

[Corrected as per speaking to the minutes order dated 10 November 2025]

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

Criminal Bail Application No.2928 of 2025

Pratik Parshuram Thombare

Age: 21 yrs, Occ: Education,

R/of Flat No.D-11, Kharamala,

Shirur, Pune

(at present Yerwada jail)

... Applicant

Versus

The State of Maharashtra

(through SrPI Ravet Police Station,

Pimpri-Chinchwad, Pune)

... Respondent

**Mr Amar Kale, Advocate i/by Prashant Hagare for the
applicant.**

Mr MG Patil, APP, for the respondent/ State.

PSI Altaf Shaikh, Hadapsar Police Station, Pune.

Coram: R.N. Laddha, J.

Date: 6 November 2025.

P.C.:

Heard Mr Amar Kale, the learned Counsel appearing on
behalf of the applicant, and Mr MG Patil, the learned
Additional Public Prosecutor representing the respondent/
State.

2. By this application, the applicant seeks bail in connection

with CR No.56 of 2025, registered at Ravet Police Station, Pimpri Chinchwad, Pune, for offences punishable under Sections 310(2), 126(2), 351(2)(3), and 352 read with 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, Section 4(25) of the Arms Act, 1959, and Sections 37(1)(3) read with 137 of the Maharashtra Police Act, 1951.

3. According to the First Information Report (FIR), on 28 February 2025, at approximately 9:30 a.m., the complainant visited Flat No.1001, F Wing, Celestial City, to meet his childhood friend, Aniket. Subsequently, on 1 March 2025, the complainant's college acquaintance, Yuvraj, arrived at the said premises and introduced the complainant to accused No.1, Pradeep Gaikwad, and accused No.6, Tejas. Later that evening, at around 10:00 p.m., accused No.1, Pradeep Gaikwad, met the complainant in the society premises and requested him to accompany him to his friend's residence in Wing B. Upon arrival, accused No.1 introduced the complainant to accused No.5, Manthan, and accused No.4, Abhishek Pandey. During this meeting, accused No.1 allegedly showed the complainant obscene videos depicting himself and others forcibly undressing and assaulting young men to extort money from them. Disturbed by these acts, the complainant distanced himself from accused No.1, which angered him.

4. Thereafter, on 2 March 2025, accused No.1 contacted the complainant and invited him to his residence for a social gathering. Pursuant thereto, on 4 March 2025, around 1:30 a.m., the complainant, accompanied by his friend Aniket, proceeded to Flat No.101, B Wing, Celestial City. Upon entering, the complainant observed that four to five individuals, friends of accused No.1, were present. Immediately thereafter, these individuals forcibly seized their mobile phones, compelled them to remove their clothes, and physically assaulted them using their hands and sticks, inflicting injuries on the complainant's back, legs, arms, and face. Accused No.6, Tejas, then intervened and temporarily halted the assault, allowing the complainant and his friend to put on their clothes. Subsequently, accused No.1, Pradeep Gaikwad, entered the room, forcibly disrobed the complainant and assaulted him with a wooden stick. During this assault, accused No.1 allegedly threatened the complainant with further violence and demanded a sum of Rs,4,00,000/-. Upon the complainant's inability to comply with the demand, the accused persons resumed the assault.

5. It is further alleged that accused No.1, Pradeep Gaikwad, compelled the complainant and his friend to disclose their mobile phone passwords, whereupon an amount of Rs.30,000/-

and Rs.1,400/- was forcibly transferred from the account of Aniket and the complainant to the account of accused No.6, Tejas. Accused No.1, directing accused No.6 to withdraw cash from his account, continued to demand additional sums of Rs.4,00,000/- to Rs.5,00,000/- for the release of the complainant. During a moment when accused No.6, Tejas, and accused No.3, Sagar, were engaged in a conversation, the complainant managed to open the door and escape from the premises in a semi-nude condition. While seeking assistance, the complainant encountered a police vehicle and narrated the incident to the police personnel, leading to the apprehension of the applicant and the co-accused, who had assaulted the complainant.

6. The learned Counsel appearing on behalf of the applicant, asserting the applicant's innocence, contends that the applicant has been falsely implicated in the crime. It is submitted that the allegations against the applicant are general and vague in nature, and in the FIR, no role is attributed to him. Furthermore, the applicant is not the beneficiary of the transferred sums. The learned Counsel submits that the applicant is a young boy, approximately 21 years old, with no criminal antecedents, and has been languishing in jail since 5 March 2025. The investigation has concluded, and there is

nothing to be recovered or discovered from the applicant. Inviting the attention of this Court to the co-accused's bail orders, it is submitted that accused No.1, against whom serious allegations are made, has also been released on bail. The principle of parity squarely applies to the applicant, and the applicant is willing to abide by any conditions this Court imposes.

7. On the other hand, the learned Additional Public Prosecutor representing the respondent/ State opposes the applicant's request for bail, emphasising the gravity and severity of the offence. He submits that the applicant, in connivance with the co-accused, not only physically assaulted the complainant in a brutal manner but also engaged in the extortion of a significant sum of money. The learned APP expresses concern that granting bail to the applicant would pose a serious risk of evidence tampering and intimidation of witnesses.

8. This Court has given anxious consideration to the rival contentions canvassed across the Bar. Upon perusing the records, it appears that specific roles have been ascribed to the co-accused, notably with accused No.1 being assigned a more serious role compared to the others. The applicant does not

appear to be the beneficiary of the alleged funds. Furthermore, the injuries appear to be of a simple nature. Additionally, accused Nos.1, 4, 5 and 6 have already been released on bail. With the investigation now complete, and a charge sheet filed, nothing remains to be recovered or discovered from the applicant. The applicant has been languishing in jail since 5 March 2025, and there has been no significant progress in the trial to date. The prosecution intends to examine fifteen witnesses, and the trial will take its own time. The prosecution's apprehension about potential evidence tampering and witness influence can be addressed by imposing appropriate conditions.

9. In the totality of the circumstances, including the parity in treatment extended to the co-accused and the absence of any disqualifying factors, this Court finds no justifiable reason to deny the benefit of bail to the applicant. Hence, the following order:

ORDER

(i) The applicant shall be released on bail in CR No.56 of 2025, registered at Ravet Police Station, Pimpri Chinchwad, 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.

(iv) The applicant shall refrain from contacting the complainant or any of his family members.

10. The application stands disposed of accordingly.

[R.N. Laddha, J.]