

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION**

**INTERIM APPLICATION NO.1731 OF 2024
IN
CRIMINAL APPEAL NO.678 OF 2016**

Pandurang Mansingh Gunjwate Applicant

versus

The State of Maharashtra & Anr. Respondents

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- Mr. Abhijit B. Kadam, Advocate for Applicant.
- Mr. Prashant P. Jadhav, APP for the State/Respondent.
- Mr. Sandesh D. Patil, Advocate for Respondent No.2/UOI.
- Mr. Swapnil R. Chopade i/b. H.P. Giri, Advocate for original complainant.

**CORAM : SARANG V. KOTWAL, J.
DATE : 14th AUGUST, 2024**

P.C. :

1. The Applicant was convicted by the Additional Sessions Judge, Satara, vide the Judgment and Order dated 30/09/2016, in Special Case No.16 of 2014, u/s 354-B of the Indian Penal Code. He was sentenced to suffer rigorous imprisonment for 3 years and to pay a fine of Rs.5,000/- and in default of payment of fine to suffer further rigorous imprisonment for three months.

2. Heard Mr. Abhijit B. Kadam, learned counsel for the Applicant, Mr. Sandesh D. Patil, learned counsel for the Respondent No.2/UOI, Mr. Swapnil R. Chopade, learned counsel for the original complainant. and Mr. Prashant P. Jadhav, learned APP for the State.
3. The Applicant has challenged that order by filing Appeal No.678 of 2016. It was admitted on 20/10/2016. He was granted bail on the same day, pending his Appeal. The Appeal has not reached the final hearing stage.
4. Learned counsel for the Applicant submitted that he wants to visit Dubai to meet his niece, who is at present in Dubai. Therefore, he needs his passport.
5. The Appeal is not likely to be decided within a reasonable period. Therefore, he seeks directions from this Court to the Respondent No.2, who is the passport authority, to consider the Applicant's application for the grant of passport.

6. Learned counsel for the Respondent No.2 submits to the order of the Court.
7. Learned APP opposed these submissions.
8. I have considered these submissions. The Appeal is admitted in the year 2016. It is not likely to be decided within a reasonable short period. Therefore, the Applicant cannot be deprived of an opportunity to travel abroad. Hence, I am inclined to allow this application.
9. The Applicant is permitted to make an application for issuance of passport for a period of three years.
10. Once the passport is issued, the Applicant shall file application before this Court for permission to travel abroad.
11. With these observations, the application is disposed of.

(SARANG V. KOTWAL, J.)