

N.S.Kamble

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

CRIMINAL BAIL APPLICATION NO. 627 OF 2026

Azad Kallu Kewat

....Applicant

VERSUS

State Of Maharashtra And Anr

....Respondents

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Date:
2026.04.20
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Mr.Kishan Chaudhari a/w Mr.Rajabhau Chaudhari, for the Applicant.

Ms.R.D. Humane, APP for Respondent-State.

Mr.Waqar Pathan i/b Wesley Menezes, for Respondent No.2.

Mr.V.B. Maskar, PSI, Shikrapur Police Station, Pune Rural.

CORAM : SHIVKUMAR DIGE, J.

DATE : 17th APRIL 2026

P.C. :

. Heard learned counsel for the Applicant, learned APP for the State and learned Counsel for Respondent No.2.

2. By this Application, the Applicant is seeking regular bail in Crime No. 503 of 2025 registered with Shikrapur Police Station, District Pune for the offences punishable under Sections 143(2),(3),(4),(5) and 3(5) of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and under Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 and under Sections 16 and 17 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.

3. It is prosecution's case that the Applicant and co-accused compelled the victim to do prostitution. They used to take money from the

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customers. It is alleged that the Applicant compelled the victims to do prostitution in their lodge. He used to take money from the customers for having sexual relations with the victims. It is alleged that the Applicant was the Manager of the lodge, where the prostitution was going on.

4. It is contention of learned counsel for the Applicant that the Applicant is behind bar for more than 8 months. He was Manager. He was not aware about the age of the victims. He never told the victims for doing prostitution. Victims themselves doing the prostitution. The Applicant has no antecedents. It may take time to conclude the trial and requested to allow the application.

5. It is contention of learned APP for the State and learned counsel for Respondent No.2 that the Police raided the lodge where the Applicant was working and found four victims, out of which one was minor. In the statements of all victims, they have stated that the Applicant used to ask them to do prostitution and he used to take money from customers. Learned APP further submitted that one of the victim was minor. Her ossification test is done and in the said test, her age is shown as between 16 to 18 years. If the Applicant is released on bail, he may abscond or threaten the prosecution witnesses and requested to reject the application.

6. I have heard all learned counsel. Perused charge-sheet and

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documents produced on record. Statements of victims shows that they were indulged in the prostitution. The statement of minor victim shows that earlier she was doing prostitution at other places. There is no evidence on record to show that the Applicant was aware about the age of minor victim. The Applicant is behind bar for more than 6 months. He has no antecedents. It may take time to conclude the trial.

7. Considering this fact, I pass following order:

ORDER

- (i) The Applicant be released on bail in Crime No. 503 of 2025 registered with Shikrapur Police Station, District Pune, on furnishing PR bond of Rs.25,000/- with one or two solvent sureties in the like amount.
- (ii) The Applicant shall not tamper with the evidence and/or influence the prosecution witnesses.
- (iii) The Trial Court shall decide the case on its own merits and in accordance with law, uninfluenced by the observations made in this order.
- (iv) The Applicant shall attend the concerned police station, as and when required.
- (v) Bail Application is allowed in the aforesaid terms.

(SHIVKUMAR DIGE, J.)