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ISRAELI DRUG LORD HELD IN EARLY MORNING RAID

Yaniv Benaim, alias Atala, was nabbed with cocaine and charas worth nearly Rs 9 lakh

Team Herald

PANJIM: Notorious Israeli alleged drug lord Yaniv Benaim, alias Atala, whose arrest 15 years ago exposed the police-politicians-drug mafia nexus and resulted in the suspension of seven policemen, was arrested early on Saturday by the Anti-Narcotics Cell (ANC) with drugs worth Rs 8.7 lakh.

The ANC seized 50 grams of cocaine and 110 grams of charas, along with Rs 40,000 in cash, from Atala, who was picked up from his rented accommodation at Siolim.

Significantly, this is the first time the drug dealer has been caught with narcotics in his possession, although he had been arrested twice earlier. These arrests are for



assault cases registered at the Anjuna police station in 2010 and 2019.

According to the police, Atala was on the radar of ANC sleuths for operating a drug racket. Cops set up a decoy, who struck a deal with Atala and went to his rented lodgings to pick up the drugs. That is when police swooped in and caught him red-handed.

He was produced in Court later in the day and remanded in five days' police custody. The police are now probing if Atala was staying in the country with valid visa documents.

The Israeli drug dealer was in the news in March 2010, when a controversial tape was uploaded, where he was seeking talking about his alleged

links with the police. His girlfriend, Lucky Farmhouse, had recorded his video confession, claiming that he had been supplying drugs which were confiscated by police during the raids.

The ensuing controversy led to the suspension and subsequent arrest of five policemen, including the then PI, a head constable and three constables for their alleged links with the drug dealer. The case was investigated by the Crime Branch and later handed over to the CBI.

Though Atala had fled the country, the CBI extradited him from Peru in 2012. He and the suspended police officers were later acquitted by the Court.

Cont on Pg 12 >>

HISTORY-SHEETER BACK IN CUSTODY

■ In March 2010 a controversial tape, allegedly filmed by Atala's then girlfriend, was uploaded where he was seeking talking about his alleged links with the police and claiming that he had been supplying drugs which were confiscated by police during the raids.

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■ Atala was again arrested in April 2019 by the Anjuna police in an attempt-to-murder case. After the Additional Sessions Court dismissed his bail application in May 2020, Atala approached the High Court of Bombay at Goa and got bail in August the same year

India, Lanka ink defence & energy deals

A five-year defence co-op pact provides training of Lankan military personnel in India as well as information & technology sharing

AFP, COLOMBO: India secured defence and energy deals with neighbouring Sri Lanka on Saturday during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit, seen as a move to counter rival China's growing influence in the region.

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake rolled out the red carpet for

India's rise as a world power, not just a regional power. I have reiterated our position to Prime Minister Modi that Sri Lankan territory will not be allowed to be used by anyone to undermine India's security

— Anura Kumara Dissanayake, Sri Lankan President

Modi and conferred on him the country's highest civilian honour for "the deep personal friendship" shown

to the smaller neighbour.

"We believe that our security interests are aligned," Modi said during

a televised ceremony from Dissanayake's office in the capital.

"Our security is interdependent and interconnected." A five-year defence co-operation agreement provides training of Sri Lankan military personnel in India as well as information and technology sharing.

Dissanayake applauded

what he called "India's rise as a world power, not just a regional power".

"I have reiterated our position to Prime Minister Modi that Sri Lankan territory will not be allowed to be used by anyone to undermine India's security," he added.

Cont on Pg 12 >>

Shinde jibe: Kamra skips third summons

PTI, MUMBAI: Stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra failed to appear before the Mumbai Police on Saturday in connection with a case registered against him for allegedly passing a "traitor" jibe at Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, an official said.

This is the third time Kamra has given police summons a miss, the official said.

The Khar police booked Kamra on a complaint by Shiv Sena MLA Murji Patel for allegedly making defamatory remarks against the deputy chief minister during a show.

Kamra shot a video lampooning Shinde over the split in the Shiv Sena, and party workers later ransacked the studio and the hotel in which it is located on the night of March 23.

The official said the Mumbai police asked Kamra to appear before it on April 5, issuing summons to him for the third time.

Earlier this week, a team from the Khar police visit-

ed his residence in Mahim after he skipped the second summons.

The Madras High Court has granted interim anticipatory bail to Kamra till April 7. He is a permanent resident of Tamil Nadu.

Three FIRs registered against the comedian at Nashik Rural, Jalgaon and Nashik (Nandgaon) have been transferred to Khar police station.

Meanwhile, Shiv Sena functionary Rahool Kanak on Saturday claimed BookMyShow has taken stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra off the sale and artists list from its platforms.

Kanak, the social media in-charge of Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, thanked BookMyShow CEO Ashish Hemrajani for keeping its portal "clean and keeping such artists out of the list of pure entertainment".

When contacted, the BookMyShow team said they have no comments to offer as of now.

Cont on Pg 12 >>

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