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Press conference livestream

BACKGROUNDER: HPD DETAILS INVESTIGATION LEADING TO ARREST IN MURDER INVESTIGATION OF JONNAVEN MONALIM

The Honolulu Police Department (HPD) is providing a debrief of the investigation into the murder of 55-year-old Jonnaven Monalim. The following includes a timeline and key evidence that led to the identification of the victim and the arrest of the suspect.

On Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025, at approximately 10 a.m., District 3 patrol officers responded to a suspicious circumstance call at 96-546 Waihona Street in Pearl City. A woman reported that her brother, Monalim, did not return home the previous night and could not be reached.

Using location services, she tracked Monalim's last known location to Waihona Street, where she discovered blood on the sidewalk, her brother's hearing aids and both a spent and an unspent 9mm cartridge.

Family members told officers they last spoke with Monalim on Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2025, just after 5:30 p.m., when he said he was going to collect money from a gambling win.

Initial Leads & Missing Person Investigation

Early in the investigation, detectives learned that Clarence Luke, a friend of Monalim and the boyfriend of one of Monalim's sisters, might have information. Due to the evidence found on Waihona Street and Monalim's unusual behavior, a Missing Persons investigation was initiated on Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025.

Luke initially cooperated with detectives, stating that he met with Monalim at his Kapolei home, drove with him near the Embassy Suites hotels to "talk story" and later dropped

him off. He denied knowing anyone who would want to harm Monalim and consented to searches of his vehicle and cellphone. Detectives also processed Luke's 2014 gray Toyota pickup truck.

Witness Accounts

As part of the canvas of Waihona Street, detectives located a witness who reported that while leaving work, he saw a dark-colored pickup truck with both doors open and two men standing beside it. He recognized one of the men as Monalim, who appeared injured and was pleading with the other man to stop. The witness then heard two gunshots after passing the truck. He described Monalim as wearing a gray graphic T-shirt and dark shorts.

Cellphone & Surveillance Evidence

A forensic review of both men's phones showed the following:

- 5:00 p.m. – Monalim at home
- 5:45 p.m. – Luke at his residence
- 7:30 p.m. & 8:04 p.m. – Both phones on Waihona Street
- 9:00 p.m. – Both phones traveling westbound on H-1 together

The GPS data contradicted Luke's initial statement to detectives.

Additional surveillance obtained on Nov. 6, 2025, showed Luke arriving at Encore Collision in Waipahu around 11 a.m., driving a Toyota Tacoma and disposing of items in a dumpster. With permission, detectives searched the dumpster and recovered a blue Walmart bag containing a black T-shirt and black jeans as well as an Alpha Construction item. The business owner confirmed the items did not belong to him.

Surveillance from the night of Nov. 5, 2025, showed Luke wearing similar black clothing, which was later identified as belonging to him. The clothing was submitted to the Scientific Investigation Section (SIS) Forensic Biology Unit for testing.

Discovery of Monalim's Body

On Friday, Nov. 7, 2025, officers from the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) Homicide and Strategic Enforcement Detail, along with District 3's Crime Reduction Unit (CRU), conducted area checks near Waipi'o Point Access Road, where Luke's phone had also pinged on Nov. 5, 2025. At approximately 11:10 p.m., District 3 CRU officers located a decomposing body along the access road. The remains were believed to be those of Monalim based on tattoos, and his identity was later confirmed through fingerprint comparison.

A Murder in the Second Degree case was opened.

Autopsy Findings

On Saturday, Nov. 8, 2025, the Office of the Medical Examiner determined:

- Cause of Death: Multiple gunshot wounds
- Manner of Death: Homicide

The autopsy revealed Monalim sustained two gunshot wounds to the left side of his torso.

Arrest Warrant & Forensic Results

On Monday, Nov. 10, homicide detectives worked with the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney to prepare arrest warrants for Murder in the Second Degree and Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Separate Felony. A judge approved the warrants and set bail at \$1,000,000.

On Tuesday, Nov. 11, 2025, forensic testing confirmed that the black T-shirt recovered from the dumpster contained DNA belonging to Monalim. The shirt was previously identified as belonging to Luke.

Arrest of Clarence Luke

On Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2025, at approximately 8 a.m., District 3 CRU officers, with assistance from District 8 CRU, located Luke in Waipahu. He was arrested without incident for the two warrants.

Family members also told detectives that Luke had recently been ignoring Monalim's calls, creating tension between them. Detectives additionally learned that Luke may have owed money to individuals linked to gambling, which remains under investigation.

Acknowledgements

This investigation required extensive coordination across HPD. The department extends its appreciation to the following units:

- Specialized Services Division – K9 Search and Rescue, Cadaver Dog and Helicopter Section
- Scientific Investigation Section – Crime Scene Unit, Firearms Unit and Forensic Biology Unit
- Criminal Investigation Division – Cyber Crimes Unit, Crime Analysis Unit and Drone Team
- District 3 and District 8 Crime Reduction Units

The SIS Forensic Biology DNA Laboratory worked around the clock, providing critical results that helped advance the case. District 3 CRU officers were instrumental not only in locating the victim but also in apprehending the suspect.

Finally, HPD extends its gratitude to the community. Numerous residents shared surveillance footage, provided witness statements and assisted detectives. Their cooperation was vital in bringing this investigation to its current stage, and we thank them for their partnership in keeping our community safe.

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