

N.S.Kamble

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

CRIMINAL BAIL APPLICATION NO. 719 OF 2026

Nitin Venkatesh Bhandari

... Applicant

Versus

State Of Maharashtra And Anr

... Respondents

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Mr.Shailesh Kharat, for the Applicant.

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

Mr.Vinod S. Kendre, for Respondent No.2.

CORAM : SHIVKUMAR DIGE, J.**DATE : 9th APRIL 2026****P.C.:**

. By this Application, the Applicant is seeking regular bail in Crime No.103 of 2022 registered with Alankar Police Station, Pune, for the offences punishable under Sections 342, 366(A) and 376(3) of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 ('IPC' for short) and Sections 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 ('POCSO' for short).

2. It is prosecution's case that the Applicant sexually assaulted the First Informant on various occasions by threatening her. She was minor at the time of the incident.

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3. It is contention of learned counsel for the Applicant that there was love affair between the Applicant and First Informant. There is delay in lodging a Complaint. The Applicant is behind bars for more than three years. It may take time to conclude the trial, and requested to allow the Application.

4. It is contention of learned APP that, at the time of incident, victim was 16 years old. The Applicant has antecedents. He sexually assaulted the victim on various occasions by threatening her. If the Applicant released on bail, he may abscond or threaten First Informant and prosecution witnesses, and requested to reject the Application.

5. It is contention of the learned counsel for Respondent No.2 that Respondent No.2 is present in the Court and she has no objection to allow the Application.

6. I have heard all learned counsel. Perused charge-sheet and documents produced on record.

7. At the time of the incident, First Informant was 16 years old. There is delay in lodging the complaint. The Applicant is behind bars for more than three years. It may take time to conclude the trial.

8. Considering these facts, I pass following order.

ORDER

- (i) The Applicant be released on bail in Crime No.103 of 2022 registered with Alankar Police Station, Pune, on furnishing

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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) Application is allowed in the aforesaid terms.

(SHIVKUMAR DIGE, J.)