

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

Anticipatory Bail Application No.599 of 2026

Geet Ramesh Bhandari
Aged 35 years, Occu: Business
Residing at A 101, Naraan Nagar
Apartment, Ashoka Marg, Nashik
Dist- Nashik - 422011

... Applicant

Versus

The State of Maharashtra
(At the instance of Koregaon Park
Police Station vide their CR No.133
of 2025)

... Respondent.

Mr Prabhanjay Dave, a/w Mr Tanmay Tendulkar, for the
applicant.

Ms Sangeeta E Phad, APP, for the respondent/ State.

Coram: R.N. Laddha, J.

Date: 6 April 2026.

P.C.:

By this application, the applicant seeks pre-arrest bail in connection with CR No.133 of 2025, registered at Koregaon Park Police Station, Pune, for offences punishable under Sections 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, and Sections 143(3) read with 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023.

2. The prosecution case, in brief, is that upon receipt of confidential information regarding women allegedly being coerced into prostitution for monetary gain, a raid was conducted at 'The Heaven Hotel' in Pune. During the raid, three women were found engaged in prostitution along with a customer. At that time, the applicant was the licensee of the said Hotel.

3. Mr Prabhanjay Dave, the learned Counsel appearing on behalf of the applicant, asserts the applicant's innocence and submits that the applicant has been falsely implicated in the present crime. Inviting the attention of this Court to the leave and licence agreement, it is contended that although the hotel was taken on licence by the applicant and his business partner, its day-to-day operations were managed by the co-accused, Aditya Singh. It is further submitted that the applicant, being a resident of Nashik, had no knowledge of the alleged illegal activities and has been made a scapegoat. It is urged that the charge sheet has already been filed against the co-accused, the statements of the victims have been recorded, and the victims have been released; thus, nothing further remains to be recovered or discovered. The investigation is substantially complete, and custodial interrogation of the applicant is unwarranted. The applicant undertakes to abide by any

conditions that may be imposed by this Court.

4. On the other hand, Ms Sangeeta Phad, the learned Additional Public Prosecutor representing the respondent/ State, opposing the application, argues that the offence is of a serious nature. The victims were found at the scene while committing illegal activity on the premises. The applicant is the owner of the Hotel. The learned APP also raised concerns about potential evidence tampering and witness influence if the applicant were granted pre-arrest bail.

5. This Court has given anxious consideration to the rival contentions and perused the records.

6. Upon perusing the records, it appears that the applicant, along with the co-accused, Jash Thakkar, had entered into a leave and license agreement to run the business of the said Hotel. The hotel appears to have been managed by the co-accused Aditya. The applicant is a resident of Nashik and was not present at the time of the raid. The record does not suggest that the applicant was aware of the alleged illegal activities that took place on the premises. The victims, who are adults, have not levelled any allegations against the applicant; rather, their statements attribute coercion to one Rahul. It is also pertinent that the co-accused have already been enlarged on bail, and the

applicant has no criminal antecedents. The investigation is complete, and nothing further remains to be recovered or discovered from the applicant.

7. In light of the foregoing, this Court is inclined to exercise its discretion in favour of the applicant. Hence, the following order:

ORDER

(i) In the event of the applicant's arrest in connection with CR No.133 of 2025, registered at Koregaon Park Police Station, Pune, he shall be released on bail upon executing a PR Bond of Rs.25,000/- and furnishing one or more sureties in the like amount.

(ii) The applicant shall attend the concerned police station as and when required till filing of the charge sheet.

(iii) The applicant, himself or through any other person, shall not tamper with the evidence or influence witnesses.

8. The application stands disposed of accordingly.

[R.N. Laddha, J.]