

Two minors sexually assaulted in Calangute hotel; 2 suspects arrested

Owner, receptionist of Calangute hotel, where the incident occurred, also arrested

Team Herald

PANJIM: In a disturbing incident, Agasaim Police arrested two individuals from Porvorim on Wednesday for allegedly sexually assaulting two minor girls at a hotel in Calangute on the night of June 7-8. This follows recent violent incidents in Bastora, where a pregnant woman and her husband were attacked, and in Calangute, where a biryani shop owner and staff were assaulted, raising concerns about deteriorating law and order in the state.

befriended one of the victims on Instagram and persuaded her to meet him in Porvorim. The girl, hesitant to go alone, brought her sister and a neighbour. Mujawar allegedly bought items for the girls and provided them with beer, which left them disoriented and unable to walk. He then took them to a hotel in Calangute, where Naik joined him. The two are accused of sexually assaulting the girls in separate hotel rooms.

The victims were referred to the Victim Assistance Unit in Bambolim to record their statements. Agasaim Police have registered cases under Sections 137(2), 64(1), 74, and 75(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Section 8(2) of the Goa Children's Act 2005, and Sections 4, 8, and 12 of the POCSO Act. The investigation is ongoing, led by LPSI Deepika Parwar and PSI Rushikesh Rikar, under PI Anant Gaonkar, SDPO Panjim Sudesh Naik, and SP North Rahul Gupta, IPS.

Emidio Pinho, Coordinator of Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN), alleged that all three girls were sexually abused and demanded stringent action against hotel owners who enable such exploitation. In a letter to Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte and the North Goa Superintendent of Police, Pinho wrote, "We have come across many such cases wherein children were abused in hotels, as these hotels are providing access to rooms or premises where adults are engaging in activities that involve the abuse and exploitation of children. Such conduct not only endangers the lives and well-being of vulnerable children but also severely undermines the safety and moral fabric

NO BREAKDOWN IN LAW AND ORDER, CLAIMS CM

PANJIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Wednesday denied that the law and order situation has collapsed in Goa. Speaking to reporters at Mantralaya in Porvorim, he said, "Law and order situation has nowhere collapsed. If any incident is taking place, police are taking action. If you look back, you can understand why this is happening. That needs to be seen but the police are acting. The culprits have been arrested. It is also important that the reason behind the incident is presented before the society."

Police reports indicate that three girls, aged 11 to 15, left their homes on June 7 and failed to return, prompting their parents to file a missing persons complaint at Agasaim Police Station. A case was registered, and a police team located and rescued the girls from a Calangute hotel on June 8. Two suspects, Altaf Mujawar, 19, and Om Naik, 21, both from Porvorim, were arrested at the scene.

Investigations revealed that Mujawar

of our community. It is imperative that strict action is taken as per law against the owners who deliberately or negligently facilitate such heinous acts by providing access to their properties."

Pinho urged authorities to increase awareness within the hotel industry about the Goa Children's Act 2003.

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Growing rift among ST leaders may impact BJP prospects: Observers

VITHALDAS HEGDE

vhegde5@herald-go.com

PANJIM: With rising discontent against United Tribal Associations Alliance (UTAA) and growing discord among Scheduled Tribes (ST) leaders in Goa, there could be a serious threat to the ruling BJP's electoral prospects, with political observers pointing to the ST community's decisive role in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

In last year's parliamentary polls, a section of the ST community publicly withdrew support to the BJP, opting instead to back the Congress. This shift was reflected in the strong performance of the Congress party in constituencies with a significant ST population, including Quepem, Sanguem, Canacona, Dharbandora, Ponda, Salcete and Mormugao. The South Goa Lok Sabha seat was clinched by the Grand Old Party, as a result.

Political parties across the spectrum have long courted the roughly 12% ST electorate, recognising their influence in closely contested races. Currently, four legislators from the ST community are in the Assembly - Art and Culture Minister Govind Gaude, Speaker Ramesh Tawadkar, Ganesh Gaonkar (all three with the BJP) and independent MLA Anton Vas. These leaders have been vocal in demanding the implementation of 12% political reservation.

However, internal rifts have emerged within the ST leadership. GAKUVED Federation president Govind Shirodkar has launched a public challenge against Prakash Velip, former minister and president of the United Tribal Associations Alliance (UTAA).

Shirodkar has filed a petition with the District Registrar and Inspector General (South), Margao, seeking to nullify the UTAA elections held on September 20, 2022.

“The BJP's unfulfilled promises turned into gains for Congress (in the Lok Sabha polls). People are now better informed, especially through social media. Our issues have been pending since the Balli agitation in 2011, despite the ST community's earlier support for the BJP-MGP alliance

- John Fernandes, advocate

“The government is yet to notify tribal areas, which is vital for the socio-economic development of our people. We are also demanding that a ST Commission be set up and a post-based roster for government/semi-government organisations, autonomous bodies and the private sector be implemented

- Govind Shirodkar, GAKUVED Federation president

He has also called for an updated list of the UTAA's General and Executive Council members.

Speaking to O Herald, Shirodkar criticised the lack of progress on long-standing demands of the ST community, including political reservation, filling of backlog vacancies in government services, promotions, and the creation of an ST Commission. "Since 2011, our issues remain unresolved. The government is yet to notify tribal areas, which is vital for the socio-economic development of our people," he said.

Advocate John Fernandes echoed these concerns, warning that continued neglect of ST demands could see a repeat of the Lok Sabha election outcome in the 2027 Assembly polls.

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Musk backs off from feud with Trump

AP, WASHINGTON: Billionaire Elon Musk on Wednesday backed off from feud with US President Donald Trump, saying he regrets social media posts that 'went too far.'

Early Wednesday morning, Musk posted "I regret some of my posts about President @realDonaldTrump last week. They went too far."

Musk's break with a president on whom he spent hundreds of millions of dollars to elect appeared to put an end to his influence in the White House and prompted concerns about effects on his companies.

As a major government contractor, Musk's businesses could be particularly vulnerable to retribution, and Trump has already threatened to cut Musk's contracts.

Musk earlier deleted a post in which he claimed without evidence that the government was concealing information about the president's association with infamous pedophile Jeffrey Epstein.

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MAX. TEMP 32.6 °C
MIN. TEMP 27.3 °C

idharudhar



Relax! Just a vitamin shot on the minister's advice.

DESPAIR IN DELHI



Residents appear distressed during an anti-encroachment drive conducted by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) in the Govindpuri area of South Delhi, on Wednesday

Pope Leo names first Chinese bishop

AP, VATICAN CITY: Pope Leo XIV made his first appointment of a Chinese bishop under the Vatican's 2018 agreement with Beijing, signalling he is continuing one of Pope Francis' most controversial foreign policy decisions.

The Vatican expressed satisfaction that Leo's June 5 nomination of Bishop Joseph Lin Yuntuan as auxiliary bishop of Fuzhou was recognised Wednesday by Chinese authorities.

Francis had riled conservatives when he approved a deal in 2018 over bishop nominations.

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Row over filthy train sent for BSF jawans

Railways suspends four officials, sends special train

PTI, NEW DELHI: Around 1,200 Border Security Force (BSF) jawans, scheduled to travel from Udaipur to Jammu for security duties during the upcoming Amarnath Yatra, were finally set to board a second special train after they refused to board a train on Monday after finding it in an extremely poor condition.

The train provided on Monday was in such a horrible state that jawans refused to travel in it. A video of the same is going viral on social media which shows broken windows, no upper births, basically, just a dilapidated train. A controversy erupted after videos of the filthy train went viral.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw suspended four officials and ordered an inquiry.

The minister asserted that the dignity of the security forces is paramount and such negligence will not be tolerated at any level, according to a statement from the Railway Ministry released on Wednesday.

The action came a day after the Northeast Frontier Railway Zone dismissed the allegations in a post on X, where social media users criticised the railways over the condition of the coaches while reacting to videos of the train that surfaced online. About 1,200 BSF troops drawn from 13 companies were scheduled to board a

“This is what happens when the government's entire focus is on PR for a few flashy trains, while the masses are forced to travel like animals. Shame on @narendramodi and @AshwiniVaishnaw for providing a filthy train - full of dirt, cockroaches, and broken seats - for our BSF soldiers heading for Amarnath Yatra duty

- Congress spokesperson Shama Mohamed

“The Railway Minister said that the dignity of the security forces is paramount and such negligence will not be tolerated at any level. An enquiry has also been ordered so that such incidents shouldn't take place in future

- Railway Ministry

special train on June 6 for Jammu Tawi from Udaipur in Tripura. The train had to make a few stops in between and collect troops from four locations in Tripura, Assam and West Bengal.

Officials said the train was made available to the BSF on June 9, and when they saw its "poor and unhygienic" condition, the jawans inspecting a coach recorded videos.

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100% sure my sister behind her hubby's murder: Sonam's brother

PTI, INDORE/SHILLONG: The brother of Sonam Raghuvanshi, accused of plotting the murder of her Indore-based husband Raja during their honeymoon in Meghalaya, on Wednesday said he is '100 per cent' sure his sister orchestrated the crime and asserted she should be hanged if found guilty.

A distraught Govind Raghuvanshi, brother of Sonam, declared his family has snapped all ties with his sister and expressed solidarity with Raja's grieving family members and vowed to help them in their fight for justice in a case which has shocked the nation.

In a related development, a court in Meghalaya's capital Shillong sent Sonam Raghuvanshi and her four aides arrested for the murder last month to eight-day police custody, an official said.



Govind Raghuvanshi, brother of Sonam Raghuvanshi, consoles Raja's mother Uma Raghuvanshi during a visit at the latter's residence, in Indore, on Wednesday

The Meghalaya police brought Sonam to Shillong from Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday midnight and the other accused from Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday on transit remand, a senior officer said.

"Police had sought a 10-day remand of all the accused. The court granted 8 days of police custody," East Khasi Hills district

SP Vivek Syiem told PTI. The special investigation team probing the sensational case sought police custody of the accused to reconstruct the crime scene in Sohra (also known as Cherrapunji), where the body was recovered on June 2, the officer said.

In Indore, Govind Raghuvanshi visited Raja's house to con-

“Absolutely (when asked if Sonam should be given capital punishment), if Sonam is found guilty, she should be hanged straight away. I will appoint a lawyer myself to represent Raja Raghuvanshi's family in the court. I am with the truth. Raja Raghuvanshi's family has lost a son. I have apologised to his family. Our family has broken ties with Sonam

-Govind Raghuvanshi, accused Sonam's brother

sole the latter's family members. Sharing the family's grief, he hugged Raja's mother Uma and broke down.

Raja (29) and Sonam (24) got married on May 11 and went "missing" during their honeymoon trip to the north-eastern state on May 23.

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