

Indian cabbie denied bail over murder bid

An Indian taxi driver in New Zealand, jailed for five years for planning to kill a Hindu priest who he believed was his wife's lover, has been denied bail.

Bhikubhai Patel applied to the Court of Appeal here Wednesday for bail pending an appeal on his conviction early this year for trying to murder priest Sunil Shandra.

The 50-year-old taxi driver gave a \$1,500 contract to kill Sharda in 2004 but the plan fell apart because he unwittingly approached a police informant to do the job.

When the informant realised that Patel might be serious, he told the authorities.

The court said they were unable to find any grounds to overcome the presumption against releasing a sentenced prisoner and refused Patel's application for bail, stuff.co.nz reported.

Prior to hatching the plot to kill Sharda, Patel hired a private investigator in 2004 to follow and report everything about his wife and the Hindu priest.

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