



(This order is corrected pursuant to the Speaking to the Minutes order dated 24.04.2026)

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
BENCH AT AURANGABAD

ANTICIPATORY BAIL APPLICATION NO. 551 OF 2026

RAJENDRA BALWANT METKAR
VERSUS
THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA AND ANOTHER

Advocate for Applicant : Mr. V. D. Hon, Senior Counsel i/b Mr. Nitin K. Chaudhari

APP for Respondents-State : Mr. A. S. Shinde

WITH
CRIMINAL APPLICATION NO. 1317 OF 2026
IN ABA/551/2026

AMRUTA ASHISH METKAR
VERSUS
THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA AND OTHERS

Advocate for Applicant : Mr. Praveen S. Dighe

CORAM : MEHROZ K. PATHAN, J.

Date : 20th April, 2026

ORDER :-

1. Heard learned counsel for the applicant, and the learned APP for the respondent-State.

2. The applicant has approached this Court apprehending arrest in connection with FIR No. 62 of 2026 dated 18.02.2026, registered with Kopargaon Rural Police Station, District Ahilyanagar, for the offences punishable under Sections 85,

115(2), **316(2)**, 352, 351(2), 89 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023.

3. The case of the prosecution is that the marriage of the informant Amruta Ashish Metkar was solemnized with the accused No. 1 Ashish Rajendra Metkar on 09.12.2021. Accused Nos. 2 and 3 are the parents-in-law of the informant, while the remaining accused are relatives of the informant's husband. The applicant, who is the father-in-law of the informant, is alleged to have subjected the informant to mental harassment and cruelty due to the non-fulfillment of dowry demands. There are various allegations levelled against the informant's in-laws, asserting that they instigated her husband to commit acts of cruelty and harassment. These allegations include the accusation that they forcibly caused the termination of the informant's pregnancy.

4. The learned Senior Counsel, Mr. Hon, appearing for the applicant (father-in-law of the informant), submits that the informant is deliberately dragging the family members into the present crime. He contends that the allegations against the present applicant are general and omnibus in nature. The applicant, aged 66 years, has been falsely implicated in the crime and carries no criminal antecedents. It is further submitted that co-accused with

identical roles have already been enlarged on bail by the learned Sessions Court. The specific allegations against the applicant involve recorded telephonic conversations wherein he refused to hand over ornaments and documents as demanded by the informant, while also seeking custody of the informant's child.

5. The learned Senior Counsel further submits that the applicant is ready to hand over all ornaments demanded by the informant, as per the list annexed to the application at Page No. 141 (Exh. N). Additionally, the applicant is ready to hand over all documents pertaining to the child, Raghav, including the passport and other relevant papers. The applicant undertakes to abide by any conditions that may be imposed by this Court and is ready to cooperate with the Investigating Officer. Accordingly, he prays for the application to be allowed.

6. The learned APP, Mr. Shinde, strongly opposed the application on the ground that there are specific allegations of harassment and cruelty against the present applicant. It is submitted that the applicant, along with other in-laws, subjected the informant to torture from the very inception of the marriage. The applicant is further alleged to have pressurised the husband to terminate the informant's pregnancy. There are recorded

telephonic conversations wherein the applicant is heard harassing the informant regarding the hand over of ornaments and documents pertaining to her minor child.

7. The learned APP contends that there is ample evidence on record to establish the applicant's involvement and that his custodial interrogation is necessary for the purpose of effective investigation. There are serious allegations suggesting that the applicant, in collusion with the husband, attempted to kidnap the minor child from the informant's custody. Considering the grave nature of the offence, there is a every likelihood that the applicant may tamper with evidence or intimidate the informant. There is also a reasonable apprehension that the applicant may flee from justice and remain unavailable for trial. Consequently, the learned APP prayed for the rejection of the application.

8. The learned Assisting Counsel, Mr. Dighe, appearing on behalf of the original informant, adopted the submissions advanced by the learned APP and further submitted that the applicant is one of the prime accused who subjected the informant to persistent harassment and cruelty. It is contended that the facts narrated in the FIR itself disclose serious allegations of cruelty, including the applicant's role in instigating the husband to forcibly terminate the

informant's pregnancy. As the father-in-law, the applicant allegedly interfered in the matrimonial relationship of the informant and her husband on a regular basis.

9. It is further submitted that the applicant has refused to hand over the informant's ornaments and essential documents of minor child, and is also alleged to have attempted to kidnap her minor child. The learned Counsel argued that if the applicant is released on bail, there is a significant risk that he may tamper with the prosecution evidence and may threaten the informant. Therefore, it is submitted that this is not a fit case for the grant of anticipatory bail.

10. I have perused the investigation papers. The allegations against the present applicant (aged 66 years), who is the father-in-law of the informant, appears to be general in nature. The specific instances narrated in the FIR primarily implicate all other accused persons who have already been enlarged on bail by the learned Sessions Court. Furthermore, the learned Senior Counsel for the applicant has undertaken to hand over the ornaments as specified in the list annexed at Page No. 141 (Exh. N). The applicant has also expressed readiness to hand over the minor child's documents, including the passport and other relevant papers by visiting the residence at Thane in the presence of Police

Officers and the complainant.

11. It has been observed repeatedly by the Hon'ble Supreme Court that the tendency to implicate family members in matrimonial disputes is gaining ground, a practice that needs to be deprecated. This includes the practice of arresting in-laws based on general allegations of harassment and cruelty. Taking into consideration the nature of the allegations against the present applicant and the fact that co-accused with identical roles have been enlarged on bail by the learned Sessions Court, I am inclined to exercise discretion under Section 482 of the BNSS and release the applicant on anticipatory bail. The counsel appearing for the complainant disputes the list of ornaments at Page No. 141 (Exh. N).Reserving the rights of the informant to file an application for returning of remaining articles, the following order is passed :-

ORDER

1. The Anticipatory Bail Application is **allowed**.

In the event of arrest of the Applicant – Rajendra Balwant Metkar, he be released on bail on furnishing P.R. bond of Rs.50,000/- (Rupees Fifty Thousand) **each** with one or two solvent sureties in the like amount each, in connection with FIR bearing with FIR No. 62 of 2026 dated 18.02.2026, registered with Kopargaon Rural Police Station, District Ahilyanagar, for the offences punishable under Sections 85, 115(2), **316(2)**, 352, 351(2), 89 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 on the following

conditions :-

- A) The Applicant is directed to attend the concerned police station and report to the Investigating Officer on every Saturday between 12:00 noon and 02:00 p.m. and as and when called by the Investigating Officer for the purpose of investigation, till filing of the charge-sheet.
- B) The Applicant shall also cooperate with the investigation.
- C) The Applicant shall not pressurize the prosecution witnesses and shall not tamper with the prosecution evidence, in any manner.
- D) The applicant shall furnish copies of his Aadhaar Card and PAN Card to the Investigating Officer along with the addresses and mobile numbers of two nearest relatives.

2. The applicant shall hand over the ornaments and articles mentioned in the list annexed at page no. 141 (Exh. N), specifically the 30 items as detailed therein, in presence of Police Team by visiting residence at Thane on 27.04.2026.

3. The informant is at liberty to seek the recovery of remaining articles, if any, by filing an appropriate application before the concerned Family Court.

4. At this stage, the learned counsel for the informant submits that the informant is ready to accompany the Police Authorities to Thane, where the relevant documents and ornaments are placed.

5. The applicant is directed to make necessary arrangements to accompany the Police Officer to the flat at Thane on 27.04.2026.
6. It is directed that the police team shall comprise one PSI, one male constable and one female constable.
7. The Investigating Officer shall prepare a separate panchanama of the articles handed over to the informant which shall form a part of the charge-sheet to be filed before the Trial Court.
8. Needless to say, violation of any of the aforesaid conditions may entitle the prosecution to seek cancellation of the anticipatory bail granted hereinabove.
9. The observations made herein are prima facie and shall not influence the Trial Court while deciding the case on its own merits.
10. In view of the above, the Anticipatory Bail Application stands disposed of.
11. Application for assisting the prosecution also stands disposed of.
12. List this matter for compliance and submission of the panchanama on **29.04.2026**.

(MEHROZ K. PATHAN, J.)