COP REWARDED FOR PREVENTING BURGLARY

'Never saw myself standing with IPS officers to shake commissioner's hand'

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ASSISTANT SUB-INSPECTOR (ASI) Suresh (55) couldn't believe his luck when Delhi Police Commissioner Satish Golcha shook his hand on October 16. In a career spanning over 35 years, he has never met a police commissioner in person, let alone be inside his office. If this was not enough shock for him, Golcha also invited him for a Diwali Milan, scheduled later that evening at the Police Head Quarters on Ashoka Road. The commissioner hosts the party exclusively for IPS officers.

Why was he invited: Suresh was awarded the 'Asadharan Karya Puraskar' by Golcha on Thursday due to his efforts in preventing a major burglary. "The invite was even more moving than the award he gave me. Never did I see myself standing in queue with IPS officers to shake the commissioner's hand," says Suresh.

His journey to the commissioner's office started on October 15. Around 3 am, Suresh, posted at Paschim Vihar West police station in Outer Delhi, was out in an Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) at Chaudhary Prem Sukh Marg, with Constable Arun at the wheel. "I saw two Maruti Eco vehicles parked on the road. Two men each were inside... I asked the driver of the first car to come out for a routine check," Suresh said.



ASI Suresh with Delhi Police chief with Satish Golcha

Two men came out and quickly went towards the second vehicle, got in and fled.

"I still didn't assume that they were criminals. People have a tendency to run away when they are asked to stop at night by police," said Suresh. Soon, Constable Arun started the ERV, with Suresh by his side, and a chase ensued.

"We went after them... At Durlabh Nath Marg, the vehicle had to stop as the road was barricaded. So, the Eco vehicle went towards Dhobi Ghat," Suresh says.

Suresh and Arun followed. At another turn, the Eco found another barricade. "It was then that the four men abandoned the vehicle and started running towards a narrow lane. Our ERV wouldn't enter the lane. Arun and I started chasing them on foot. Soon, the four men fled in different directions. We decided to go after one to ensure at least one is arrested," says Suresh.

On the way, trying to catch his breath, Suresh worried what if the accused had a weapon. "I pushed myself and caught the accused with Arun. I am especially proud of my run," Suresh chuckles.

The man they caught was Laxmi Narayan Bansal (53), who had come out on bail four months ago. He was one of the most notorious auto-lifters in the area. "Bansal has been involved in over 70 cases of theft and burglary across Delhi. His journey began in 1991," DCP (Outer) Sachin Sharma said. During questioning, Bansal told Suresh that he had two more Eco vehicles, hidden in Rohini. When asked why he was taking such an active interest in Eco vehicles, Bansal said he was preparing for a major heist.