

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CIRCUIT BENCH AT KOLHAPUR
CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION
CRIMINAL BAIL APPLICATION NO. 228 OF 2026

PRATIKYA LANGDAYA PAWAR
VERSUS
THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA AND ANR.

...
Advocate for Applicant : Ms. Tanvi Tapkire, ,
APP for Respondent-State : Mr. A. S. Shalgaonkar
...

CORAM : SACHIN S. DESHMUKH, J.
Date : 25th March, 2026

PER COURT :-

1. The applicant has approached this Court seeking regular bail in connection with FIR dated 23.01.2022 bearing Crime No. 16 of 2022 registered with Aashta Police Station, Dist. Sangli for the offences punishable under Sections 302, 307 read with 34 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

2. The prosecution case is that informant Sharmila Pawar and her husband, Asman, were embroiled in a long-standing feud with the accused, Pratikya, and his family in Village Koregaon. The conflict began during the 2020 Dasara festival over a dispute, leading to cross-complaints involving charges of assault and outraging of modesty. The violence escalated in June 2021 when

the accused allegedly assaulted Asman, breaking his leg. On 20.01.2022, Pratikya reportedly telephoned Sharmila, offering Rs. 8,00,000/- to withdraw the pending legal cases.

3. Following the refusal to settle, the accused arrived at the informant's home on 22.01.2022, at approximately 8:00 p.m. They allegedly attacked Asman with an axe, targeting his head and hands. Asman succumbed to his injuries, leading to the present murder charges against the accused.

4. The learned counsel for the applicant submits that the applicant has been falsely implicated in the offence. There is a long-standing history of deep-seated animosity between the two families, as evidenced by multiple cross-complaints filed since the year 2020. The learned counsel also submits that a co-accused in this crime has already been enlarged on bail. The arrest of the applicant is effected on 29.11.2025. Investigation is complete and the charge-sheet is filed. Nothing remains to be recovered at the instance of applicant. As such, further incarceration of the applicant is unjustified. Hence, it is prayed that the application be allowed.

5. The learned APP opposed the application, submitting

that the offence is serious in nature and that there is sufficient material on record to establish the applicant's complicity. The gravity of the assault disentitles the applicant from seeking bail. Furthermore, the APP argued that if the applicant is released on bail, there is every possibility of the prosecution evidence being tampered with or the offence being repeated. Accordingly, it was prayed that the application be rejected.

6. Upon considering the submissions of both sides and perusing the material on record, including the charge-sheet, there is existence of a long-standing history of prior enmity and litigation between the informant's family and the applicant's family. The record prima facie indicates a series of cross-complaints dating back to the year 2020, including a report filed by the co-accused's wife, Malan, against the deceased for outraging her modesty.

7. Furthermore, while the allegations involve a serious offence under Section 302 of the IPC, the prosecution's case against Pratikya primarily rests on ocular evidence provided by interested witnesses who are closely related to the deceased. Furthermore, the accused No. 04, who is alleged to be the primary assailant, has already been admitted to bail. Even, the other co-accused involved in the crime have also been released on bail.

8. Considering that the lead assailant and other similarly situated individuals have been granted liberty, there remains no justifiable ground to keep the present applicant in continued incarceration. The investigation is complete for all intent and purpose and the charge-sheet is filed. Having regard to the number of accused and the witnesses which the prosecution proposes to examine, it is very unlikely that the trial can be commenced and concluded within a reasonable period.

9. As such, further detention of the applicant as an under trial prisoner, in the circumstances of the case, does not seem to be either warranted or justifiable. The apprehension expressed by the learned APP about tampering with the prosecution evidence can be adequately taken care of by imposing stringent conditions.

10. Hence, the following order:

ORDER

- (I) Application is **allowed**.
- (II) Applicant – Pratikya Langdaya Pawar be released on regular bail on furnishing P.R. bond of Rs. 50,000/- (Fifty Thousand Only) with one or two local solvent sureties in the like amount, in Crime No. 16 of 2022 registered with Aashta Police Station, Dist. Sangli for

the offences punishable under Sections 302, 307 read with 34 of the Indian Penal Code, on the following conditions :-

- (a) The applicant shall attend each and every date of the Trial Court unless exempted by the Trial Court.
 - (b) The applicant shall not pressurize the prosecution witnesses and shall not tamper with the prosecution evidence, in any manner.
 - (c) The applicant shall submit his Aadhar and Pan Card to the Investigation Officer and detailed addresses and phone numbers of applicant and two of the near relatives.
 - (d) Breach of any of the conditions by the applicant would entail the cancellation of the bail.
- (iii) Needless to states that the observations rendered herein are to the extent of this application and the trial court shall not be influenced by the same.

(SACHIN S. DESHMUKH, J.)

Omkar Joshi