

NIA Press Release

NIA CHARGESHEETS SELF-RADICALISED ACCUSED IN KOZHIKODE TRAIN ARSON CASE IN KERALA

New Delhi, 30th September 2023

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday chargesheeted the sole accused in the Kerala train arson case, in which three passengers, including a child, were killed and nine others injured.

The accused Sharukh @ Sharukh Saifi, a 27-year-old, has been charged under various sections of IPC, UA(P)A, Railways Act and PDPP Act. He is accused of committing the terror act by setting the D1 Coach of Alappuzha- Kannur Executive Express on fire on 2nd April, 2023. The NIA Chargesheet says Saifi, the sole accused in the gory case, had thrown and sprinkled Petrol on the passengers and set the bogey on fire with a lighter with the intention to kill people.

A resident of Shaheenbagh, New Delhi, Saifi had boarded the moving Alappuzha- Kannur Executive Express, committed the terror act, and continued to travel in the same train till Kannur, before escaping to Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, from where he was eventually arrested. He had travelled to Kerala from New Delhi on 31st March 2023 and reached the state on 2nd April, NIA investigations have revealed. The accused purchased petrol from a Petrol bunk in Shoranur and a lighter from a nearby store at Shoranur Railway Station.

NIA investigations show that Saifi had chosen Kerala for the act involving terror and arson as he wanted to commit his Jihadi act in a location where he would not be recognised. He had intended to return to normal life after the commission of the act, aimed at creating terror in the minds of the general public.

The accused was self-radicalised through various online propaganda material available on social media in favour of violent extremism and Jihad, as propagated by radical Islamic preachers of Indian and foreign nationalities. In this process, he followed radical and hardline Islamic Preachers including those who are Menk and Pakistan-based, on social media platforms. He had committed the arson as a Jihadi terror act in pursuance of the online radicalisation.

The case was initially registered as FIR No. 38/2023 at Kozhikode Railway Police Station, Kerala State, and later by Special Investigation Team, Kerala. On 17th April, the NIA took over the investigations of the case (RC-01/2023/NIA/KOC) on orders from MHA. During the course of its investigations, NIA conducted searches in 10 locations in Delhi and seized digital devices. Several witnesses were questioned and CCTV footage from the Railway Station were also seized.