

Centre, Delhi Police conspiring to kill Kejriwal, says AAP

PTI, NEW DELHI: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Friday accused the BJP-led Centre and the Delhi Police of conspiring to "kill" its chief Arvind Kejriwal and urged the Election Commission (EC) to restore his security cover provided by the Punjab Police.

There was no immediate reaction from the Delhi Police to the allegation.

The BJP in a statement later in the day called the allegations a "fake drama" and "election stunt" to divert attention from AAP governance failure.

BJP MP Parvesh Verma slammed Kejriwal for seeking additional security while he already enjoys Z-plus security by Delhi police.

Addressing a press conference here, the party said it has written to the EC demanding "fair grounds" for the AAP in the February 5 Delhi Assembly polls and the restoration of Kejriwal's security cover by the Punjab Police, along with an audit of "life-threatening" attacks on him.

It alleged that the Delhi Police, which comes under the Centre, turned a blind eye to attacks on Kejriwal following Union Home Minister Amit Shah's order.

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— Atishi, Delhi Chief Minister

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"In October (last year), an attack was made on Kejriwal. Upon investigation by us, it was found that the attackers were BJP workers, but police took no action," Delhi Chief Minister Atishi alleged.

"We have written to the EC demanding that Kejriwal's security be restored. We do not trust the Delhi Police as it is under Amit Shah's control," she added.

The AAP in its letter to the EC alleged that removal of the security was an instance of "dirty politics" by the BJP ahead of the Delhi polls.

"We write to you with utmost urgency and grave concern regarding the security arrangements of Arvind Kejriwal, ex-chief minister of Delhi and the national convener of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP),

who has been consistently facing grave threats to his life and deliberate lapses in his security detail.

"These lapses are not isolated incidents but appear to be part of a larger, orchestrated pattern designed to jeopardise his safety," the letter written by the AAP leaders to the EC read. It alleged that on different occasions over the last three months, Kejriwal came under several attacks, including physical assault and stone pelting during a political rally.

But police "simply acted as mute spectators" and did not make an attempt to protect him, the letter alleged.

According to it, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) asked for a withdrawal of the Punjab Police's security cover to Kejriwal in Delhi as he already enjoys Z-plus security here.

"The Punjab Police, which has been a crucial and reliable component of his security detail, has been abruptly withdrawn without consultation or justification. This reckless and politically-motivated decision has left Kejriwal entirely dependent on the Delhi Police -- a force directly controlled by the BJP through its government at the Centre," the party said in the letter.

The withdrawal was announced by Punjab Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav on Thursday.

Saif stabbing: Police to conduct attacker's facial recognition

Custody extended till Jan 29

PTI, MUMBAI: Police on Friday told a court here that they needed to conduct facial recognition test of the Bangladeshi man arrested for allegedly stabbing Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan to ascertain that he was the person seen in the CCTV footage.

While the magistrate's court extended the police custody of Shareeful Islam Shehzad Mohammad Rohilla Amin Fakir (30) till Jan-

uary 29, defence lawyers questioned the actor's version of the incident, asking why he did not call police immediately.

Fakir was arrested on January 19 for allegedly breaking into Saif Ali Khan's 12th floor flat in Bandra for robbery three days earlier, and stabbing the actor multiple times when confronted.

The police on Friday sought his further custody, claiming that while sub-



Shareeful Islam Shehzad Mohammad Rohilla Amin Fakir alias Vijay Das being produced at a court, in Mumbai, on Friday

stantial progress had been made in the probe, more interrogation was required to investigate certain crucial aspects.

Public prosecutors K S Patil and Prasad Joshi told the court that "facial recognition test" of the accused was needed to be done at a Forensic Science Laboratory to ascertain that he was the same person seen in the CCTV footage recovered from the staircase of Khan's building.

The prosecution's statement followed reported claims made by the accused's father that the person seen in the CCTV

footage was not his son.

Fakir's father, reportedly speaking to the media in Bangladesh, alleged that based on some similarities his son was falsely implicated.

Judicial magistrate K C Rajput extended Fakir's police remand till January 29, noting that it was necessary considering the nature of the offence and progress in the probe.

The police also told the court that they need to match the footprints of the accused with those found at Khan's residence, and the shoes the accused was wearing at the time have not been recovered yet.

A missing part of the knife used in the crime too was yet to be found, the police said, adding that the accused was not cooperating with investigation.

A driving license issued in Bangladesh has been recovered from him, confirming that he is a native of the neighbouring country, the prosecution told the court.

YSRCP gen secy Reddy announces decision to quit politics; says will resign as RS MP

PTI, AMARAVATI: In a surprise move, YSRCP Rajya Sabha member and party general secretary V Vijayasai Reddy on Friday announced his decision to quit politics and said he will be resigning from his parliament membership on January 25. Further, he said agriculture will be his future.

Reddy, who is also the party's floor leader in the Upper House, said he is not joining any other political party.

Reddy, 67, is currently serving his second term as Rajya Sabha member from Andhra Pradesh. He still has more than three years left in his term.

"I am quitting politics. I am resigning from the Rajya Sabha membership tomorrow, (January) 25th. I will not join any political party. I am not resigning hoping for any position, benefits, or money. This decision is completely my personal one. There was no pressure. No one influenced me," he said in a post on 'X'.

FROM PAGE 1

CONG WANTS ACTION ON LAND GRAB PROBE, WRITES TO PM

Kawthankar has requested the PMO to appoint a High Powered Committee headed by retired Supreme Court Judge to investigate the said land grab as there are serious lapses which appear to be deliberate by the Goa BJP government headed by Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant, to protect those involved in the land grabbing. Those found guilty should face appropriate legal action to safeguard the rights and interests of the citizens," he requested.

Highlighting the issues of rampant land conversion, Kawthankar said that there has been rampant land conversion under the garb of corrections in Goa by TCP Minister Vishwajit Rane, causing permanent destruction of environment and demography of villages and irreversible damage to eco-sensitive areas including hill cutting, cognisance whereof has been taken even by the Hon'ble High Court of Bombay at Goa.

"Goa has never seen such massive amounts of land conversions including conversions of Private Forest lands, in a short span of time when the Regional Plan is not in place for more than a decade which was part of the poll manifesto of BJP in the year 2012. It is necessary that the land conversions in the last 30 months be investigated and in the interim all such conversions which have been carried out and which are in the process of being carried out be put on hold till such inquiry is completed," Kawthankar requested.

Furthermore, strict guidelines should be enforced, said Kawthankar adding, "This is to ensure that land conversions are not permitted for non-Goan individuals, in order to preserve the State's cultural and ecological heritage."

8 KILLED IN BHANDARA ORDANCE FACTORY BLAST

District Collector Sanjay Kolte told PTI that 13 people were working in the unit at the time.

The blast led to fire and subsequent building collapse, and a National Disaster Response Force team was deployed immediately for a rescue operation, said an official release.

Specialised equipment was being used for the rescue operation and efforts were on to ensure the safety of all involved, said the release issued by the NDRF.

The deceased workers were identified as Chandrashekar Goswami (59), Manoj Meshram (55), Ajay Nagdeve (51), Ankit Barai (20), Laxman Kelwade (38), Abhishek Chaurasia (35), Dharmaraj Rangari (35) and Sanjay Karemore (32).

Besides, N P Wanjari (55), Sanjay Raut (51), Rajesh Badwaik (33), Sunil Kumar Yadav (24) and Jaydeep Banerjee (42) were injured and undergoing treatment, officials said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said he was "deeply saddened" by the incident. All efforts were being made to provide assistance to the affected people, he said on X.

"Deeply saddened to know about the blast at Ordnance Factory at Bhandara, Maharashtra. My condolences to the bereaved families. Praying for the speedy recovery of the injured," he said on X.

PEOPLE ASK WHY THERE AREN'T CASES AGAINST POLITICIANS, FOR THE CHANDOR ANTI-DOUBLE TRACKING PROTEST

And now have seemingly changed their stance now that they are part of the present BJP-led State government.

The police have recently filed an application for supplementary investigation, claiming critical investigative gaps need to be addressed. They highlighted that station diary extracts documenting the deployment of police inspectors and staff during the protest remained uncollected, and they seek to record unrecorded statements from key government officials, including Salcete Joint Mamladars.

Vikas Bhagat, one of the accused activists in this case, questioned the selective targeting of the activists and exclusion of politicians

Bhagat pointed out that there were many other organisations and citizens that had participated in the protests against the expansion of the railway double-tracking as well as the other two linear projects.

"What is the government trying to do? Do they think that by filing cases against us and intimidating us, we will back down? We will not get scared and will continue to fight. Even if they try to block us, hundreds will take our place immediately as we are fighting not for ourselves but for the future of Goa and to protect its environment," said Bhagat.

Speaking about the police action and the on-going case despite their pleas for the case to be dismissed, another accused, Abhijit Prabhudesai lamented that this is part of attempts to intimidate the protesters who have been part of other agitations as well.

"The government continues to be slaves of crony capitalists hell-bent on killing all life on earth for a few pieces of coal. They have failed the people and the planet by blindly worshipping the greed of a few in the name of development. The people will rise and defend the future generations and planet, and ill-intended cases against peaceful protesters will only strengthen the will of the people," said Prabhudesai.

"So many of us were there for the protests and it was a landmark moment against the government's double tracking and other linear projects. What is important to note here is that politicians who were supporting the people's case and contested elections were also present. Some were already MLAs, some became MLAs, but they have since left the Opposition and joined the very government that was pushing this project against the wishes of the people, as seen in the Chandor protest. What happened to their 'fighting for the cause' or was that just to fool us to gain votes," said Renata Fernandes, an eco-conscious youth, who was present for the Chandor protest and stands in solidarity with the accused protesters.

When questioned, why activists were acted against and politicians left out of the investigation, the then Congress Leader of the Opposition

and now BJP MLA Digambar Kamat said, "We had gone to Chandor to express our solidarity with the protestors. But we were not involved in blocking the train. We had also protested against double tracking at South Western Railway headquarters, Hubballi. It was also a peaceful protest."

Curtorim MLA Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco, who supports the ruling BJP, said, "I was not present when the protestors entered into an argument with the police and other government authorities. No doubt I was present at the venue, but never got into an argument with the police and the government authorities." Lourenco was then in the Opposition.

"Why are the police not calling the MLAs as witnesses? Let them tell the story, based on their own involvement in the protests that happened then. They may change their tune today, but let their statements be recorded too," said Renata Fernandes.

"Over 5,000 people took part in the peaceful protest on November 2, 2020 and yet the police are taking action against a few protestors. If these protestors are jailed, there are thousands of people who will continue this fight to save what is left of our pristine Goa. By this action, the government has displayed bankruptcy of thought. It is clear that this government is not for the people, but for crony capitalists, who are hell-bent to squeeze Goa till the end. But people of Goa will not allow it to happen," said Chandor resident Felix Furtado and Rainbow Warriors member.

"The Supreme Court has in the past upheld the right to peaceful protest as a Constitutional right under Article 19 (1) (a) & 19 (1) (c). One of the most unpopular governments in history has been using the police machinery to frame charges against protestors in the false hope that the dissenters will be frightened by such intimidatory tactics. Goencho Ekvott (GE) hereby expresses its solidarity with those booked and will stand shoulder to shoulder to defeat this unholy nexus to lay the railway double tracks which has rightly been denounced by the Supreme Court-appointed Central Empowered Committee (CEC) that will lay waste large tracts of our virgin forest cover apart from irreversibly destroying thickly populated human settlements, thus violating our Human Rights," said Orville Dourado Rodrigues, GE Founder member.

CARNIVAL FLOAT PARADES FROM FEB 28

Parades will also be held in Panjim on March 1, Margao on March 2, Vasco on March 3 and Mapusa and Morjim on March 4. This vibrant festival promises to attract tourists and locals alike with its lively atmosphere, he said.

The prize plus infrastructure money allotted for Panjim, Margao, Vasco and Mapusa Carnival organising committee is Rs 27.35 lakh whereas that for Porvorim was Rs 17.35 lakh and Rs 14.25 lakh will be allotted to the Morjim Carnival organising committee.

Naik further informed that the Shigmo festival, a grand 15-day celebration of Goa's vibrant folk traditions, will be held from March 15 to 29, with colourful float parades organised across 19 centres. The festivities will commence from Ponda on March 15, followed by Margao on March 16, Mandrem and Quepem on March 17, Shiroda and Curchorem on March 18, and Dharbandora on March 19. Calangute will host the parade on March 20, followed by Vasco on March 21 and Panjim on March 22. Parades in Mapusa and Sanguem are scheduled for March 23, while Canacona will celebrate on March 24 and Pernem on March 25. The celebrations continue in Valpoi and Cuncoim on March 26, Bicholim on March 27, Sankhali on March 28, and will culminate in Porvorim on March 29.

These parades will highlight Goa's rich cultural heritage, featuring traditional music, dance, and artistic performances, offering locals and tourists an unforgettable experience, Naik said.

A decision to increase the prize money for the centres namely Quepem, Bicholim, Valpoi, Canacona, Curchorem, Sanguem, Pernem, Cuncoim, Sankhali, Dharbandora, Shiroda, and Calangute, by Rs 50,000 was also taken during the meeting chaired by Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte.

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti will be celebrated on February 19 at multiple locations including Panjim, Margao, Mapusa, Vasco, Ponda, Sankhali, Porvorim, and Bicholim. To support these celebrations, a one-time grant of Rs 5 lakh will be allocated to various committees in various cities to facilitate the events and ensure their success, informed Naik.

Representatives of different municipal councils of different festival centres, representatives of the police, traffic cell and fire and emergency services and others were part of the meeting.

LORD I AM COMING HOME

DOB- 29/03/1951 DOD- 23/01/2025



MARIA PRISCA RODRIGUES

KARALLY PARODA

*Everyday in some way we miss you more than words can say,
In our hearts you will always stay,
Loved and remembered everyday.*

Beloved wife of Jeronimo Augustinho Rodrigues
mother/mother in law of Augustine Dominic/Lovevitta, Emma/ Melvin Dias
Grandmother of Roxton, Adrian, Arlon and Chloe
sister / sister in law : Peter Anthony/Thresa Dias,
Gullherme / Loyela Dias, Marie/ Salvador Gomes,
Late Inas Marie / Late Francis Fernandes
sister in law : John Lawrence/ Late Consalco Marina Rodrigues,
Inacinha/ Late Joaquim Miguel Fernandes
Piedade/ Late Minguel Pereira, Anthony/ Joaquina Rodrigues,
Bernardo/ Santana Rodrigues
Adorable Aunt of all Nieces, Nephews
Funeral Cortage will leave her residence at 3:30pm on 25 January 2025
at our Lady Of Immaculate Conception Church, Paroda
for Eucharistic celebration followed by burial

stantial progress had been made in the probe, more interrogation was required to investigate certain crucial aspects.

Judicial magistrate K C Rajput extended Fakir's police remand till January 29, noting that it was necessary considering the nature of the offence and progress in the probe.

A missing part of the knife used in the crime too was yet to be found, the police said, adding that the accused was not cooperating with investigation.

A driving license issued in Bangladesh has been recovered from him, confirming that he is a native of the neighbouring country, the prosecution told the court.

RETURNED TO THE LORD



Born : 06/11/1929 Died: 24/01/2025

SIMAO JOAQUIM CORREIA

Beloved husband of late Rubertina Correia,
father/father in law of Winnie/Anthony Fernandes,
Lourdes/Francis Pereira, Francisca/Michael Pereira,
Sera/Diogo Lourenco.
Loving grand father of Annoshka, Wianda, Shelton, Melissa,
Meriel, Delgio and Deliza.
Expired peacefully. Eucharistic celebration will be held at
Our Lady of Sucorro Church, Ambirna, Sucorro Bardez, Goa
at 3.00 pm on 25/01/2025 (TODAY).
Relatives and friends please accept this as the only intimation.

CONDOLENCE

MARIA PRISCA RODRIGUES

*In life we loved you dearly,
In death we loved you still,
In our hearts you hold a place,
that no one could ever fill.*

MAY HER SOUL REST IN PEACE

Late Inas Maria and Late Francis Fernandes
--A tribute of love from--
ANTHONY/ REISMA, VANROY, VANSLEY,
VANIFA, AGOSTINHO/ MARJOL, MAISIE, ADRIEL,
MARCELINA/ JERRY, MELVILLE

ONE YEAR REMEMBRANCE

In cherished memory of



SANTAN FRANCO

VELOTIM-POMBURPA

*We miss you more than words can say
Quietly remembered everyday
No longer in our midst today
but in our hearts you will always be there.*

Fondly remembered by his sister
Maria Caitana, nieces, nephews
and their families.