

Shubhada S Kadam

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

BAIL APPLICATION NO. 319 OF 2026

Pritam Pratap Sonone	...Applicant
<u>VERSUS</u>	
The State of Maharashtra	...Respondent

Mr. Ashraf Ali Shaikh, Advocate for Applicant (Through VC).
Mr. P. P. Jadhav, APP for Respondent-State.
PSI-S.S.Devkar, Chikhali Police Station, present.

CORAM : SHIVKUMAR DIGE, J.
DATE : 23rd MARCH, 2026.

P.C. :

1. By this application, the applicant is seeking regular bail in Crime No. 346 of 2023 registered with Chikhali Police Station, District Pune, for the offences punishable under Sections 302 and 120-B of the Indian Penal Code 1860, Sections 3(25)(27) of Indian Arms Act, Section 37(1)(3) read with Section 135 of the Maharashtra Police Act and Sections 3(1)(ii) and 3(4) of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, 1999.

2. It is prosecution's case that the applicant and co-accused murdered the deceased by firing at him.

3. It is contention of learned counsel for the applicant that the main allegations are against the co-accused who fired at the deceased. At

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the time of the incident, the applicant was not present. The allegations against the applicant are that he visited the incident spot before and after the incident. The applicant has no antecedents. He is behind bars for more than two years and eight months. There is no progress in the trial, and requested to allow the application.

4. It is contention of learned APP that the applicant was a dog watcher who visited the incident spot before and after the incident, which shows his involvement in the crime with the co-accused. It is further alleged that he paid money to the gang leader to run away from the incident spot. The entire incident is captured in CCTV footage. If the applicant is released on bail, he may abscond or threaten the prosecution witnesses. Hence, requested to reject the application.

5. I have heard both learned counsel, perused charge-sheet and documents produced on record. The CCTV footage does not show that at the time of the incident the applicant was present. The main allegations are against the co-accused. To prove the role of the applicant in the crime, evidence is required. The applicant has no antecedents. He is behind bars for two years and eight months. There is no progress in the trial. Considering these facts, I pass the following order:

ORDER

(i) The applicant be enlarged on bail in Crime No. 346 of 2023

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registered with Chikhali Police Station, District Pune, on executing P.R.Bond in the sum of Rs.30,000/- with 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.

The application is allowed in the aforesaid terms and is accordingly disposed of.

6. 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.

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

(SHIVKUMAR DIGE, J.)