

**Criminal Bail Application No. 128/2026**

(CNR-MH-DH-01-000555-2026)

Devidas Mangu Sonawane. .... Applicant.  
-versus-  
The State of Maharashtra. .... Respondent.

**Order Below Exh.1**

Accused has sought regular bail under Section 483 of Bhartiya Nagarik Surksha Sanhita, 2023, in connection with Crime No.45/2026 registered with Dhule Taluka Police Station, for the offences punishable under Sections 74, 75, 76 of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and Section 8, 12 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012.

2] Brief facts of the prosecution case are as under;

On 31/01/2026, the informant/victim's grandmother lodged a report stating that accused is husband of victim's aunt. On 07/09/2025 accused took the victim with her to Dhule for purchasing clothes on her birthday. After returning from Dhule victim told informant that accused touched her body, kissed her and moved his hand over her face and over her chest. Informant told the victim that accused might be caressing her being her uncle and ignored said fact. Prior to 15 to 20 days of lodging F.I.R. accused came to the house of informant when victim was alone. Accused called the victim and threatened to kill her parents by showing knife and told her to allow him touch her. Thereafter accused started touching breasts of victim and started removing her inner wear. At that time victim pushed the accused and raised shouts and escaped herself. At that time also accused threatened the victim not to disclose the incident to anyone

otherwise he would kill everyone. Victim narrated the incident to informant and others. On these allegations FIR was lodged against the accused vide section 74, 75, 76 of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and Section 8, 12 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. Applicant was arrested on 31/01/2026 and since then he is in custody.

3] The State has opposed bail application on various grounds.

4] Ld. Advocate Shri. N. G. Dusane, for the applicant submitted that, accused is innocent and he is falsely implicated in this crime. The ingredients of the offences alleged are not attracted in the present case. The allegations in the F.I.R. are vague. There is delay of 15 to 20 days in lodging of F.I.R., which is not properly explained. The accused is not related to the informant as alleged in F.I.R. The informant and her family members obtained hand loan of Rs. 30,60,000/- from the accused. When applicant demanded back said amount, the informant and her family members threatened to kill him and to implicate him in false cases. After receipt of notice of demanding said amount, informant has filed false F.I.R. against the applicant. Applicant is 60 years old. Nothing is to be seized at the instance of applicant. Investigation is practically completed. He is ready to abide by the conditions imposed by the Court.

5] Ld. Special P. P. Shri. N. B. Kalal has submitted that allegations against the accused are serious. Therefore he has prayed to reject this application.

6] The informant appeared before the Court through advocate Shri. M. U. Thorat. She has filed her say vide Exh.13 and has strongly objected the application.

7] On perusal of the documents filed by the State and considering the submissions made by the learned advocate for the accused, it appears that an offence punishable under section 74, 75, 76 of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and Section 8, 12 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 has been registered against the applicant. Considering the allegations in the F.I.R. it appears that the alleged incidents have taken place on 07/09/2025 and thereafter about 15 to 20 days prior to lodging of the F.I.R., whereas the report came to be lodged on 31/01/2026. Thus, there is considerable delay in lodging the F.I.R., which will have to be appreciated during trial. The applicant has been arrested on 31/01/2026 and is in custody since then. The investigation appears to be practically complete and further custodial detention of the applicant does not appear to be necessary for the purpose of investigation. The defence of the applicant that prior to lodging of the F.I.R., he had issued a notice dated 23/01/2026 demanding an amount of Rs.30,60,000/- from the family of the victim is a matter which can be examined during trial. As per own contention of accused there are criminal antecedents against him, however, he has been released on bail in the said cases. It is settled principal of law that criminal antecedents of accused by themselves cannot constitute ground for denial of bail. In these circumstances, I am of the opinion that the applicant deserves to be released on bail on appropriate conditions. Hence I pass following order.

**ORDER**

- 1] The application is allowed.
- 2] The applicant Devidas Mangu Sonawane, is released on bail in connection with Crime No.45/2026 registered with Dhule Taluka Police Station for the offences punishable under Sections 74, 75 of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and Section 8, 12 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, he be released on executing PR bond of Rs.25,000/- (Rs. Twenty five thousand only) with one local surety for the like amount on the following conditions :-
  - a) Applicant shall not, directly or indirectly, make any inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case so as to dissuade them from disclosing such facts to the Court or to any police officer.
  - b) Applicant shall not leave India without permission of the court.
  - c) Applicant shall remain present before the Court on every date, till the disposal of main petition.
  - d) The applicant shall not enter the area/locality where the victim and her family reside, till the conclusion of the trial. He shall furnish his proposed residential address along with the contact details of two of his close relatives to the Court.
  - e) The applicant shall not change his residential address without prior intimation to the Investigation Officer and to the Court.
- 3] A soft copy of this order be sent to accused Devidas Mangu Sonawane by e-mail through the Superintendent of Jail, Dhule in view of directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court in Suo Moto W. P. (Cri) No.4/2021 (SC) dated 03.01.2023.

Date:- 11.03.2026.

[ Yasmin G. Deshmukh ]  
Addl. Sessions Judge, Dhule.

**Certificate**

I certify that the contents of this PDF file are word to word as per Original Judgment/order.

Name of the Steno : T.R.Pankhedkar.  
Name of the Court : Court of District Judge-3 & Addl. Sessions Judge, Dhule.  
PDF Uploading Date : 11-03-2026.

Sd/-...

Stenographer(Gr-I).