Filmmaker Shakeel Noorani held after aspiring actor alleges rape

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
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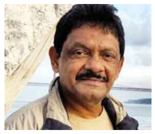

Mumbai Police have arrested Bollywood filmmaker Shakeel Noorani after a 33-year-old aspiring actor accused him of raping and threatening her, officials said on Monday.

The 73-year-old accused was traced to his farmhouse in Mahabaleshwar hill station, located more than 200 km from Mumbai, on Saturday after he went into hiding following the registration of a First Information Report (FIR) against him, they said.

Noorani is known for directing films like "Joru Ka Ghulam" (2000), starring Govinda, and "Bade Dilwala" (1999), which featured Suniel Shetty. In her complaint, the woman alleged that Noorani sexually assaulted her over the last four years and also poisoned her, leading to a miscarriage.

She claimed the accused had called her to his residence in the Malvani area here on the pretext of discussing the script of an upcoming film project, where he allegedly spiked her drink and sexually assaulted her.

When she regained consciousness, Noorani showed her an intimate video on his mobile phone and allegedly threatened to circulate it if she approached the police or informed her family.

The accused subsequently used the purported video to allegedly threaten her and sexually assault her on multiple occasions. He also gave her contraceptive pills following the assault and poisoned her, causing a miscarriage, a police official said quoting the woman's complaint lodged 40 days ago.

Assam re-launches red lentil, sugar scheme

TONY DAS Guwahati

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday re-launched the State's subsidised *masoor dal* and sugar distribution scheme for National Food Security Act (NFSA) beneficiaries at Raha in Nagaon district. The initiative is set to benefit over 2.48 crore individuals across nearly 70 lakh families in the State.

Under the revived welfare initiative, masoor dal will be made available at ₹70 per kg, while sugar will be provided at ₹30 per kg through fair price shops. The scheme, which had been temporarily suspended for two months owing to the Vote on Account budget, was formally restarted at a modest function held at a fair price shop in Kamarjan village under the Raha assembly constituency.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister emphasised that the supply of essential commodities at subsidised rates alongside free rice under the 'Anna Sewa Saptah' will play a vital role in ensuring nutritional security for poor households.

Sarma stated that the distribution programme had been kept modest due to the prevailing severe flood situation in Upper Assam. Assuring that welfare initiatives were regaining momentum as flood conditions gradually improved, he noted that key public schemes like Orunodoi, Chief Minister's Nijut Moina, and Nijut Babu were also systematically restarted following the passage of the state budget in July. Highlighting upcoming welfare steps, the Chief Minister announced that salt would also be provided at subsidised rates within a few days once technical constraints are resolved.

He further revealed that the State Government is actively taking steps to fulfil its election promise of providing mustard oil at subsidised prices, besides initiating measures to cover eligible families previously left out of the Orunodoi scheme.

The coverage under the distribution scheme includes 15,83,080 beneficiaries across 3,85,299 families in Nagaon district alone, while 2.36 lakh individuals belonging to 61,614 families in the Raha constituency will benefit from the programme. Expressing his gratitude to cooperative societies and fair price shops for executing the supply chain, Dr Sarma also promised significant developmental projects for the Raha constituency over the next five years.

The re-launch event was attended by Agriculture Minister Pijush Hazarika, Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs Minister Kaushik Rai, along with MLAs Sashikanta Das, Rupak Sarma, and Jitu Goswami.

NCP (SP) rules out support to NDA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumbai

The Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP) on Monday dismissed speculation about future support for the BJP-led NDA, and affirmed that its stance on delimitation will depend on the final draft bill presented in Parliament.

Talking to reporters, NCP (SP) spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said a delegation led by party MP and working president Supriya Sule met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi to discuss issues related to Maharashtra, and insisted the visit wasn't political.

He said the meeting, which lasted 20 minutes, was scheduled after confirmation from the Prime Minister's Office on Friday and was not related to the delimitation issue.

"There is no proposal or discussion on delimitation in Parliament today. First, the bill should come. Once the bill comes, it will be discussed with the INDIA alliance. There will be a detailed discussion within the alliance," Tapase said.

Mahesh Tapase, NCP (SP) spokesperson

He clarified that the NCP (SP) was firmly with the Opposition bloc and had not entered into any political understanding with the BJP or the NDA in 2014, 2019 or 2024, and questioned why it would do so now.

Tapase's remarks came amid speculation about a rapprochement between the two NCP factions and the Sharad Pawar-led party extending support to the NDA.

He said that the party had built its own organisation after the NCP split and was working to strengthen its cadre under the leadership of Supriya Sule, Rohit Pawar, Jayant Patil and Shashikant Shinde. Speaking about the proposed delimitation exercise, Tapase said the Government had not yet made up its mind whether to introduce the legislation during the ongoing monsoon session.

"No draft bill has been sent to any MP for reading or discussion. I don't think the delimitation bill will come in the next two-three days," he said. He further stated that women's quota should be delinked from delimitation, and said the legislation passed in 2023 should be implemented immediately.