

Mumbai top cop shunted, NIA says other players in Waze episode



Under flak for 'mishandling' of the bomb scare outside industrialist Mukesh Ambanis house in Mumbai, Maharashtra Government on Wednesday transferred city Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh to the low-key Home Guard.

Senior IPS officer Hemant Nagrale, holding additional charge of the state Director General of Police (DGP) post, will be the new Mumbai Police Commissioner, Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said.

Singh's transfer came even as the case of recovery of gelatin sticks near Ambani's residence turned murkier with the National Investigation Agency (NIA) claiming there were "other players" who had been allegedly instructing arrested policeman Sachin Waze.

[NIA](#) sources said the case had virtually been cracked and soon the "entire conspiracy" behind would be unravelled.

"Big decision of the government. Shri Hemant Nagrale will be the new Mumbai Police Commissioner. Shri Rajnish Seth will have the additional charge of the post of Director General of Police, Maharashtra," tweeted Deshmukh, who met Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray earlier in the day.

"Shri Sanjay Pandey will have the responsibility of Maharashtra State Security Corporation. Shri Param Bir Singh will have the responsibility of the Home Guard, he added.

The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) governments move follows a series of meetings among the ruling Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress alliance leaders.

Waze is at the focus of NIA's probe in the recovery of an SUV with explosives near Ambani's house.

Arrested in the case on March 13 for his alleged role in the crime, Waze was attached to the Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) till recently. He was suspended after NIA arrested him.

Singh's transfer follows Monday's talks between Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and NCP chief Sharad Pawar, amid reports that Waze stage-managed the bomb scare on instructions from Singh.

The NIA team recovered some "incriminating" documents and electronic evidence such as laptop, iPad and mobile phones from Waze's office, an official of the agency said on Tuesday.

A black Mercedes car, being used by Waze, was also seized from a parking lot near the CSMT station, and Rs 5 lakh in cash, a note-counting machine, two number plates and some clothes were recovered from it, the official added.

The NIA questioned Mumbai crime branch officer Riyazuddin Kazi for the fourth consecutive day on Wednesday in connection with its probe into a case related to the recovery of the SUV with explosives.

Another assistant police inspector (API) of the crime branch, Prakash Howal, also appeared before the agency here in the afternoon.

Kazi had allegedly procured the fake number plates found in the SUV, an official claimed.

NIA sources said a letter from the terror outfit Jaish-UI-Hind, posted on Telegram app, demanding ransom and claiming responsibility for the incident will also be investigated.

The Delhi Police's special cell has already taken into custody Tehseen Akhtar, an associate of the Indian Mujahideen who is an expertise on fabricating improvised explosive devices.

The officials said some evidences have been collected after questioning Akhtar and seizing the mobile instrument used to post the threat letter on Telegram app, and Waze will soon be confronted with these.

Meanwhile, the former owner of the Mercedes car which was allegedly used by Waze and seized by the NIA, said he will "fully cooperate" with the probe agency if it approaches him for any information related to the vehicle.

Saransh Bhawsar, a resident of Dhule district, told a TV channel that he had sold his vehicle last month through an online portal and claimed he did not know the person who purchased it.

Bhawsar said he does not know Waze and heard his name for the first time on Tuesday.

Bhawsar said though he does not own the car now, he got phone calls from people who know him after the vehicle was seized by the NIA.

Maharashtra minister Jayant Patil said the NIA should complete its probe into the recovery of the explosive-laden SUV then announce the conclusion, instead of disclosing the investigation details in-between.

Talking to reporters after a meeting of key state ministers at the Sahyadri Guest House here, the names of those involved are coming to the fore slowly.

State textiles minister Aslam Shaikh said action will be taken against "anyone who has committed a mistake" and the state government will not back anybody in such a case.

NIA