

# NOW, CONSTABLE WHO HELPED SIDDIQUI FLEE SLIPS OUT ON BAIL

Cops left red-faced as court grants bail pointing out that all sections slapped on dismissed IRBn constable Amit Naik are bailable and bail is his right

Team Herald

PANJIM: He was caught on camera unlocking the Crime Branch lockup and helping landgrab accused Siddiqui alias Suleman Khan flee. On Saturday, seven days after he was arrested for his involvement in the fugitive's escape, constable Amit Naik himself slipped out of the police's grasp, with the CJM court granting him conditional bail.

In its bail order, the chief judicial magistrate pointed out that the former Indian Reserve Battalion (IRBn) constable had been slapped with only bailable sections and bail was his right. In effect, this means that even while filing the chargesheet against him, police had known that the door would be open for him to get bail. This, in an investigation that has seen Goa Police face intense scrutiny over how



a wanted man like Siddiqui could walk out of lockup and vanish into thin air. Now, the man who helped him do that is also out.

Naik was arrested on December 13 was first remanded in four days police custody and was later sent to judicial custody for ten days.

Naik has been referred to the Institute of Psychiatry and

Human Behaviour (IPHB), Bambolim, for mental health assessment and treatment after he attempted to commit suicide in the lockup. He has already been dismissed from the service.

On Friday, the Court had adjourned the hearing of the bail application to Saturday.

The Old Goa police in their say had opposed the bail appli-

cation and sought custody of Naik to carry out fair and clear investigation into the land grabbing accused Suleman Khan escaping case.

Investigating officer PSI Suden Redkar had submitted that if Naik was released on bail he may threaten prime witnesses and it will hamper the whole investigation. He may also contact Siddiqui, the lawyer contended.

The Court ordered that Naik be released on a bail of Rs 25,000. Adv Kautuk Raikar argued on behalf of Naik and submitted that all the sections that he was booked under were bailable.

Meanwhile, the police custody of Hajaratasabh Bavannavar alias Hazrat Ali of Old Hubballi, who allegedly harboured Suleman in his car at Hubballi, was extended by three more days on Friday. He was arrested on December 14.

## GOA POLICE RESPONSIBLE FOR SIDDIQUI'S ESCAPE: TANAVADE

PANJIM: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) State president and Rajya Sabha MP Sadanand Shet Tanavade on Saturday held the Goa Police responsible for Siddiqui alias Suleman Khan's escape from the Crime Branch lock-up.

Tanavade said, "Police are to be held cent per cent responsible for Suleman's escape from the lock-up. There were lapses and the police have to find out how he escaped. It was their responsibility (to guard him)."

## Labourer dies in stone crusher accident at Chimbel

Team Herald

PANJIM: A labourer working at a stone crusher unit at Chimbel died after part of a crusher machine fell on him on Saturday morning.

The deceased was identified as 48-year-old Parshuram. The tragedy occurred when one part of the crusher machine gave way and fell on his head injuring him grievously.

He was immediately shifted to the Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Bambolim but died on the way, the police said.

The Old Goa police conducted the panchanama and sent the body to the GMC morgue for post-mortem examination.

## Cong protest stalled by cops, workers detained

Police deny permission to march to CM's residence, detain Amit Patkar, Yuri Alemao, Altone D'Costa, Sunil Kawthankar, others; 'massive' protest turns into damp squib

Team Herald

PANJIM: A massive protest organised by the Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) to the Chief Minister's official residence to highlight various issues plaguing the State on Saturday turned out to be a damp squib as few party members attended.

The police also refused them permission to march to the Chief Minister's Altinho residence due to which the Opposition members staged protest near the Azad Maidan, Panjim. The police told them that the North Goa Collector had denied permission to the march.

The police later detained 24 protestors including GPCC president Amit Patkar, Leader of the Opposition Yuri Alemao, MLA Altone D'Costa, vice president Sunil Kawthankar and others, while trying to break the police cordon to march to the Chief Minister's residence. They were all taken to the



Agassaim police station and were released in the evening.

Addressing a protestors, Thakare said, "We had organised a peaceful protest march but were stopped by the police. This is happening only in Goa where the government used police to stop our peaceful protest march. We wanted to protest against the BJP government on collapsing law and order, rampant land grabbing, illegal land conversions and cash-for-government jobs scams.

Referring to the escape of hardcore criminal Siddique alias Suleman Khan from the

police lock-up, Thakare alleged that the main of the government was to protect land grabbers. It is condemnable, he said.

Thakare further said that the government had failed to provide employment to educated youth and BJP functionaries were involved in cash-for-jobs scam undermining the future of Goan youth. "The government cannot safeguard the interest of unemployed youth seeking jobs and the Chief Minister Pramod Sawant should resign immediately," he said.

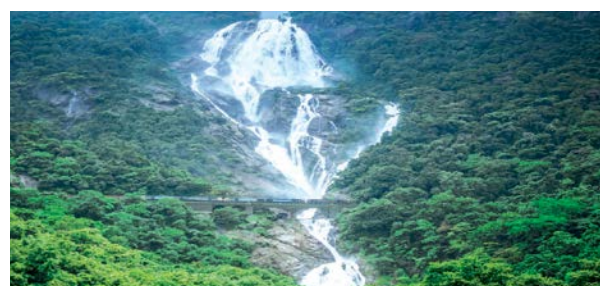
GPCC president Amit Patkar said that Chief Minister Pramod

The government had trampled upon their constitutional rights by directing the North Goa Collector to deny them permission for a peaceful march to the CM's residence — Amit Patkar, GPCC president

Sawant had failed Goa on every front. He alleged, "The government had trampled upon their constitutional rights by directing the North Goa Collector to deny them permission for a peaceful march to the Chief Minister's residence."

After they were detained by the police, GPCC vice president Sunil Kawthankar alleged that the police illegally detained them while peacefully marching towards the Chief Minister's residence. This is murder of democracy and violation of our fundamental rights ensured under the Indian Constitution, he charged.

## GTDC to hold Dudhsagar Festavista at Collem



Team Herald

PANJIM: The Tourism Department will be organising Dudhsagar Festavista 24 at Collem on Christmas Day and the Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC) has picked the picturesque Metawad ground in Collem to host the one-of-the-kind event and which will offer a unique blend of music, culture and festive celebrations.

### HINTERLAND TOURISM

According to GTDC officials the one-day festival will exclusively focus on heritage and culture and will have three musical concerts, cultural programmes and folk dance performances by Goan artists and singers.

The traditional-themed festival is part of the Tourism Department's effort to spotlight and promote the natural beauty of Goa's hinterlands.

Dudhsagar Festavista will feature an exceptional line-up of performances, with celebrated artists including Band 24K, Kashish and Bollywood Band, DJ

Amin, and comedian Ahsaan Qureshi, ensuring a captivating experience for all attendees.

"Dudhsagar Festavista promises a captivating array of activities and attractions featuring vibrant cultural performances, exquisite local crafts, artisan stalls, and a diverse selection of food stalls. This event is a celebration of Goa's rich cultural heritage and breath-taking natural landscapes, offering visitors a chance to experience the state beyond its iconic sun, sea, and sand. The festival is dedicated to fostering long-term benefits for local communities, preserving natural resources, and highlighting the unique charm of Goa's hinterlands," said an official.

Director of Tourism and Managing Director of GTDC, Suneel Anchipaka, IAS, informed that this is the first time such a festival will be held in the State. Under the festival, we are showcasing the natural attractions of the region. He emphasized on the Department of Tourism's focus on the "Goa Beyond Beaches" initiative and on various aspects of Regenerative Tourism.

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