

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

Bail Application No. 1765 of 2025

Ajay Kisan Ranjane

Age: 26, Occ : Labour,

R/o. Bharati Vidyapeeth,

Pune.

At present in Pune Jail.

... Applicant

versus

The State of Maharashtra

Through Bharati Vidyapeeth

Police Station, Pune.

Vide C.R. No.830 of 2024.

...Respondent

Mr Kuldeep Nikam a/w Mr Om Latpate, for the Applicant.

Mr S S Pednekar, APP, for Respondent / State.

API Ganesh Mohite, Bharati Vidyapeeth Police Station, Pune, is present.

Coram: R.N. Laddha, J.

Date: 7 October 2025

P.C.:

By this application, the applicant seeks bail in connection with CR No.830 of 2024, registered at Bharati Vidyapeeth Police Station, Pune, for offences punishable under Sections 109, 352, 351(2), 189(2), 181(4), 191(2), 191(3) and 190 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, Sections 4 and 25 of the

Arms Act, 1959, Sections 37(1)(3) read with 135 of the Maharashtra Police Act, 1951, and Section 7 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1932.

2. It is the case of the prosecution that on or about the evening of 8 October 2024, at approximately 8:00 p.m., the informant travelled to his maternal uncle, Arun Kadam's residence in Anjani Nagar, Katraj, Pune, to attend a religious festival (Yatra) held in his maternal uncle's native village. At approximately 9:00 p.m., the informant, accompanied by his cousin, Raj, proceeded on a motorcycle to witness a Raas Dandiya event held in front of the Ayyappa Swami Temple at Santosh Nagar, Katraj, Pune. After parking the motorcycle and observing the event for approximately fifteen to twenty minutes, an assemblage of individuals arrived on motorcycles. These individuals brandished sharp-edged weapons and commenced intimidating conduct by shouting abusive language, causing public alarm and terror among the attendees, who then dispersed in panic. During this commotion, the informant and his cousin attempted to flee the scene. Raj sustained an injury to his right hand caused by an assailant wielding a sharp weapon. While fleeing, the informant stumbled and fell, subsequently becoming surrounded and attacked by the group. The assailants, with the intent to cause grievous bodily harm

and possibly to cause death, struck the informant multiple times using sharp-edged iron weapons, inflicting serious injuries to his head, left ear, and back, resulting in profuse bleeding. The informant vociferously called for assistance, and upon the approach of a female police officer, the assailants fled the scene on their motorcycles. Subsequent to the assault, the informant was transported to Sai Hospital by Nikunj Kadam, elder brother of Raj, and thereafter admitted to Bharti Hospital for further medical treatment. The informant was later informed by Raj that the assailants identified as Amit Chorge, Akshay Sawant, Abhi Sawant, Ajay Ranjane (the present applicant), Prasad Ranjane, and approximately three to four other unidentified accomplices were involved in a prior dispute and came to the location armed with sharp weapons, intending to create terror and inflict harm in furtherance of an old enmity.

3. Mr Kuldeep Nikam, the learned Counsel appearing on behalf of the applicant, asserts the applicant's innocence and submits that the applicant has been falsely implicated in the alleged offence. It is contended that the prosecution has failed to establish a *prima facie* case demonstrating the applicant's culpability in the commission of the alleged crime. The learned Counsel draws the Court's attention to the fact that the informant, at the initial stage, did not possess knowledge

regarding the identity of the assailants and purportedly came to know of their names only upon being informed by his cousin, one Raj. The entire FIR is based on hearsay. Even assuming the prosecution's version to be true in its entirety, the role attributed to the applicant, at its highest, is that of having assaulted the informant with fists and kicks. The learned Counsel further submits that the grievous nature of the assault alleged in the FIR has primarily been attributed to the co-accused, who are said to have used weapons in the commission of the offence. The weapons allegedly used were recovered at the instance of the co-accused and not from the applicant. Moreover, the said weapons did not bear any bloodstains upon recovery. Though the weapons have been forwarded for forensic analysis, the report from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) has not yet been received. The learned Counsel further asserts that the medical report reveals the injuries sustained by the informant are classified as both simple and grievous, which do not align with the allegations as narrated in the FIR.

4. Mr Nikam further submits that the applicant has been in custody since 10 October 2024. Despite the filing of the charge sheet, there has been no substantial progress in the trial proceedings, and further incarceration of the applicant would

serve no meaningful or constructive purpose. The learned Counsel also submits that the applicant has deep-rooted ties within the community and is neither a flight risk nor in a position to tamper with the prosecution evidence or influence witnesses. The applicant is willing to comply with any conditions that this Court may impose.

5. On the other hand, Mr SS Pednekar, the learned Additional Public Prosecutor representing the respondent/ State, vehemently opposes the applicant's request for bail. He submits that the applicant, in collusion with the co-accused, was a member of an unlawful assembly that committed a premeditated and violent assault upon the informant and others present at the scene of the incident. It is asserted that the said attack was not only unprovoked but also executed with a clear and deliberate intention to cause fatal injuries, amounting to an attempt to commit murder. He contends that the assault arose out of a prior altercation that occurred on the preceding day, thereby demonstrating the presence of motive and preplanning. He further underscores the gravity and heinous nature of the alleged offence, highlighting that the informant sustained as many as nine injuries, four of which were dangerous to life. The learned APP expresses apprehension that granting bail to the applicant at this stage may lead to potential tampering with

evidence or influencing prosecution witnesses.

6. Upon perusing the records, it appears that the prosecution's case pertains to an incident that occurred on the evening of 8 October 2024, wherein the informant and his cousin Raj attended a public event in Katraj, Pune. During the course of the event, a group of armed individuals arrived at the spot, issued threats, and caused panic among the crowd. Amidst the ensuing commotion, both the informant and Raj were allegedly attacked and sustained injuries. The informant was allegedly assaulted with sharp weapons by the group, suffering injuries before the attackers fled upon the arrival of the police. The statements of the witnesses, particularly those of Raj (the informant's cousin), Shubham, and Akash (independent witnesses), reflect the applicant's limited role in the said incident. It is alleged that while co-accused Amit, Vijay, and Siddhesh assaulted the informant with a *palghan*, *koyta*, and a steel rod, the applicant, along with co-accused Akshay, Abhi, Prasad, and certain unidentified individuals, purportedly inflicted blows on the informant using fists and kicks. Significantly, the informant in his initial statement dated 9 October 2024 broadly alleged that all the accused individuals had assaulted him using iron weapons. However, in a subsequent statement recorded on 16 October 2024, he appears

to have delineated the roles of the accused, attributing to the applicant only physical assault by means of fist and kick blows. The injury certificate on record reflects the categorisation of injuries as both simple and grievous. Furthermore, the recovery of the weapons allegedly used in the offence has been effected at the instance of the co-accused Prasad, and not the present applicant.

7. The investigation into the crime has concluded, culminating in a charge sheet, and no further recovery or discovery is required at the applicant's behest. Although the charge sheet was filed on 2 January 2025, to date, the charge has not yet been framed. The applicant has no criminal antecedents and has been languishing in jail since 10 October 2024. The prosecution intends to examine 15 witnesses, and the trial will take its own time. Having regard to the nature of the allegations, the limited role attributed to the applicant, the absence of prior criminal history, the current status of the trial proceedings, the applicant's continued incarceration and the overall circumstances, this Court is inclined to grant bail to the applicant. Hence, the following order:

ORDER

- (i) The applicant shall be released on bail in CR No.830 of 2024, registered at Bharati

Vidyapeeth Police Station, Pune, upon executing a PR Bond of Rs.25,000/- and furnishing one or more sureties in the like amount.

(ii) The applicant, himself or through any other person, shall not tamper with the evidence or influence witnesses.

(iii) The applicant shall regularly attend and cooperate with the trial Court for the expeditious disposal of the case.

8. The application stands disposed of accordingly.

[R.N. Laddha, J.]