



NIA SPECIAL COURT SENTENCES U.P RESIDENT TO RI & FINE IN PAK ESPIONAGE CASE

The NIA Special Court, Lucknow, on Tuesday convicted and sentenced one person to rigorous imprisonment (RI) and fine in an espionage case involving passing of photographs and videos of sensitive Indian installations and details regarding movement of armed forces to agents working for Pakistani Defence establishment and the ISI.

Mohammad Rashid, a resident of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, has been convicted today by the NIA Special Court Lucknow in the case (RC-03/2020/NIA-LKW).

NIA investigations had revealed that the accused had shared photographs of sensitive, tactical and strategically important installations & places in India, as well as details regarding the movements of the Indian Army and paramilitary forces, along with photographs of insignia clicked from his mobile, with agents across the border. It was also found during investigations that the accused had aided and abetted a conspiracy hatched by Pakistani ISI agents for commission of terrorist acts.

Investigations further revealed that Mohammad Rashid was in contact with agents connected with Pakistani Defence authorities and the ISI, as well as government employees in Pakistan and was sending them the sensitive images and videos through WhatsApp. He frequently used to reset his mobile phone and WhatsApp account to delete the logs and digital footprints of his communication to remove all traces of the same.

Acting on the directions of ISI agents, he had also arranged Indian SIM cards fraudulently, along with OTPs, for operatives of the Pakistani spy agency, for facilitating the activation of WhatsApp accounts with Indian numbers in their country. As part of the conspiracy, he had received funds and gifts from the ISI agents for supply of the information, including photos and videos of places of strategic, tactical and religious importance.

In its orders today, the NIA Special Court sentenced Mohammad Rashid to 03 years RI with Rs. 2,000 fine or one month imprisonment u/s 120 B of the IPC, 05 years RI with Rs. 2,000 fine or one month imprisonment u/s 123 of the IPC, and 06 years RI with Rs. 2,000 fine or one month imprisonment u/s 18 of the UA(P) Act. All the sentences will run concurrently.

The case was initially registered by ATS, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow (U.P) on 19th January 2020 u/s 123 of the IPC. It was taken over and re-registered by NIA on 6th April the same year. He was charge-sheeted in July 2020, and subsequently, another accused, identified as Rajakbhai Kumbhar, was chargesheeted by the agency in February 2021.

Further trial against the remaining accused continues.