

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

CRIMINAL BAIL APPLICATION NO. 5142 OF 2024

Sandeep Balaji Sontakke ... Applicant.
Vs.
The State of Maharashtra ... Respondent.

Mr Ashwini Kumar a/w Mr. Abhishek Godase, Shubham Waphare,
Anushka Javeri, Advocate for the Applicant.
Mr. T. G. Khan, APP for Respondent/State.

CORAM : ASHWIN D. BHOBE, J.

DATE : 17th JULY, 2025.

P.C. :

1. Heard Mr. Ashwini Kumar, learned Advocate for the Applicant and Mr. T. G. Khan, learned APP for the Respondent-State.

2. By the present Application, Applicant is seeking bail in Crime No. 707 of 2023 registered with Lonikand Police Station for the offences punishable under Sections 8©, 20(b)(ii)(c) and 29 of the NDPS Act and under Sections 170 read with Section 34 of the Indian Penal Code (for short "IPC"). Said crime is registered as Special Case No. 267 of 2024 and is pending file before the Additional Sessions Judge, Pune .

3. There are 3 Accused in the present crime. Applicant is Accused No.1.

4. The Applicant was arrested on 2nd September, 2023, since then he is in jail. Bail Application at Exhibit-1 in Bail Application No.860 of

2024 filed by the Applicant was rejected by the learned Trial Court on 31st August, 2024.

5. Mr. Ashwini Kumar, learned Advocate for the Applicant submits that the Applicant is seeking bail on the ground of parity. He submits that Mahesh Tulshiram Parit (Accused No.3) in the said crime, against whom the allegations were similar and identical to the allegations made against the Applicant has been released on bail by this Court by order dated 20th June, 2025 passed in Criminal Bail Application No. 2163 of 2024. He tenders a copy of the order dated 20th June, 2025 which is taken on record and marked as 'X' for identification. He submits that the Applicant does not have any criminal antecedents.

6. Mr. T. G. Khan, learned APP for the State submits that the involvement of the Applicant in the present crime is similar and identical to the involvement of Accused No. 3 in the said crime. He therefore submits that the case of the Applicant can be considered on the ground of parity.

7. I have perused the records with the assistance of the learned Advocates.

8. Perusal of the charge-sheet reveals that the involvement of the Applicant and the role assigned to the Applicant is similar to the role / involvement of the Accused No.3 in the said crime. Accused No.3 has been released on bail. Applicant being similarly placed, would be entitled to bail on the principles of parity.

9. In view of the above, the Applicant is entitled to bail on the ground of parity on the following conditions :-

(a) Applicant be released on bail in Crime No.707 of 2023 registered at Lonikand Police Station, District Pune for the offences punishable under Sections 8(c), 20(b)(ii)(c) & 29 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act and under Sections 170 read with 34 of the Indian Penal Code, on furnishing P.R. Bond in the sum of Rs. 25,000/- (Rs. Twenty Five Thousand) with one or two sureties in the like amount.

(b) Applicant shall attend the concerned Police Station once in a month, i.e. on 1st Saturday between 11.00 am to 2.00 p.m, till conclusion of the trial.

(c) Applicant shall not directly or indirectly make any inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with facts of the case so as to dissuade him from disclosing the facts to the Court or any police officer and shall not tamper with evidence.

(d) Applicant shall appear before the Additional Sessions Judge, Pune in Special Case No. 267 of 2024 on each date of hearing, unless specifically exempted by the Court.

10. Criminal Bail Application No. 5142 of 2024 is allowed in abovesaid terms.

(ASHWIN D. BHOBE, J.)