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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

BAIL APPLICATION NO. 3879 OF 2026

Ritika Sunil Bakshi .. Applicant

Versus

The State of Maharashtra .. Respondent

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- Mr. Harsh Kashyap, Advocate appearing through video conferencing for Applicant.
- Ms. Sangeeta E. Phad, APP for Respondent – State.
- PSI – Akshay Patil, Uttam Nagar Police Station, Pune City.

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CORAM : MILIND N. JADHAV, J.

DATE : OCTOBER 14, 2026

P.C.:

1. Heard Mr. Kashyap, learned Advocate appearing through video conferencing for Applicant and Ms. Phad, learned APP for Respondent – State.

2. This is an Application under Section 483 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 seeking bail in connection with C.R. No.28 of 2023 registered with Uttamnagar Police Station for offences punishable under Sections 302 and 182 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and Section 23 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000.

3. Applicant is the stepmother of the victim who is a five year old child. Applicant is arrested on 24.02.2023 and is in incarceration

for the past more than 3 years 8 months. The trial is just commenced and I am informed that the first witness is under examination.

4. Ms. Phad, learned Prosecutor for the State would vehemently oppose the grant of bail to Applicant and would contend that if the post-mortem report with regard to column No.17 and the injuries suffered by the victim are seen it would probably shock the conscience of the Court, considering the fact that the prosecution has also recorded witness statements account of the neighbours wherein it is stated that Applicant used to occasionally beat and abuse the victim who was her stepdaughter.

5. With the able assistance of the learned Advocates, I have perused the papers and post-mortem report and considered column No.17 as appearing on page Nos.108 and 109 of the present Application. A major part of the injuries which are stated therein are burn marks, rather they are clarified to be superficial burn marks and contusions and abrasions.

6. However, in the facts of the present case, what impels me to consider the Applicant's case for bail is not the alleged gravity which is argued by the prosecution, but the length of trial 3 years 8 months which in my opinion is an unduly long period of time. There are two accused persons in the present time, the other accused person being father of the victim. He has already been enlarged on bail. The

evidence qua the role of Applicant is circumstantial. It is based on the medical report and the witness statements of the neighbours.

7. However, perusal of the record also shows that the victim who was 5 years old was also suffering from epilepsy and was repeatedly prone to epileptic fits and was also under treatment for the same. Hence, considering the aforesaid overall observations and findings, I am inclined to consider the case of Applicant for bail as she is a woman and also due to the ignominy of the trial though having commenced, but not being concluded in the near foreseeable future being inevitable, the Applicant is allowed to bail.

8. Hence, in view of above *prima facie* observations and findings, Bail Application of Applicant is allowed subject to the following terms and conditions:-

(i) Applicant – Ritika Sunil Bakshi is directed to be immediately released from prison in connection with CR. No.28 of 2023;

(ii) Applicant is directed to be released on bail on furnishing P.R. Bond of Rs.15,000/- (Rs. Fifteen Thousand only) with one or two sureties in the like amount;

(iii) Applicant shall report to the Investigating Officer at

concerned Police Station, once every month, on the first Monday of the month between 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. until commencement of trial and thereafter shall attend all dates of hearing before the Trial Court;

(iv) Applicant shall cooperate with the conduct of the trial and remain present before the Trial Court on all dates, unless specifically exempted. Applicant shall not seek unnecessary adjournments. Any such conduct shall entitle the prosecution to apply for cancellation of bail;

(v) Applicant shall not leave the State of Maharashtra without prior permission of the Trial Court;

(vi) Applicant shall not influence any of the witnesses or tamper with the evidence in any manner;

(vii) Applicant shall keep the Investigating Officer informed of her current residential address and mobile telephone number and shall forthwith inform the Investigating Officer of any change in her residential address or mobile telephone number, as and when such change occurs; and

(viii) Any breach or infraction of any of the aforesaid conditions shall entail cancellation of the bail granted to

the Applicant.

9. It is clarified that the observations made in this order are limited for the purpose of granting bail only and I have not made any observations on merits of the case. The trial shall be adjudicated on the strength of the evidence led and strictly on its own merits being uninfluenced with any of the *prima facie* observations made hereinabove in this order.

10. Bail Application is allowed and disposed in the above terms.

[MILIND N. JADHAV, J.]

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