

HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH, BILASPUR**CRR No. 881 of 2016**

Vijay Singh @ Budhwa S/o Jag Singh Diwan Aged About 13 Years (Wrongly Written Diwan Instead Of Kavar) R/o Village Gaya, P.S. Rajadevari, District Baloda Bazar Bhatapara, Through His Father & Natural Guardian Jag Singh Kavar, Aged About 57 Year, R/o Village Gaya, Police Station Rajadevari, District Baloda Bazar Bhatapara, Chhattisgarh.

---- Applicant

Versus

State Of Chhattisgarh Through District Magistrate, Baloda Bazar, District Baloda Bazar Bhatapara, Chhattisgarh.

---- Respondent

Shri Hemant Gupta, counsel for the applicant/s.
Shri D.R.Minj, Dy.G.A. for the State.

Hon'ble Shri Justice Manindra Mohan Shrivastava

Order On Board

15/11/2016

This revision arises out of order dated 12/08/2016 by which, the appellate authority has dismissed the appeal affirming the order passed by the Juvenile Justice Board rejecting applicant's application for grant of bail under Section 12 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (for short 'the Act of 2015').

2. Learned counsel for the applicant submits that the Courts below have rejected the bail application as also the appeal swayed by the gravity of allegations which should not be taken into consideration. The social investigation report has been wrongly construed and there is nothing to show that his release would bring him in association with known criminals or would expose him to moral, physical and psychological danger. Therefore, the applicant ought to be granted bail looking to the statutory mandate of Section 12 of the Act of 2015.

3. Referring to the social investigation report of the Probation Officer that the parents and other family members of the applicant have left the house and gone to other State to earn livelihood, the applicant having liability of maintaining his three younger brothers and sisters, occasionally consuming liquor and loneliness, the lower Courts have come to the conclusion that in case of his release, it will not be in the best interest of the juvenile in conflict with law.

4. The scope and object of provision regarding grant of bail to a Juvenile as envisaged under Section 12 of the Act of 2000 came up for consideration before a learned Single Judge of this Court in the case of **Bharat @ Bhurat & Another vs. State of CG, 2006 (1) CGLJ 72**, wherein it was held that the use of word by the legislative provisions in Section 12 of the Act is of great significance and which raises a presumption that the particular provision is imperative and makes it manifest that ordinarily the Board is under obligation to release the Juvenile on bail with or without surety, but the Juvenile shall not be so released in certain circumstances as latter part of the Section also uses the word imposing certain mandatory conditions prohibiting the release of the Juvenile by the Board. It has also been held that ordinarily the bail has to be granted to the Juvenile and would be liable to be rejected only when it appears to the Board that either of the three conditions mentioned in Section 12 of the Act of 2000 are existing. In the case of **Akhilesh Kumar vs. State of CG, 2006(1) CGLJ 305**, dealing with the case of a Juvenile, this Court while examining the correctness and validity of order rejecting application of the applicant filed under Section 12 of the Act of 2000 on the ground that release would defeat the ends of justice, found that though the Juvenile Justice Board had dismissed the bail application on the ground that release would defeat the ends of justice but how the release would defeat the ends of justice has not been stated. In that view of the matter, this Court came to the conclusion that the orders passed by the Court below are not sustainable in the eye of law.

5. In the case of **Rahul Mishra vs. State of MP, 2001 Cr.L.J. 214**, the High Court of M.P. has considered the provisions contained in Section 12 of the Act of 2000 and held that the words notwithstanding anything contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, would indicate that the considerations which are germane for granting or refusing bail to persons who are not juvenile delinquent shall not come into play for granting or refusing bail to a Juvenile. It was also held

that the words should be confined to those facts which show that the grant of bail itself is likely to result in injustice. The Juvenile delinquent may appear to be guilty *prima facie* but he is especially protected by the Act and is favourably considered for grant of bail. From the aforesaid decisions and the law propounded by Their Lordships in various cases, it is clear that ordinarily bail is required to be granted to a Juvenile in view of the provisions contained in Section 12 of the Act of 2000. It is only when the Court finds that the grounds therein are made out that the Court shall reject the application.

6. Grant of bail to a juvenile, in conflict with law, is engrafted under Section 12 of the Act of 2000. In the present case, the applicant has been subjected to proceedings and application for grant of bail has been moved under Section 12 of the repealed Act of 2000, as alleged act is said to have been committed when the Act of 2000 was in force. The Act of 2000 was repealed by the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, (for short 'the Act of 2015') Act No.2 of 2016 which received the assent of the President on the 31st of December, 2015 and Act published in the Gazette of India (Extraordinary) Part II Section 1 dated 01/01/2016 pages 1 - 44.

On a comparative reading of provisions contained in Section 12 of the old and new Act, the provisions are *pari materia*. The provisions and scheme of grant of bail to a Juvenile, in conflict with law which existed in the old Act has been continued in the new Act which is reproduction of provisions contained in Section 12 of the Act of 2000.

7. The legislature, in its wisdom, has made grant of bail to a juvenile a rule irrespective of nature and gravity of allegations alleged to have been committed by a juvenile. Present is a case of a juvenile who is less than 16 years of age. Therefore, in this case, no case arises for carrying out assessment in terms of provisions contained in Section 15 of the Act of 2015. In respect of the applicant, an enquiry is to be made by the Juvenile Justice Board. Therefore, in such a situation, the Board and the appellate authority were obliged under the law to consider prayer for grant of bail, keeping in view the legislative mandate engrafted under Section 12 of the Act of 2000.

8. It has been held in catena of decisions that nature and gravity of offence is not a relevant consideration while deciding application for grant of bail filed by juvenile in conflict with law. Not only that, as the language of Section 12 goes to show, grant of bail is rule and rejection is exception only when one of the grounds enumerated under Section 12 of the Act are made out, which are as under -

- A. That release of a juvenile is likely to bring him in association with any known criminals, or
- B. That his release is likely to expose him to moral, physical and psychological danger, or
- C. That his release would otherwise defeats the ends of justice.

The grounds which have been stated under Section 12 of the Act of 2000 are exhaustive and not inclusive so as to say that the application could be rejected for grounds other than those, which have been mentioned in Section 12 of the Act of 2000. When application under Section 12 of the Act of 2000 is filed before the Board for grant of bail, approach has to be different from the approach of the Courts while considering the application for grant of bail under Section 437, 438 and 439 CrPC. The legislature has purposely gave overriding effect of the provisions of the Act of 2000 by clearly mentioning in Section 12 (1) of the Act of 2000 that By way of proviso, the exceptional grounds which could be made a basis to reject the application have been exhaustively mentioned. Therefore, the approach while considering the applications for grant of bail under Section 437, 438 and 439 CrPC is as to why the applicant should be granted bail whereas while considering the application for grant of bail made on behalf of a juvenile, in conflict with law under the provisions of the Act of 2000 or for that matter, under the provisions of the Act of 2015, the approach should be as to why bail should be refused.

9. The Juvenile Justice Board and the appellate authority are required to look more into aspects which may be relevant with reference to three grounds namely likelihood of association with known criminals, likelihood of physical, mental and psychological danger and likelihood of defeating the ends of justice, rather than searching into merits of the case or the nature and gravity of allegations.

The report of a probation officer assumes great importance because it contains social investigation report of the child in conflict with law. The Special Juvenile Police Unit and the police station where the offence has been registered, may also place before the Juvenile Justice Board, any material relevant for deciding whether any ground is made out to reject the application which are mentioned in the provisions contained in Section 12 of the Act of 2000. Once, those grounds are not made out, the only consequence is release of the juvenile. Rejection of application for grant of bail by making a detailed enquiry into the nature and gravity of allegations would be completely contrary to the statutory mandate of Section 12 of the Act of 2000.

10. If the aforesaid principles discussed in various decisions and statutory scheme of the Act is examined in the context of the facts and circumstances of the present case and social investigation report, it is difficult for this Court to come to the conclusion that release would bring him in association with known criminals or would expose him to moral, physical and psychological danger. In this regard, it has to be noticed that there has to be material to come to the conclusion on any of the grounds enumerated in Section 12 of the Act of 2015 to reject the application for grant of bail. Trivial observation that once or twice, liquor was consumed or that juvenile is burdened with maintaining his younger brothers and sisters, that by itself would not lead to the conclusion that his release would subject the juvenile to physical, moral or psychological danger. There is hardly anything to draw inference that his release would defeat the ends of justice.

11. In view of above consideration, impugned order cannot be sustained and is therefore set aside. The application under Section 12 of the Act of 2000 is allowed. The applicant shall be released on bail forthwith on furnishing a personal bond in the sum of Rs.10,000/- by the father or mother of the applicant, to the satisfaction of the Juvenile Justice Board, for his appearance before the Board, as and when directed.

12. The revision is accordingly allowed.

Sd/-
(Manindra Mohan Shrivastava)
Judge