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IN THE HIGH COURT OF BOMBAY AT GOA

CRIMINAL APPLICATION (BAIL) NO.30 OF 2025

SHRI. KARAN KIRAN CHODANKAR,
Son of Shri. Kiran Chodankar,
28 years of age, Married,
Indian National and Resident of
Gaowaddi, Near Bhumika Temple,
Anjuna, Bardez, North-Goa
(Presently in Judicial Custody,
Modern Central Jail
Colvale Bardez North-Goa)

... Applicant.

Versus

1. STATE OF GOA
(As represented by the officer In charge/
Investigating Officer,
Anjuna Police Station
Anjuna-Goa)

2. THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
High Court Bldg.
Porvorim Goa.

... Respondents.

Mr. Abhijit Gosavi, Advocate for the Applicant.

Mr. S.G. Bhobe, Public Prosecutor for the Respondents.

CORAM:	VALMIKI MENEZES, J.
RESERVED ON:	24th June, 2025
PRONOUNCED ON:	25th June, 2025

ORDER:

1. Registry to waive office objections and register the matter.
2. This is a bail application at the behest of a sole accused in Crime No. 160/2024 registered at Anjuna Police Station on 17.11.2024, under Section 326(g) BNS. It is the case of the Prosecution, in a charge sheet/final report filed before the J.M.F.C., Mapusa on 09.01.2025 that the Applicant is alleged to have intentionally set the house of the complainant Leopoldina Porob on fire, thereby damaging the property of the complainant and causing her loss to the tune of Rs.27,00,000/-. The charge-sheet alleges that the motive of the crime was due to his previous enmity with the complainant, who is his aunt.
3. The trial has commenced and the deposition of the complainant/victim Leopoldina Porob has been recorded on 20.06.2025. Copy of the deposition has been placed on record, which, in substance states that the complainant was not at home on the date of the incident i.e. 31.10.2024 and she had not seen the accused setting fire to her house. The present application though having been filed in April, 2025, was adjourned from time to time, to enable the Trial Court to complete the depositions of the main witness, Leopoldina, since she was an elderly person and was at risk of being threatened by the Applicant. This was one of the grounds for rejection of his bail on previous three occasions, i.e. on 26.11.2024, 12.12.2024 and the last one on 10.03.2025. In the last of the three orders, one of

the circumstances for denial of bail to the Applicant was that the chances of the complainant being threatened from deposing in the matter were high, hence, the Court opined that until examination of the complainant, the Applicant should not be enlarged on bail.

4. The only other witness who may be relevant, and whose statement was recorded on 02.12.2024 is one Pio who was a neighbour and who has stated that he noticed the house of Leopoldina was gutted in a fire in the early hours of 31.10.2024. This witness in his statement to the police alleges that during inquiry with Leopoldina, he came to know that the act was done by her nephew, the accused, and since then, he has not been seen at his residence. Even by this witness statement, there does not appear to be a direct implication of the Applicant in the incident.

5. The trial is underway and will take some time to conclude as other witnesses, who are not eyewitnesses or directly connected with the incident, are yet to be examined. These include pancha witnesses. It is not the case of the State that there is likelihood that these witnesses would be threatened by the Applicant. No doubt, the Applicant has three FIRs. lodged against him, dated 24.05.2020, 17.08.2022 and 10.09.2022 for offences of criminal intimidation, assault, mischief, wrongful restraint and insult. He has been released on bail in all three offences. However, these antecedents by themselves would not disentitle the Applicant to bail in the present

case, since the main witness has been examined at the trial. Sufficient curbs can be put on the movements of the Applicant to ensure he stands trial and does not interfere with any witnesses yet to be examined. Considering these facts, I proceed to pass the following order:

6. For reasons stated above, the application of the Accused for bail is granted on the following conditions:

- a) The Applicant shall be released on bail in Crime No.160/2024 registered at Anjuna Police Station on executing a Bail Bond of Rs.25,000/- with one surety in the like amount, to be executed before the Sessions Court, ~~Mapusa.~~ **Merces**.
- b) The Accused/Applicant shall furnish to the Investigating Officer a copy of his Aadhaar card, full residential address, email ID and his mobile phone number, which shall be kept functional and on at all times to enable the Investigating Officer to contact him; in addition the Applicant shall report to the Anjuna Police Station once in a month on the first Monday between 11.00 am to 1.00 p.m until completion of the trial.
- c) The Applicant shall not interfere with any of the witnesses or attempt to contact them by himself or through any of his or tamper with the evidence.
- d) The Applicant shall not enter the Village of Anjuna;

Correction
carried out as
per order dated
26.06.2025
sd/-

Correction
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per order dated
26.06.2025
sd/-

e) The Applicant shall not travel outside the State of Goa without permission of the Sessions Court at ~~Mapusa~~^{Merces}. In addition, the Applicant shall deposit any valid Passport in his possession with the I.O. until completion of the trial.

7. The application stands disposed of in the above terms.
8. All concerned to act on an authenticated copy of this order.

VALMIKI MENEZES, J.