IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CIRCUIT BENCH AT KOLHAPUR

CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

CRIMINAL BAIL APPLN. NO. 913 OF 2026

Mahadev Pandhari Mane ……Applicant
Versus
State Of Maharashtra And Ors. ……Respondents

Mr. Kunal V. Patil a/w Ms. Rajnandini P. Katkar, for Applicant.
Ms. Shubhangi N. Deshmukh, A.P.P. for Respondent Nos.1 and 2 - State.

SHANTANU SHANKARSA DHUDUM
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Date: 2026.10.08 19:13:07 +0530

CORAM : ASHWIN D. BHOBE, J.
DATE : 7th OCTOBER, 2026.

P.C.

1. Heard, Mr. Kunal V. Patil, learned Advocate for the Applicant and Ms. Shubhangi N. Deshmukh, learned A.P.P., for Respondent Nos.1 and 2 – State.

2. By the present Application filed under Section 483 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (for short, “BNSS”), the Applicant seeks Regular Bail in connection with Crime No. 411 of 2026 registered at Malshiras Police Station, District Solapur, for offences punishable under Sections 7, 7A and 12 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

3. Mr. Kunal V. Patil, learned Advocate for the Applicant, states that there are four (4) Accused in the present case, with the Applicant being Accused No. 2.

4. In brief, the prosecution case is that Anil Shinde (Accused No. 3) demanded Rs.25,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty-Five Lakhs) from Santoshkumar Malve (Informant) for not registering Crime No. 564 of 2026 for offences punishable under Sections 109(1), 132, 121(1), 127(2), 351, 351(2), 352 and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (“BNS”) against the Informant, Mahesh Khade and the parents of Mahesh Khade; for helping them obtain Anticipatory Bail; and not adding offences under the PCPNDT Act. Accused No. 3 demanded Rs.25,00,000/- for the Deputy Superintendent of Police-Walke and Rs.5,00,000/- for himself through the Applicant and Accused No. 1(Aba Sawala Valkunde).

5. On 20th August, 2026, Accused No. 3, accepted Rs.10,00,000/- for the Deputy Superintendent of Police, through Rupali Fadtare, a Police Officer and friend of Mahesh Khade and the Accused No. 1, near the Primary Health Centre near Siddhanath Mandir, Mhaswad. The Accused insisted on payment of the remaining amount. Therefore, the Informant approached the ACB, Solapur Office, with the complaint. On 28th August, 2026, during the raid conducted by the ACB Officers, the Accused No. 1 and the Applicant and were present. The Informant, handed over Rs. 5,50,000/- to the Accused No.1 , who accepted the same with both hands.

The Applicant was present alongside Accused No. 1 when the said amount was handed over.

6. The Applicant was arrested on 29th August, 2026. Bail Application No.263 of 2026 filed by the Applicant was rejected by the Special Judge, ACB, Malshiras (“Trial Court”) on 10th September, 2026.

7. Mr. Kunal V. Patil, learned Advocate for the Applicant, submits that the Applicant has been implicated in the present crime solely based on his presence alongside Accused No. 1(Aba Sawala Valkunde), who received Rs.5,50,000/- in the trap laid by the ACB team. He fsubmits that, apart from the Applicant's presence, there is no other material against the Applicant.

8. Ms. Shubhangi N. Deshmukh, learned A.P.P. for Respondent Nos. 1 and 2 – State, submits that although there is no telephonic communication between the Applicant and the Informant, there is sufficient material on record to indicate the Applicant's involvement in the crime, based on the conversation between the Applicant and the other co-accused.

9. Perused the record.

10. The Applicant is not a Public Servant. From the allegations in the FIR, it appears the Applicant was present when the bribe was paid to Accused No. 1, apart from the Applicant's presence alongside Accused No.

1 at the time of the raid there is no material to indicate the Applicant's involvement in the crime.

11. The offences charged against the Applicant herein carry a maximum punishment of seven years. The sum of Rs.5,50,000/- has been recovered from Accused No. 1. No recovery has been made from the Applicant.

12. Accused No. 4 (Rahul Maruti Wagh), a public servant on whose behalf the demand and illegal gratification were allegedly to be paid, was granted pre-arrest bail by the Special Judge (ACB), Malshiras, on 22nd September, 2026, in Criminal Bail Application No. 270 of 2026. Accused No. 1 is released on regular bail in Criminal Bail Application No. 926 of 2026. Mr. Kunal V. Patil, learned Advocate for the Applicant, has tendered a photostat copy of the order dated 22nd September, 2026, which is taken on record and marked as "**X**" for identification.

13. Considering the nature of the allegations against the Applicant, the fact that the Applicant is a private person and the investigation being complete, custodial interrogation of the Applicant pending trial in Crime No. 411 of 2026 is not warranted.

14. In view of the above, this Application is allowed on the following terms and conditions:

ORDER

A) The Applicant - Mahadev Pandhari Mane, shall be released on bail in Crime No.411 of 2026, registered at Malshiras Police Station, District Solapur, on furnishing a P.R. Bond in the sum of Rs.1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Only), with one or two sureties in the like amount, to the satisfaction of the Special Judge, ACB, Malshiras.

B) The Applicant shall not, directly or indirectly, make any inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case to dissuade that person from disclosing those facts to the Court or to any police officer. The Applicant shall not tamper with the evidence in any manner.

C) The Applicant shall attend and report to the Investigating Officer, Malshiras Police Station, District Solapur, on the second day of each month, till framing of the charge in Crime No. 411 of 2026.

D) The Applicant shall not tamper with the evidence in any manner.

E) The Applicant shall provide the Investigation Officer, Malshiras Police Station, District Soalpur with his

residential address along with proof, his contact numbers and must inform the Investigating Officer of any changes to this information from time to time.

F) The Applicant shall regularly appear before the Trial Court in the proceedings, as and when the proceedings in Crime No. 411 of 2026 commence.

G) In the event of any default in complying with the conditions or misuse of the liberty granted to the Applicants, the prosecution shall be at liberty to seek cancellation of bail.

15. The observations made in this order are for the purpose of deciding the Bail Application and will not affect the trial.

16. Criminal Bail Application No.913 of 2026 is disposed of.

(ASHWIN D. BHOBE, J.)