

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

CRIMINAL BAIL APPLICATION NO. 330 OF 2026

PRASHANT KISAN BANKAR
VERSUS
THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA AND ANOTHER

...
Advocate for Applicant : Mr. Rahul S. Kate
Advocate for Respondents : Mr. A. S. Shalgaonkar
...

CORAM : SACHIN S. DESHMUKH, J.

DATE : 04-05-2026

PER COURT:-

1. The applicant seeks regular bail in Crime No.345 of 2025 dated 24.10.2025 registered with Phaltan Police Station, District Satara, for the offences punishable under Sections 64(2)(m) and 108 of *Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023*. The applicant was arrested on 25.10.2025. After completion of the investigation, the chargesheet is filed on 18.12.2025.

2. The prosecution case is that the deceased, cousin sister of the complainant, was serving as a Medical Officer at Sub-District Hospital, Phaltan. On 23.10.2025, deceased checked into Room of Madhudeep Hotel. On the following morning, despite repeated attempts by the hotel staff to access the room, there was no response. Subsequently, in the evening, upon opening the room,

the deceased was found hanging by the ceiling fan with the aid of a stole. The incident was reported to the police. The complainant and his relatives reached Phaltan and identified the dead body.

3. It is alleged that a writing was found on the left palm of the deceased, indicating that the applicant had committed sexual assault upon her on multiple occasions and that co-accused Prashant Bankar had subjected her to physical and mental harassment. It is further noted that certain alterations were observed in the said writing. The complainant has further alleged that during her tenure, the deceased was frequently assigned postmortem duties and was subjected to persistent pressure from the local police, owing to which she had earlier lodged a complaint before the Sub-Divisional Police Officer, Phaltan. On the basis of the aforesaid allegations and circumstances, the complainant lodged the present report against the accused persons.

4. Learned counsel for the applicant submits that the applicant is falsely implicated in the alleged crime. The applicant has no nexus with the deceased and alleged WhatsApp chats are between the deceased and the co-accused. Further, the co-accused already released on bail by this Court. The role of the applicant is on lesser footing, hence, prayed to allow the application.

5. Per contra, learned APP has vehemently opposed the application submitting that the offence is serious in nature. The investigating agency has produced an overwhelming evidence against the applicant in the form of Whats App chats indicating the complicity of the applicant. The learned APP further expressed the apprehension that, if the applicant is released on bail, may threaten or influence the witnesses.

6. Having heard the submissions of both the sides and upon perusal of the record including the chargesheet, *prima facie*, indicates that the applicant and the victim were not in direct contact with each other. Except the name of applicant along with name of co-accused on the hand of the deceased. Much less, *prima facie*, in absence of proximate and compelling reasons, that drove deceased to commit suicide.

7. The co-accused is enlarged on bail by this Court vide order dated 01/04/2026 in Criminal Bail application no. 196 of 2026. *Prima facie*, given the role of the applicant than that of the co-accused, further detention of the applicant would be unjustified.

8. The investigation is complete for all intent and purpose and the charge-sheet is filed to that effect. Having regard to the number of witnesses which the prosecution proposes to examine,

the trial is unlikely to commence and conclude within a reasonable period. So far as the apprehension expressed by the learned APP is concerned, the same can be adequately taken care of by imposing stringent conditions.

9. In view of above discussion, I am persuaded to exercise the discretion in favour of the applicant.

10. Hence, the following order:-

ORDER

- (i) The bail application is allowed.
- (ii) Applicant, Prashant Kisan Bankar, be released on bail, on furnishing P.R. bond in the sum of Rs.50,000/- (Rs.Fifty Thousand) with one or two local solvent sureties, in the like amount, in connection with Crime No.345 of 2025 dated 24.10.2025 registered with Phaltan Police Station, District Satara for offences punishable under Sections 64(2)(m) and 108 of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, on the following conditions :-
 - (a) The applicant shall not pressurize the prosecution witnesses and tamper with the prosecution evidence, in any manner.
 - (b) The applicant shall attend the trial on each and every date unless exempted by the trial Court.

- (c) The applicant shall submit Aadhar and Pan Cards to the Investigating Officer and detailed address and phone numbers and two of the near relatives.
- (d) In case of breach of any of the conditions by the applicant, it is open for the Prosecution to move the concerned Court seeking cancellation of bail, notwithstanding the fact that this Court has admitted the applicant to bail.
- (iii) Needless to state 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]
JUDGE

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