

Indian police arrest fake Dubai princess in Punjab

Indian police arrest woman and accomplices as they try to extract money to release man on death row in Sharjah

- By Anjana Sankar, Senior Reporter
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Dubai: A fake Dubai princess and three of her male accomplices were arrested on Wednesday by police in the northern Indian state of Punjab for trying to dupe the family of one of the 17 Indians who are facing the death penalty in Sharjah, a senior official said.

Dr Jitendra Jain, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Ludhiana, Punjab told *Gulf News* that the woman posed as a 'princess' from Dubai, and claimed she could help the family to get their kin out of prison if they paid her money.

"The four were produced in the court and are remanded to the police custody. Investigations are on and we are yet to track whether they have any links to Dubai," Jain told *Gulf News* over the phone from Punjab.

The 40-year old woman, Sarabjit Kaur, is reportedly a resident of Mahianwala village near Zira town in Ferozepur district.

Ludhiana (rural) Superintendent of Police, H.S. Chahal told *Gulf News* over the phone from Punjab that on July 10, the brother of Sarabjit Kaur called Jaspreet Singh and said that a Dubai 'princess' is visiting Punjab, and she could help release his brother Kuldeep Singh who is currently on death row in Sharjah.

The man demanded Rs1.4 million (Dh110,134) in return, said the officer.

"Jaspreet contacted Avtar Singh, senior vice-president of Lok Bhalai Party, that is involved in fighting for the cause of the release of these 17 Indians, who in turn informed us. Singh talked to the caller over the phone and struck a deal for Rs600,000 (Dh47,200). They also informed the police.

"The man called them at Zira bus stand for the delivery of money and said the 'princess' will herself accept the money. We laid a trap and arrested the woman when she was receiving the money on Tuesday at the bus stand. Her face was covered with a black scarf. The three male accomplices escaped but we arrested them all yesterday," Chahal said.

The officer said the three have been involved in other fraud cases including conducting fake marriages and cheating people by posing as spiritual gurus.

"The court has sent Sarabjit in police remand. During interrogation, she told police that earlier she had contacted the family of another youth on death row in the UAE," Chahal said.

Seventeen Indians — 16 from Punjab and one from Haryana — were sentenced to death by a Shariah court in March. They were convicted of murdering a Pakistani man and injuring three others in January 2009 in a fight over spurious liquor.

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