

S.S.Kilaje

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

**CRIMINAL BAIL APPLICATION NO. 4497 OF 2025
WITH
CRIMINAL BAIL APPLICATION NO. 4460 OF 2025**

Pravin Ramesh Gholap

... Applicant

Versus

The State of Maharashtra & Anr.

... Respondents

Mr. Ashok M. Mundargi, Senior Advocate a/w. Mr. Sanjay P. Shinde and Mr. Prathmesh T. Bhanuwanshe, for the Applicant in both the Applications.

Smt. Ranjana D. Humane, APP for the Respondent-State.

CORAM : SHIVKUMAR DIGE, J.

DATE : 28th JANUARY, 2026.

P.C. :

1. These two bail applications are preferred by the applicant in different crime number having same allegations hence I am deciding both applications by this common order.

2. By these applications, the Applicant is seeking regular bail in C.R.No. 199 of 2025 and C.R.No. 197 of 2025 registered with Bhadrakali Police Station, Nashik, for the offences punishable under Sections 74 and 76 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (for short “BNS Act”) and Section 3(1)(w)(i)(ii), Section 3(2)(v)(a) of Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989 and Sections 8 and 12 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (for short “POCSO Act”).

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3. It is prosecution's case that applicant is the Principal of college where victim was studying. It is alleged that from 05.08.2024 to January-2025, the applicant outraged modesty of the two victims, one of them belongs to Adivasi caste. He was aware about the caste of the victim. It is alleged that applicant solicited sexual favours from the victim.

4. It is contention of learned Senior counsel for the applicant that the applicant is behind bars for more than eight months. On the same day, four complaints have been filed of the same nature. There is delay in lodging the complaint and requested to allow the application.

5. It is contention of learned APP along with learned counsel for respondent No.2 that applicant was Principal. He outraged modesty of the victims by taking undue advantage of his post. The first informant belongs to Adivasi community and was below 18 years old when the first incident occurred. If the applicant released on bail, he may abscond or threaten prosecution witnesses. Hence, requested to reject the applications.

6. I have heard all the learned counsel. Perused chargesheet and documents produced on record. There is delay in lodging the complaint. The applicant is behind bars for around eight months. Investigation is completed. Chargesheet has been filed. Considering these facts, I pass following order.

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ORDER

- i. The applicant be enlarged on bail in C.R.No. 199 of 2025 registered with Bhadrakali Police Station, Nashik, and C.R.No. 197 of 2025 registered with Bhadrakali Police Station, Nashik, on executing P.R.Bond of Rs.30,000/- in each crime, for furnishing one or two sureties in the like amount.
- ii. The applicant shall attend the concerned police station as and when required.
- iii. The applicant shall not tamper with the evidence or attempt to influence or contact the complainant, witnesses or any person concerned with the case.

7. The Bail Applications are allowed in the aforesaid terms and are accordingly disposed of. All pending applications, if any, disposed of.

8. It is made clear that the above observations are made only for the purpose of granting bail and the Trial Court shall decide the case on its own merits in accordance with law and uninfluenced by the observations made in this order.

9. All concerned to act on the authenticated copy of this order.

(SHIVKUMAR DIGE, J.)