

Man Poses As Up Minister, Stays At Goa Guest House; Arrested



Agencies

PANAJI: Goa Police have arrested a man for allegedly posing as a minister from Uttar Pradesh by submitting fake documents and staying at a state guest house here for over 10 days.

Four of his accomplices, who were staying with him at the state guest house here, have also been arrested, a senior Goa Crime Branch official said on Thursday.

The accused, Sunil Singh, was nabbed after Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant alerted the police about him.

Singh stayed at the state guest house here for almost 12 days before being caught on Tuesday. He had even sought an appointment with the chief minister, the official said.

"As he had shown his designation as Minister of Cooperation from the Uttar Pradesh government, he was also provided a personal security officer from the Goa Police," the official said.

After his behaviour was found to be suspicious, Sawant brought it to the notice of the Goa Police.

"I asked the Crime Branch to arrest the person. He had produced forged letters and e-mails to claim that he was a minister in the Uttar Pradesh government," Sawant told

reporters here.

The accused also met Goa Cooperation Minister Govind Gawade in the ministerial block here last week and discussed various issues related to the department.

When asked about it, Gawade said, "I was told that he was a state guest and a minister in the UP Cabinet. I didn't meet him for much time. He was with me for 10 minutes."

Gawade said he also found Singh's behaviour a little suspicious.

"So when I went back home, I searched for information on him on the internet but could not find anyone with that name. But I couldn't follow up the matter, as I was busy in other things," the minister said.

The Crime Branch official said Singh and his aides allegedly forged official documents of the UP government.

"We will be seeking help from our UP counterparts in the investigation," he said.

The accused also attended a school function in Canacona taluka of South Goa district where he was invited as the chief guest during his stay in the state.

BJP leader and Goa's former co-operation minister Prakash Velip was among those present at the function.



Tweeple Hail As Protesters Sing 'Jan Gan Man' At Jama Masjid

Agencies

NEW DELHI: Several hundred people took out a march on Wednesday night in old Delhi against the citizenship law and ended their protest with the national anthem.

In videos, being circulated on internet, children along with locals could be seen protesting against the CAA, NRC and NPR while several roamed around waving national flags and placards.

The 57-second clip that shows protesters across all age groups holding national flags, banners and candles has overwhelmed many Twitter users.

The march that started from Lal Kuan, passed through Chawri Bazaar and ended at the Jama Masjid. The protesters also expressed solidarity with the students of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Jamia Millia Islamia.

Twitteratti appreciated the

move and #NationalAnthem started trending with 30.1K Tweets, following which a user wrote: "And you thought National Anthem is sung in schools and theatres! This is from Jama Masjid..Take a breath!" "Ends with the National Anthem #Jamamasjid #NoCAANRC", added another.

A Tweeple remarked, "This is beautiful!...National anthem being sung at the iconic Jama Masjid in Old Delhi during #AntiCAA_NRC protests."

Gujarat Porsche Owner Pays Over Rs 27 Lakh To Get Back His Impounded Car



Agencies

AHMEDABAD: The owner of a Porsche 911 sports car paid Rs 27.68 lakh towards pending taxes, interest and penalty to get back his vehicle that was impounded for lack of valid documents.

After paying the money to the Ahmedabad Regional Transport Office (RTO), the car owner- Ranjit Desai- took back his impounded car from the city traffic police on Tuesday.

The car was impounded in November.

The Ahmedabad traffic police shared the photo of the RTO receipt on its Twitter handle and claimed that the fine of Rs 27.68 lakh was the highest ever in India.

"RTO slaps a fine of total Rs 27.68 Lakh on Porsche Car which was detained during a routine check by Ahmedabad Traffic West Police for not having required documents. One of the highest fine amount levied in the country ever," the traffic police tweeted

on Wednesday.

During a routine checking in Ahmedabad West, Porsche 911 was caught by PSI MB Virja. The vehicle had No Number Plate and Valid Documents. Vehicle detained and slapped fine of Rs. 9 Lakh 80 Thousand (9,80,000 INR). #AhmedabadPolice #Rules4All

The car was stopped at Helmet crossroad on November 28 as it did not have number plates.

On being questioned, the driver had failed to produce valid documents of the vehicle too, the police officer said.

"We had therefore detained the car and issued an RTO memo under the Motor Vehicles Act. This means that he has to deposit the penalty with the RTO and come to us with a receipt to get back the vehicle," a police officer said.

Initially a fine of Rs 9.8 lakh was slapped, but when the owner went to deposit that amount, the RTO dug out old records and imposed penalty of Rs 27.68 lakhs, which is the highest in India, he added.

Gangasagar Mela Gets No Central Funds But Kumbh Mela Does: Mamata



KOLKATA: West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said the central government does not provide funds for the annual 'Gangasagar Mela' held in the state, though it extends financial assistance to the 'Kumbh Mela'.

Listing out various projects initiated by the state government in view of the Mela, held on the occasion of 'Makar Sankranti', Banerjee said the administration has been making consistent efforts to develop the Sagar Island, where it is held.

"Gangasagar Mela is at par with the Kumbh Mela. The Centre provides funds for Kumbh Mela but does not extend financial assistance for Gangasagar," Banerjee said at Outram Ghat here.

The Kumbh Mela is held in Haridwar, Allahabad, Nashik and Ujjain.

The West Bengal government

had recently rolled back the pilgrim tax.

"We had been demanding the withdrawal of pilgrim tax when we were in the opposition but to no avail. But, once we came to power, we decided to scrap it with immediate effect," she said.

Asking devotees not to hurry to board vessels during their trip to the confluence, the CM said Rs 5 lakh as insurance would be given to the next of kin of a pilgrim in case of death.

Banerjee said apart from making available 10 lakh water pouches and 4,000 buses, air ambulances will be deployed to help the pilgrims travelling from UP, Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and other states.

Lakhs of pilgrims from across the country gather every year at Sagar Island, situated at the confluence of the Ganga and Bay of Bengal, for the holy dip.

As US-Iran Tensions Mount, Indian Navy Deploys Warship In Gulf Region

Agencies

The Indian Navy has deployed warships in the Gulf region to ensure security of India's sea-borne trade and effectively respond to any emergent situation in the wake of fast escalating tension between the US and Iran, officials said on Wednesday.

Iran launched missile strikes against two American military bases in Iraq on Wednesday in retaliation to the killing of its top commander General Qassem Soleimani by the US in a drone strike.

The Indian Navy said war-



ships and aircraft were deployed to establish presence, provide a sense of reassurance to the Indian merchant men, monitor the ongoing situation and respond to any emergent crises.

"Indian Navy continues to monitor the situation in the Gulf region and is maintaining presence in the region to ensure security of our sea-borne trade and the safety of Indian Flag Merchant Vessels transiting through the region," it said in a statement.

"The Indian Navy stands committed to protection of the nation's maritime interests," the Navy added.

'Let Violence Stop': Supreme Court Refuses Urgent Hearing On CAA



Agencies

Chief Justice of India S.A. Bobde on Thursday observed that the country is going through difficult times and there is so much violence going on as the Supreme Court refused urgent hearing on a plea seeking to declare the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as constitutional.

A bench headed by Chief Justice of India Bobde expressed surprise over the petition and said this is the first time that someone is seeking that an act be declared as constitutional.

"There is so much of violence going on. The country is going through difficult times and the

endeavour should be for peace... This court's job is to determine validity of a law and not declare it as constitutional," CJI Bobde said.

The bench also comprising Justices B.R. Gawai and Surya Kant said it will hear the petitions challenging validity of CAA when the violence stops.

The observation came after advocate Vineet Dhandha sought urgent listing of his plea to declare the Citizenship Act as constitutional and a direction to all states for implementation of the act.

The plea has also sought action against activists, students and media houses for "spreading rumours".

On December 18, the Supreme Court had agreed to examine the constitutional validity of the CAA, but refused to stay its operation.

The newly amended law seeks to grant citizenship to migrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Christian, Jain and Parsi

communities who came to the country from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan on or before December 31, 2014.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Bobde had fixed a batch of 59 petitions, including those filed by the Indian Union Muslim League (IUM) and Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, for hearing on January 22.

Several petitions have been filed challenging the constitutional validity of the Citizenship Act including by RJD leader Manoj Jha, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi.

Several other petitioners—including Muslim body Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, All Assam Students Union (AASU), Peace Party, CPI, NGOs 'Rihai Manch' and Citizens Against Hate, advocate M.L. Sharma and law students—have also approached the Supreme Court challenging the Citizenship Act.

'Wonder What BJP Trolls Would Have Done To Mahatma'



Don't know what the BJP's "trolls" would have done to Mahatma Gandhi and Jayprakash Narayan had the great leaders been around, Congress leader and veteran actor Shatrughan Sinha said on Wednesday. He also said targeting anyone who takes stand for truth or in the interest of the country is "not a big deal, but business" for the "trolls".

The former BJP leader's comments came in the wake of reports of Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone being trolled for expressing solidarity with Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) students attacked by masked goons inside the campus in Delhi on Sunday night.

Speaking to reporters, Bollywood veteran Sinha, without naming the BJP, took a dig at the party, saying its 'war room' is the only place where employment is being given at a time when un-

employment is allegedly being experienced in the country.

"Fortunately, Gandhi ji and JP (as Narayan was popularly known) are not among us. Don't know what the trolls would have done to them," Sinha said.

He alleged the BJP's war room and "its trolls" see those who are standing with the truth and are coming to the fore in the interest of the country as "anti-nationals".

"They (trolls) themselves are doing things which an anti-national would do, but are seeing others as anti-nationals. For them, it is neither a big thing nor a bad thing, they are doing their business," he added.

Asked by a reporter that his daughter and Bollywood actress Sonkashi, too, may get trolled for supporting Padukone, Sinha said he and his family is already being trolled since long time.

Day Before Release, Lawyer Seeks to Stop Bollywood's Deepika Padukone 'Acid Attack Survivor' Movie

NEW DELHI (SPUTNIK): The movie "Chhapaak", directed by Meghna Gulzar with top-rated Indian actress Deepika Padukone playing the protagonist, is based on the life and struggles of an acid attack survivor in re-establishing herself and her fight for justice. The movie is set to hit theatres on Friday. A day ahead of the scheduled release of "Chhapaak" (meaning Plop), a Delhi-based lawyer, who represented the real-life acid attack victim, Lakshmi Agarwal, has approached a city court demanding a stay on the release of the film. Advocate

Aparna Bhatt's beef is that the movie makers did not give her credit in the film. A day before filing the plea, Bhatt had thanked everyone for supporting her case against the "mighty Bollywood producers". "I thank all my friends who endorsed my contribution and challenged team Chhapaak in failing to say even 'Thank you!!'. I cannot match the powers of these mighty producers of Bollywood but keeping quiet will further endorse injustice. I have decided to take my cause to the next level. Ready to face the conse-

quences", Bhatt said on her Facebook post. The filmmakers have not responded to the plea yet. Meanwhile, controversies have cornered the film in the past too when a writer filed a petition with the Bombay High Court claiming the he was the original writer of the story on which the film is based, and that he should also be given credit in the film. Responding to it, Director Meghna Gulzar filed an affidavit asking the court to dismiss the suit and claimed that copyright "cannot be claimed on a story

based on a real life event". The film Chhapaak, which is being produced by Deepika Padukone, is based on life story of Lakshmi Agarwal. Agarwal was attacked by a man, whose entreaties for marriage were spurned by the victim. Agarwal, who survived the attack, became a symbol of resistance and hope for many women who have survived acid attacks. She is also the recipient of International Women of Courage Award, conferred upon her by former First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama.



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