

## Pardon plea for boy who threatened president

Bhopal - People in a Madhya Pradesh district have come forward to plead mercy for a local teenager who has been booked for sending an e-mail to President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam threatening to kill him.

Over 20,000 residents of Ashoknagar district came out on streets Saturday seeking pardon for Sulabh Goyal, media reports said.

Schoolchildren, businessmen and district-level politicians cutting across party lines joined in a rally. They carried placards reading 'Please pardon Sulabh', 'We are sorry and ashamed of Sulabh' and 'Sorry, sir'.

The 19-year-old Sulabh, preparing for the entrance exams for the National Defence Academy, had sent the threatening e-mail to president from Indore July 19 - a day after Kalam visited [Mumbai](#) in the aftermath of the July 11 terror attacks in that megapolis.

The origin of the mail was soon traced. The Indore police arrested the teenager from Ashoknagar July 26 and was handed over to Delhi Police.

Police came to know of the boy's motive when they interrogated him. He said he was being ridiculed for his name as it reminded many of Sulabh Shauchalayas, the national chain of public toilets. He said he had earlier written to the president requesting him to change the name of the public convenience chain.

'I was upset over the name of toilets as it resembled my name and I had become a butt of jokes because of it. So, I took the extreme step after receiving no response to my requests,' Sulabh is reported to have told the police.

In Saturday's rally, people walked through the main thoroughfares of Ashoknagar before gathering at Subhash Chowk where they signed a petition requesting the president to pardon the boy and get him released.

Later, they handed over the petition to Ashoknagar district collector M.C. Gupta.

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