

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION
CRIMINAL APPLICATION NO. 674 OF 2018

Central Bureau of Investigation .. Applicant
Versus
Aniyath Shivram Nair and Anr. .. Respondents
...

Mr. Hiten S. Venegavkar for the applicant.
Mr. Vijay Agrawal a/w Yash Agrawal, Jasmin Purani, Mukul Malik, Sajid Sayed i/b Rahul Agrawal for Respondent No.1 in APPLN 674/2018.
Ms. Anamika Malhotra, APP for Respondent No.2/State.

CORAM: BHARATI DANGRE, J.
DATED : 16th MARCH, 2023

P.C:-

1 The application is filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation, under Section 439(2) of Cr.P.C seeking cancellation of bail granted in favour of the respondent by the Special Judge CBI on 20/07/2018, on the ground of wrongful exercise of power to grant bail.

2 The application came to be filed in the year 2018 and when listed before me in the year 2023, my attention is invited to an order passed by the learned Single Judge (Justice. A.S. Gadkari) of this Court on 8/07/2022 in Criminal Application No. 669 of 2018, a similar application filed by CBI seeking cancellation of bail of one of the accused in CBI Special Case

No. 37 of 2018.

After recording the finding, that the trial court has passed a reasoned order to the effect that there is no direct material indicating that the applicant was directly involved in preparation of the alleged LOU's and LOC's. Apart this, the Court was also impressed by another facet of the matter, the pendency of the application for last 4 years.

3 On taking cognizance of the fact that the CBI did not take any steps to circulate the application, it was recorded as under:

“There is another facet to the present Application. The impugned Order was passed on 4th August, 2018. Present Application under Section 439(2) impugning the said Order was filed on 3rd December 2018 and till 14th January, 2021, the Applicant-CBI did not take any steps to even circulate the present Application before any Bench. That, on 14th January, 2021 for the first time at the instance of learned Advocate for the Respondent No.1, who had also filed a Bail Application No. 1243 of 2018, present Application was circulated before the co-ordinate Bench and the same was thereafter adjourned to 28th January, 2021. The Applicant-CBI thereafter also did not take any steps to get the present Application listed before the concerned Bench and on 8th June, 2022, this Court listed old Applications pertaining to the year 2018 for hearing. It therefore indicates that, the Applicant was not seriously interested in pursuing the present Application”.

4 I have heard Mr. Venegavkar, the learned counsel for CBI and the counsel for the respondent.

I have perused the impugned order, under which the Applicant/Respondent herein is released on bail.

5 He was arraigned as accused no.7 and came to be arrested on 4/03/2018. He was released on bail on 20/07/2018 by the Special Court.

6 As far as this respondent is concerned the prosecution allege that he was appointed as AGM in Gitanjali Gems Ltd and later on became director in M/s. Gili India Ltd and he is alleged to be an authorized signatory to the accounts of all the three accused companies. He is also accused of submitting an application at the instance of Mehul Choksi (accused no.6) for issuance of fraudulent LOU's and fraudulent enhancement of FLC's which are signed by accused no.10 Vipul Chitaliya.

The order passed by the Special Judge specifically recorded that there is no direct material to show his involvement and there are no allegations against him in preparation of the bogus LOU's, which were allegedly prepare by bank Manager accused Gokulnath Shetty for the wrongful gain in favour of main accused Mehul Choksi and his firms and companies. Considering that he has no role in conceding or hiding any material from the investigating agency and on his undertaking that he will not cause any tempering of evidence, he was released on bail.

7 I do not see any legal infirmity in the said order and, particularly, when the observations in para 8 of the order dated 8/07/2022 are equally applicable to the present case, as the prosecution has not bothered to move the application and it is more than 5 years that the application has been filed.

It would not therefore be in the interest of justice,

without any apparent illegality being attributed in the impugned order, to cancel the bail, after a period of more than 4 years.

Hence the application is rejected.

(SMT. BHARATI DANGRE, J.)