

False rape charge lands woman in prison for 4 years

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A woman has been sentenced to four years in jail for levelling false allegations of rape against a man, who later committed suicide as he could not bear the stigma of spending 72 days in jail for a crime he did not commit.

Last December when the country was witnessing unprecedented protests against Delhi gangrape incident, 35-year-old Chanchal Rathore had accused her 53-year-old landlord, Roopkishore Agrawal, of raping her. However, during the trial, Chanchal admitted that she was not raped.

According to her, she had a quarrel with Agrawal when he had come to collect rent and the money her husband had taken as loan from him. Additional Sessions Judge Savita Dubey, who was hearing the rape case, later ordered that Chanchal be tried for giving a false statement.

The judge even appeared as a witness in the court of Additional Sessions Judge Indira Singh, who sentenced Chanchal to four years in jail under Section 211b of the IPC (making false charge of offence with an intent to injure). She has also been slapped a fine of Rs 10,000, non-payment of which will fetch another six months jail term for her.

Chanchal, who claimed to work for an NGO, was also sentenced to six months in jail under Section 182 (giving false information with an intent to cause public servant to use his lawful power to the injury of another person). Both sentences will run concurrently.

Chanchal is also being separately tried for abetment to suicide, punishable with a seven-year jail term.

Chanchal's husband Sunil, who took the money from the landlord to buy a Tata Magic vehicle, is also an accused in this case, said Additional Public Prosecutor Hemant Mungi.

Agrawal was found dead in his home on March 17, nine days after he was released on bail. In his suicide note, he had blamed Chanchal for his ordeal and his decision to take kill himself.

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