

Food poisoning at Karnataka village fair: 3 women dead

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Tumakuru

THREE women died of food poisoning after having food at a fair at Bullasandra village in Madhugiri taluk of district on Monday. Over eleven persons were being treated at a makeshift health clinic. The deceased were identified as Thimmakka (80), Giriyanamma (86) residents of the same village and Katamma (45), who had arrived at his parent's house from Siddhagiri village of Madakasira taluk in Andhra Pradesh. The annual fair of deity Kariyamma and Mutturaya Bhootappa had begun on Saturday. After having the cooked food including the non vegetarian meals they faced the complaints of vomiting and diarrhoea. Assistant commissioner Goturu Shivanna along with taluk panchayat EO Lakshman, health officer Dr Srinivas and PDO Dayananda visited the spot and took stock of the situation. He ruled out the contamination of water but clarified that the samples have been sent for the laboratory.

More sexual misconduct allegations rock Bollywood

Major figures like Jayasurya and VK Prakash named; Ranjith booked

ANNA JOSE @Kochi

THE tsunami that hit the Malayalam film industry after the release of the Justice Hema Committee report continued to wreak havoc with more women coming out with allegations of sexual harassment and misconduct against several big names in the field, including actor Jayasurya and filmmaker V K Prakash.

On Monday, actor-producer Maniyanpilla Raju, actors Edavela Babu and Baburaj, and director Thulasidas also came under the cloud of harassment allegations.

Meanwhile, the Kochi city police registered a case against Ranjith after a Bengali actor filed a sexual harassment complaint against the filmmaker. Ranjith had resigned as the chairman of the Kerala Chalachitra Academy following the allegations. Rocking the film fraternity further, senior actor Geetha Vijayan, actor Minu Muneer and a junior artist went public on Monday to narrate the traumatic experiences they encountered from some of



Actor Siddique(L) and Director Ranjith | FILE PIC

their male colleagues.

Perhaps, the biggest name to figure in the allegations on the day was Jayasurya. Minu Muneer, who acted in a slew of Malayalam movies, alleged the Jayasurya hugged and kissed her forcibly on the sets of the 2008 movie 'Dhe Ingottu Nokkiye'. "Without my consent, he hugged me from behind and when I turned around, he kissed on my lips. I was frightened and ran away from there," she said.

In a Facebook post, Mini also accused actors Mukesh, Edavela Babu and Maniyanpilla Raju, and two technicians of physical and verbal abuse.

"In 2013, I was subjected to

physical and verbal abuse by these people while working on a project. I was forced to leave the Malayalam film industry," she wrote in the post. Putting V K Prakash in the dock, a young writer from Kochi has accused him of sexual misconduct. "He offered me a role in his film and asked me to enact a vulgar and intimate scene. I felt uncomfortable, and when I objected, he acted the scene himself and tried to touch my body," she said. Actor Geetha Vijayan told reporters that director Thulasidas behaved inappropriately with her during the shoot of his film 'Chanchattam' in 1991. "I reacted and stood up for myself. He has misbehaved with other women," she said. A junior artist, who wished to protect her identity, came out AMMA joint secretary Baburaj alleging that he sexually assaulted her in 2019.

Meanwhile, Actor Siddique filed a complaint with the DGP on Monday against artist Revathy Sampath who had accused him of sexual assault. He alleged that her accusations are driven by an agenda.

Darshan's tea party: 9 prison cops suspended

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

NINE police officers, including the chief superintendent of Bengaluru Central Prison at Parappana Agrahara, have been suspended after a video and photograph of actor Darshan Thoogudeepa having tea and cigarette with other pris-



The actor smoking with a coffee mug in hand in Bengaluru prison | FILE PIC

oners in the jail went viral on Sunday.

While three FIRs have been registered in connection with this incident, Darshan is likely to be shifted from Bengaluru to another prison as Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has instructed some top police officers to do so.

V Seshumurthy, chief superintendent, Bengaluru Central Prison, Mallikarjun Swamy, superintendent of prisons, Sharan Basappa Amingad and Prabhu S Khandelwal, jailers, LS

Kuppeswamy and Srikanth Thawar, assistant jailers, Venkappa and Sampath Kumar, head warders, and K Basappa, warder, have been suspended.

Following criticism from various quarters, Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara visited the prison along with DG & IGP Alok Mohan and DGP (Prisons & Correctional Services) Malini Krishnamoorthy on Monday afternoon.

Admitting lapses on the part of prison officials, the home minister told reporters that nine officers have been suspended for dereliction of duty. The police have mentioned the actor's name in the three FIRs, besides naming rowdy sheeters Wilson Garden Naga and Kulla Seena, and Darshan's manager Nagaraj, who are seen with the actor in the photograph.

The police said the three cases, registered at Parappana Agrahara police station, have been handed over to officers of other stations to ensure an impartial probe. The cases have been registered on complaints from DIG (Prisons) Somashekhar. The FIRs pertain to use of mobile phones and smoking cigarettes on the prison premises and smuggling these items into the jail.

Police hand in glove with the rich: HC

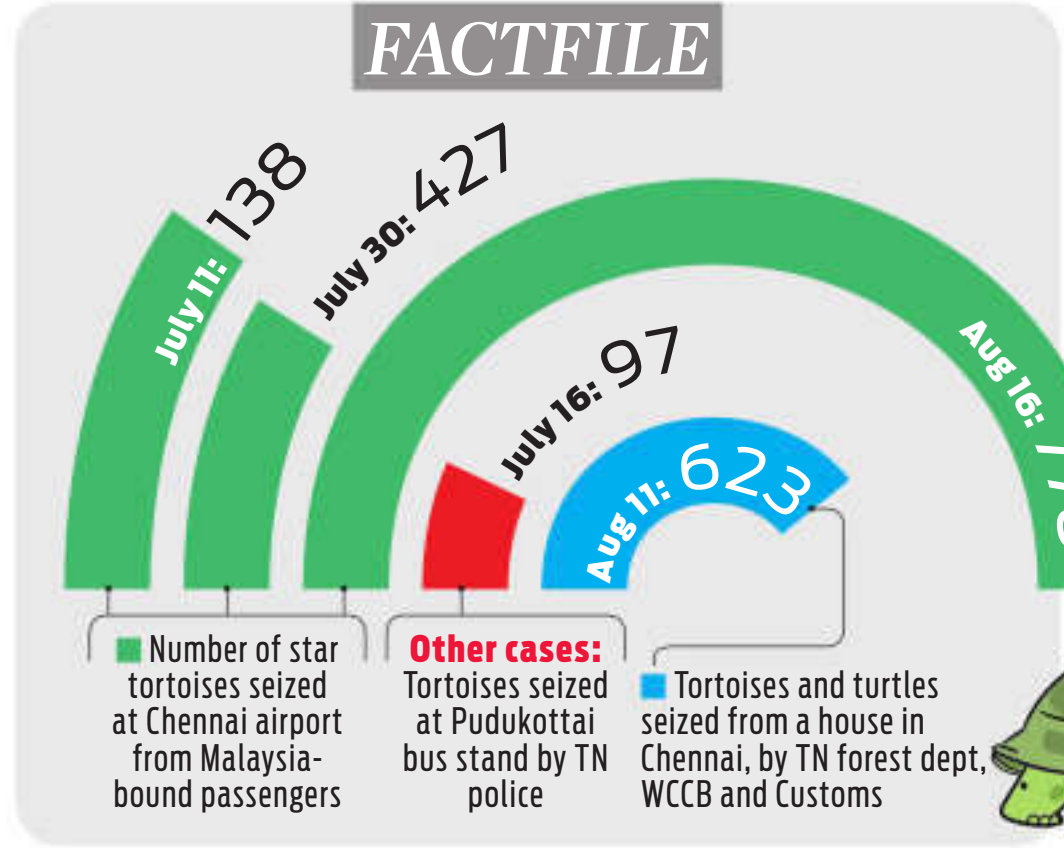
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HOWEVER, the CCB submitted to the district court that the complaint was civil in nature. So the judge ordered Tallakulam police to register an FIR and conduct an investigation. A case was then registered in July 2024 against nine persons under various sections of the IPC and Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Charging Exorbitant Interest Act, 2003.

Noting that it took the CCB over four months to realise that the complaint was civil in nature, the court said, "Demanding exorbitant interest is a menace to society and this related offence is reported more in southern districts." The judge added that the police were hand in glove with the rich, powerful and influential financiers.

Though an FIR has been registered, considering the manner in which this petitioner's complaint was dealt with by the police, the court suo motu implored the DGP as a respondent and directed him to transfer the same to CB-CID, Madurai, or Virudhunagar.

DGP told to transfer case Considering the manner in which this petitioner's complaint was dealt with by the police, the court suo motu directed the DGP to transfer the same to CB-CID, Madurai, or Virudhunagar



Customs to tighten vigil during tortoises' breeding season

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THE Indian star tortoise and other animals such as Tricarinata hill turtle, Brahminy river turtle and black pond terrapin are protected species under Indian and international wildlife laws which prohibit their trade.

They are sought-after in Malaysia and other South-east Asian countries either as pets or for their meat, sources said.

Sources said that the international network connected with Indian smugglers is a well-oiled machinery. The network engages local villagers to harvest these reptiles from their habitat in the scrub jungles of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

The animals are then transported by middlemen via trains or buses to important cities like Chennai, Tiruchy, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Cochin which have good air connectivity to Malaysia. Sources said that only unreserved compartments or sleeper class coaches are

used by the middlemen so that they can merge with the crowd and escape police's attention.

The reptiles are later handed over to another group, which stores them in a warehouse, like the Kolathur house raided on August 11.

They are then packed in suitcases concealed with chocolate wrappers, clothes and adult diapers and sent with trained carriers to Malaysia via flights. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has asked customs officials to tighten their vigil at these airports as the southwest monsoon period

(June-October) is the breeding season of star tortoises in their natural habitat and the chances of them being harvested for smuggling to Malaysia is high during the period.

Sources said RPF, GRP and TN forest officials have also been sounded an alert as these tortoises are sent via trains and buses from villages near forests to the cities. On July 16, TN police had found an abandoned bag containing 97 star tortoises near the Pudukottai bus stand, which was meant for trafficking to Malaysia via Tiruchy airport.

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