

Prime accused Sanjay Roy convicted of raping, murdering RG Kar doc

Sealdah court to announce quantum of punishment on Monday; judge said Roy was found guilty of sexually assaulting the doctor and strangling her to death and CBI had proven all charges against him

PTI, KOLKATA: A Kolkata court on Saturday convicted prime accused Sanjay Roy of raping and murdering an on-duty doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, 162 days after the crime that sparked nationwide outrage and led to prolonged protests.

The Sealdah court, where Roy's trial was held, will announce the quantum of punishment on Monday, Additional District and Sessions Judge Anirban Das said.

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COURT OBSERVATIONS

► Additional District and Sessions Judge Anirban Das observed that Roy had entered the hospital around 4 am & attacked the on-duty doctor while she was asleep in the hospital's seminar room

► "You sexually assaulted the doctor. You throttled her and covered her face and she ultimately died owing to the attack," he said

► "...On the basis of the statements of the witness-

es and the documents produced in this matter, your guilt has been proved and you are being pronounced guilty," the judge said.

► The judge said the more than 160-page judgment, which will be completed after the pronouncement of the sentence on Monday, will also categorically answer some questions raised by the complainant, the father of the victim

WON'T REST UNTIL ALL ARE PUNISHED, SAYS DECEASED DOCTOR'S MOM

PTI, KOLKATA: Welcoming the conviction of prime accused Sanjay Roy by a trial court here in the RG Kar Medical College rape-murder case, the mother of the deceased woman doctor on Saturday said they were still waiting for the other criminals to be arrested and punished. "That Sanjay is guilty was proved through biological evidence. And that he stood silent during the trials in the

court also proved his hand in torturing and killing my daughter. But he was not alone, there are others who haven't been arrested yet. So, justice hasn't been delivered," the victim's mother told PTI soon after the court convicted Roy. She said she and her husband would continue their fight for justice till the last day of their lives.

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Israeli PM demands 'list' of hostages to be freed

AFP, JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu demanded that Hamas provide a list of names of hostages to be freed on Sunday before any prisoner swap takes place.

"We will be unable to move forward with the framework until we receive the list of the hostages who will be released, as was agreed," his office said. When asked by AFP, his spokesman said he was referring to the names of hostages to be freed on Sunday.

Netanyahu is expected to issue a statement at 8.10 pm (1810 GMT) on Saturday, his office said.

Meanwhile, a ceasefire in the Gaza war will begin on Sunday morning, mediator Qatar said after Israel's cabinet voted to approve the truce and hostage-prisoner release deal.

Since Qatar and the United States, which mediated the deal along with Egypt, announced the agreement on Wednesday, Israeli strikes on Gaza have continued.

On Saturday, Gaza's civil defence rescue agency said at least five members of a family were killed when a strike hit their tent in Khan Yunis, in southern Gaza.

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DRESS REHEARSAL



Security personnel during a rehearsal for the Republic Day parade, at Kartavya Path in New Delhi, on Saturday

'Devanagari lobby hired Eduardo to swing public opinion against Romi Lipi'

Team Herald

PANJIM: Condemning former Union Minister Eduardo Faleiro's statement that if Romi Konkani script is given Official Language status, then it will spell doom for the Catholic community in the State and their children will be in darkness, the newly-formed Global Romi Lipi Abhiyan (GRLA) said that Faleiro made the statement in a section of the media with no facts to support what he claimed. GRLA president Kennedy

Due to such leaders who betrayed their community by conniving in the conspiracy hatched by the Devanagari lobby, the Roman script was not included in the Official Language Act, and continues to suffer for their sins of treachery for the last 36 years – Kennedy Afonso, GRLA president



Afonso said that it appears that Faleiro was hired for the function by the Devanagari lobby, only to make such a statement, to swing public opinion.

Afonso reiterated that due to such leaders who betrayed their community by

conniving in the conspiracy hatched by the Devanagari lobby, the Roman script was not included in the Official Language Act, and continues to suffer for their sins of treachery for the last 36 years. On the contrary facts point out that since Devan-

agari was made the Official Language of Goa by the then government in 1987, and the subsequent stand of the Sahitya Akademi of not honouring and respecting other scripts, the number of Konkani speaking people had dwindled by two lakh.

The GRLA would like to ask Faleiro, if the Catholic community took part in the Konkani language agitation of 1986, to make Devanagari as the Official Language of Goa.

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Cyber fraudsters prey on South Goa's elders

Senior citizens complain scammers are hacking their WhatsApp accounts and sending fraudulent money requests to their contacts

Team Herald

MARGAO: Raising an alarm over increasing incidents of WhatsApp account hacking, several senior citizens from South Goa have reported their contacts have been compromised in a chain reaction of cyber fraud.

Most elderly residents, who are not tech savvy, are unable to understand or combat these cyber attacks. According to victims, scammers are hacking their WhatsApp accounts and sending fraudulent money requests to their contacts.

"I received a message asking for money from someone who appeared to be my friend. When I clicked on the message, my own account got hacked," said 68-year-old Antonio Fernandes. "Within hours, my family members, neigh-

CYBER FRAUD VICTIMS

"I received a message asking for money from someone who appeared to be my friend. When I clicked on the message, my own account got hacked. Within hours, my family members, neighbours and other friends started calling to ask if I had requested money from them

– Antonio Fernandes

Many such senior citizens depend on WhatsApp to stay in touch with their children abroad. This has created fear among the elderly community

– Aniket Dessai

bours and other friends started calling to ask if I had requested money from them," he added.

While similar scams were previously common with Facebook accounts,



the shift to WhatsApp has particularly destabilised the elderly community. Many seniors rely heavily on WhatsApp for daily communication with their family members residing

abroad, sharing photos, and making video calls. The recent surge in hacking incidents has left many scared to use their phones, effectively cutting them off from their primary mode of family communication.

Over the last few months, many families have reported that they have fallen victim to this scam pattern in

the past month.

"Many such senior citizens depend on WhatsApp to stay in touch with their children abroad. This has created fear among the elderly community," said Aniket Dessai, whose WhatsApp also got hacked after receiving a fraudulent message from his father whose phone was hacked first.

According to cyber crime officials, who have been responding to these issues, the modus operandi typically involves hackers sending messages that appear to be from known contacts, requesting urgent financial assistance or it could also be a fake company official claiming that the family member has received a parcel and engages them to share more details for confirmation.

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When people of Goa are suffering, what is the point of some powerful people swimming in hundreds of crores?

Governance that helps people lead better lives has collapsed; In Goa, the High Court is forced to govern, when the government fails to

Across Goa, the pain of its people is seen and heard daily. Everyone is knocking on several doors for justice either for themselves or for their land.

If the land is our mother, she is in pain. She suffers. She cries. And yet she cannot look to the one she trusted, to look after her, to govern and to protect.

And yet the powerful are getting richer, each contract bringing in money enough for several generations, money that is often parked abroad (for investment purposes of course). But let us ask this. When people of Goa are suffering, what is the point of some powerful people swimming in hundreds of crores?

Governance is not about policy announcements, or quoting figures. Governance is simply about bringing a smile to the weakest and filling the person at the bottom of the ladder with a hope that justice will prevail and she won't be wronged.

The opposite of that is being witnessed, in villages and towns across Goa. Ask our fishermen, across the coast from Benaulum to Betim, why there is no fish wa-

ters and they will tell you that rogue fishing vessels with LED lights have taken all the fish away and do so daily, our farmers are losing land to acquisitions for highways and other projects, many of them meant to transport goods and coal for big daddies with no benefit to Goa. Our age old Khazan lands in Loutolim are being surrendered, thereby destroying agrarian ecosystems that helped out ecology and cultivation.

A land grabber with multiple criminal cases Suleman Siddiqui is escorted out of the Crime Branch by a police constable. And he in turn releases two videos, one of which holds a senior politician and top cops of torturing him and yet there is no direct action on anyone but a constable for allowing a criminal, to simply, walk out of prison. Surely the constable could not have planned this on his own and dared to facilitate this escape as a solo act. This is not failed, but non-existent governance.

THE HIGH COURT IS FORCED TO GOVERN THE STATE, WHEN THE GOVERNMENT DOESN'T

In North Goa, even the might of the Court hasn't yet been able to snuff out the menace of noise pollution. At each hearing, promises are made but the dream of having noise control machines at every potential noise-polluting night club with real-time monitoring by the Pollution Control Board is lost in a jungle of excuses. The High Court is teaching the government how to govern. It has asked the Anjuna police to get CCTV footage of establishments playing music beyond 10 pm and take action and do surprise checks on establishments against whom people have complained.

Does a functioning government need the High Court to teach the basics? Doesn't it indicate that the system is there for the violators and not those who have been violated- the common people?

Goa's biggest current shame is its capital Panjim. In a callous, reckless manner the pride of Goa, Panjim has been destroyed and its civic infrastructure hacked. Virtually every deadline given to the public and courts about completing roads dug multiple times over three year, has failed. The dug portions have claimed lives and injured others. High Court judges had to take to the streets and inspect road works. And yet to no avail. Finally, citizens of Panjim were forced to knock the

doors of the court, when dust pollution from the road mess was harming them and their family members.

It is surely a slap on Goa's governance when the High Court asks the Advocate General to indicate that clear timelines have not been adhered to for completing all the road-works and asks him to give reasons for the delay. If this is not a failure of governance, where the court is forced to intervene to solve executive incompetence, then what is?

It is Governance or the lack of it which is also linked to the on-the-ground reality of the deteriorating tourism experience. The Tourism Minister, emphasising that influencers were deliberately giving Goa a bad name, said 99.41 lakh domestic and 4.67 lakh foreign tourists arrived in Goa. And that the number of domestic tourists

increased by 22 per cent, while the number of foreign tourists rose by 3 per cent.

If these numbers have been collected from information from airlines, airports and hotels, how can it be assumed that all those entering Goa

are tourists? Among those who enter Goa are Goans who live here, Goans who work elsewhere and come home, people here for business conferences, weddings, etc.

This year was the year of the Exposition of the relics of Saint Francis Xavier which drew a large number of domestic and foreign tourists. This too bumped up the numbers. But numbers are not the point.

'TOURISTS' WHO SLEEP IN CARS DON'T BRING MONEY TO GOA

But let us hear what Goans, of whom many from the tourism industry said, witnessed on December 31. The streets were not even half as full as yesteryears. One restaurant owner who took 30 minutes to travel 5 km from his home to his restaurant in Candolim took just seven minutes this year and he witnessed the restaurants half empty. At the same time, he saw people drinking and some even sleeping in their cars- their makeshift hotel rooms. Are these tourists improving our economy? So where are the real tourists? Surely not in North Goa.

One senior manager of a five-star chain in North Goa remarked that major hotels had to reduce their room tariffs four times to reach "survival level occupancy". Meanwhile two tourism professionals from Goa, on a holiday in Sri Lanka spoke of how Colombo was buzzing with foreigners with no space in hotels and restaurants. These are not influencers but senior Goan hospitality professionals. Are they also defaming Goa? Why would they?

INFRASTRUCTURE AND APP TAXIS IS A PART OF CIVILISED TOURISM. WHEN CAN WE GET THAT?

Infrastructure is the key. When roads are crumbling, there's filth and garbage and construction everywhere, tourists will get disheartened. Getting app-based taxis and metered taxis is a part of that very infrastructure. And this is all about Governance. When will Goa see this governance so that tourists, whatever the numbers, go back with a better experience and spend more time and money in consuming that experience, with the economy of Goa benefitting?

All that the common Goan wants is to get governance back on the streets, in police stations and government offices. We cannot continue to destroy our motherland while the rich and powerful get filthy rich and richer and park their ill-gotten wealth on foreign shores.