

English told investigators in the days following the incident that the man who shot him had gray eyes. He repeated the description twice more, and was angered when investigators hinted that he was wrong about the man's eye color.

A month later, English changed his story. He now said the gunman wore yellow-tinted glasses at night.

This was the first of many inconsistencies pointed out by defense attorney Jack Martin. In one account, English said he approached the suspect. In another, English said he never advanced, shielding himself with the open door of the police car. In varying versions of the story, English described the suspect as wearing different-color hats.

English said he had shot the suspect at close range and

wounded him, but "Al-Amin had no wounds when he was arrested and the bullet casings at the scene suggested that English shot from a further distance than what he had said," Martin said.

English, the prosecution's only witness, identified Al-Amin from a photo line-up soon after he underwent surgery and had been given 4 milligrams of morphine. Defense lawyers argue that Atlanta Police coached English to identify Al-Amin.

The growing number of Al-Amin supporters claim "mounting evidence" that he is a victim of governmental grudge. In 1995, He was accused of aggravated assault after a man claimed Al-Amin had shot him. The man later recanted and said he was pressured by Atlanta authorities to identify him as the shooter.

In fact, the 58-year-old whom neighbors describe as "a man who tried to clean up the streets of drugs and prostitution," has been arrested for murder 15 times in the past 20 years, according to Ed Brown, Amin's brother, and the family spokesman. "On every single occasion, either someone else has confessed, or the state hasn't had enough evidence to bring an innocent man to trial."

Local News

Carthage

Moore County Sheriff's Deputy Randall Butler shot and killed one soldier and left another wounded last Tuesday. 1st Lt. Tallas Tomeny was killed and Sgt. Stephen Phelps was wounded. Both men were in the final exercise of their Special Forces testing. They were riding in a pick-up truck driven by a civilian participant. Butler had seen the truck pass twice and felt uneasy about its occupants - one of the soldiers was crouched down in the back. When the deputy stopped the pick-up, he saw a large duffel bag and a weapon in the truck bed. That is when Butler ordered all three men out of the vehicle. Unfortunately, the soldiers thought that this was part of their training and tried to grab the weapon. Butler fired, wounding Sgt. Phelps and killing 1st Lt. Tomeny.

Lexington

Seven people have already filed to run for sheriff in Davidson County. Gerald Hege, the current sheriff, is expected to file on Monday, and try to win a third four-year term. Opponents feel that this year they may have a chance to beat Hege due to the bad publicity his office has been getting lately. In the 1998 primary, Hege towered over his adversaries with 79 percent of the vote and later won the election with 57 percent.

Elkin

Two men died last Thurs. from suffocation inside a grain silo. Randy Tony Carpenter, 48, of Dayton, Va., and Justin Curtis Mines, 19, of Singers Glen, Va. died around 10:30 a.m. at the Wayne Farms Poultry Co. feed mill, five miles east of Elkin. The men had been inside of the silo patching holes in the bin's metal walls when mill workers opened a chute to fill a delivery truck. The mill workers were unaware that the men were working inside the silo. Both men had been lowered into 60-foot-tall silo by rope, but for some reason had taken off their harnesses once inside. As the grain emptied, both men were pulled under. It took rescue workers two hours to free their bodies.

Who's Who: Junichiro Koizumi

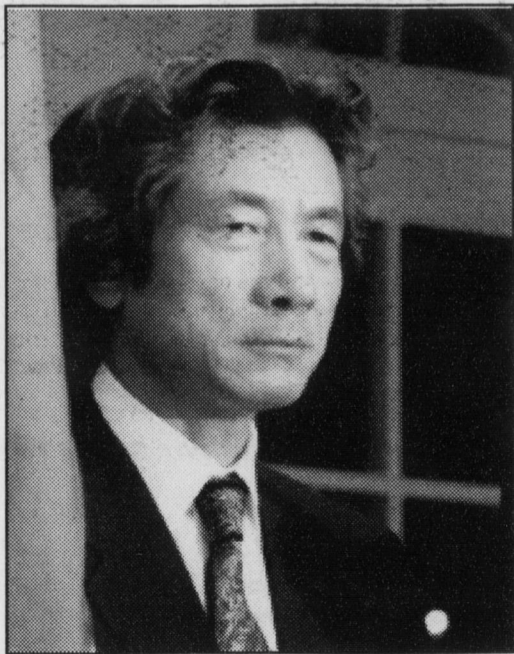
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Name: Junichiro Koizumi
Also known as: Jun-Chan
Position: Prime Minister of Japan

Koizumi was born Jan. 8, 1942, in Yokosuka City, Kanagawa, Japan. He was educated at Keio University and graduated with a degree in economics in 1967.

He has been involved in politics for most of his life, starting out as a secretary to a member of the House of Representatives and working his way up the Liberal Democratic Party over the past thirty years. He held many different posts during this time: the Chairman of Finances in 1980, Chairman of National Organization Committee in 1989, and most recently, the Minister of Health and Welfare in 1996.

In his third attempt to run for president, he was finally elected under the Liberal Democratic Party in 2001. He holds a liberal position on many issues and is working to turn around Japan's current recession. His motto is a quote from *The Analects of Confucius*, "The most fundamental principle of politics is trust."



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