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*MCOCA Special Case No. 147/2023.
Deepak Puram V/s. State.
(CNR No. MHYA010025332023)*

**-: FINAL ORDER BELOW EXH.29 IN SPECIAL CASE
BEARING NO.147/2023. :-**
(Delivered on this 08th Day of November 2024)

1. Applicant/accused invoked jurisdiction of this Court vide Section 439 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, seeking regular bail in connection with C.R. No.682/2023 registered with Police Station Awdhootwadi, Distt. Yavatmal, for the offence punishable U/secs. 302, 201, 396, 364 of the Indian Penal Code, Section 3(2)(v) of The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities (Act) 1989 r/w sections 3(1) (i), 3(2) and 3(4) of the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act, 1999 (MCOC Act).

2. Pressing upon change in circumstances, Post filing of the final report vide section 173 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the accused herein moved this Court with instant first bail application. When the case is stand over for further due deliberation the applicant accused herein knocked the door of this Court and implored for his release on suitable bail.

Succient facts are as follows :-

3. Gajanan Mahadeo Tole hails from Yavatmal. Deceased Vijay Tole was his brother. Few days back deceased was missing therefore, on 11.05.2023, Gajanan Tole lodged missing report. Inquiry was ensued. Amid search, it was found that bicycle of deceased Vijay was parked near J.K. Wine Bar. Shortly, CCTV footage of the said Bar was analyzed. It was observed that co-accused Gaurav Umate and Amit Yadav were seen along-with deceased Vijay. That way the police got the lead and they interrogated with aforesaid persons wherein it was revealed that both above referred co-accused kidnapped deceased Vijay and he was taken within the vicinity of Lohara and at that time they as well applicant, Aditya Pali and two

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unknown friends of Dipak brutally beaten to Vijay causing his death. In this way, they murdered Vijay Dhole and thereafter removed cash as well as other golden ornaments from his person. Shortly, in order to disappear the evidence they threw the body of Vijay in one Safety tank. It is urged that in view of information given by Gaurav Umate and Amit Yadav, the informant, NPC Raju Gujar lodged report at Awadhutwadi police-station and thus on the *caudex* of said report, crime was registered and investigating machinery was set into motion. Amid investigation the role of applicant accused *come in fore* hence he was arrested, interrogated and taken into MCR on 14/05/2023 so on till date. Shortly the provisions of MCOC Act were invoked against all accused. In the backdrop, instant application for bail.

4. *Per se* accused he is innocent. He is falsely implicated in the crime. His custodial interrogation is not required. Entire set of allegations in FIR are false and concocted. As such further physical custody of present accused is not required for any sort of custodial interrogation. Nothing is to be recovered or discovered at the instance of the applicant. As such there remains nothing to be interrogated with him. Investigation in instant crime is already over and Charge-sheet is filed before the court. He is ready to cooperate in the trial. He is also ready to attend trial regularly. It is further urged that MCOC Act is not applicable to him. On all these counts he implored for conferring suitable bail and oblige.

5. *Refuting above stance* the prosecution raised stiff objection for freeing of the accused with their reply below Exh.36. According to them, offences leveled against the accused are serious in nature. Alleged offence are serious and contemplate heavy penalty for the same. If he is released, then there are likely chances that he may tamper the evidence. He is part of the conspiracy and with their oblique motive they all have assaulted the deceased. He has active involvement in the crime. Applicant/accused is a hardened criminal. If he is conferred with bail, he

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would pressurize the informant and witnesses. On the count of recurrence as well as gravity of crime, prosecution prayed for rejection of the application in *limine*.

6. Post receipt of the notice, the original informant caused appearance before this court and raised objection for freeing of the accused on bail, through his reply below Exh.31. He expressed anxiety of repentance of similar crime at the instance of the accused. Ultimately, He claimed for rejection of the bail application *in entirety*.

7. Heard ld. *Advocate S.M.Ali* for the applicant/accused and ld. *APP C.R.Dahe* for the prosecution at length.

8. Mused over say, copy of FIR, and other documents pertaining to investigation keenly.

9. Before adverting towards the submissions by the parties relating to the grant of bail it is epochal to look into the prime considerations of the bail vide section 439 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has, in catena of judgments, outlined the considerations on the basis of which discretion under Section 439 of the Code of Criminal Procedure has to be exercised while granting bail. A useful reference on the point can very well be made from magnificent verdict of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of ***Gurcharan Singh v. State (Delhi Administration), (1978) 1 SCC 118***. Certain important factors that are always considered while exercising discretion for conferring bail which *inter-alia* relates to prima-facie involvement of the accused, nature and gravity of the charge, severity of the punishment, and the character, position and standing of the accused. A gainful reference can also be made from the verdict of Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of ***State of U.P. v. Amarmani Tripathi, (2005) 8 SCC 21***. The above factors do not constitute an exhaustive list. The grant of bail

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requires the consideration of various factors which mainly depends upon the specific facts and circumstances of the case before the Court. There is no strait jacket formula which can ever be prescribed as to what the relevant factors could be.

10. In *Kalyan Sarkar V/s Rajesh Ranjan (AIR 2004 SC 1866)* it was held that: “ *The law in regard to grant or refusal of bail is very well settled. The Court granting bail should exercise its discretion in a judicious manner and not as a matter of course. Though at the stage of granting bail a detailed examination of evidence and elaborate documentation of the merit of the case need not be undertaken, there is a need to indicate in such orders reasons for prima facie concluding why bail was being granted particularly where the accused is charged of having committed a serious offence.*” Thus while deciding the question whether bail is to be granted or not detailed examination of the merits of the case is not to be considered. It is not at all desirable that the court should appreciate the evidence at the pre-trial stage.

11. In the light of preceding legal scenario present application seeking regular bail deserves due deliberation.

12. Offence punishable U/secs. 302, 201, 396, 364 of the Indian Penal Code, Section 3(2)(v) of The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities (Act) 1989 r/w sections 3(1)(i), 3(2) and 3(4) of the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act, 1999 (MCOC Act) are alleged against the accused. They are grievous in nature. The alleged offences contemplate punishment of death penalty or imprisonment for life.

13. At the outset, it is epochal to note here that in instant crime charge sheet in placed before this Court and the case is stand over for appearance/production of the accused wherein, instant application is moved for enlargement of the accused on suitable bail. *Having scanned charge-*

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sheet it is crystalline that investigation as regards present accused is concerned is already over. Thus, as of now nothing is left to be recovered or discovered at his instance.

14. Apparently offence vide sections 3(1)(i), 3(2) and 3(4) of MCOC Act are alleged against present accused.

15. The question of grant of regular bail to the applicant accused has to be determined on the facts and circumstances of the present case by exercise of judicial discretion in accordance with relevant statutory provisions and settled principles of law.

16. In view of section 21(5) of the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act, 1999- Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code, the accused shall not be granted bail if it is noticed by the Court that he was on bail in an offence under this Act, or under any other Act, on the date of the offence in question. It is not the contention of the Learned APP that applicant accused was on bail in any case registered under the provisions of MCOCA when this offence was committed. Thus, there is no bar of section 21(5) of the Maha. Control of Organized Crime Act, 1999, escalating for entertaining present application.

17. While conferring bail upon the accused, as per section 21(4) (b) of the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act, 1999 the Court has to be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accused is not guilty of such offence and that he is not likely to commit any offence while on bail. If these two conditions are fulfilled then only bail can be granted for offence under MCOCA.

18. **Firstly**, it has to be seen whether the applicant accused is a part of 'organized crime syndicate' as defined under section 2(1)(f) of MCOCA. Upon perusal of the crime register extract, it is visible that no

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offence is registered against the applicant accused prior to this offence, the Learned APP has not shown any similarity between any pending cases and the present offence. The Learned APP has not shown any *nexus* between any past crime and present case. The Learned APP has not shown any case by which it can be infer that the applicant was ever a member of organized crime syndicate or of any similar gang. Naturally, it cannot be *prima facie* inferred that applicant is a member of organized crime. A useful reference on the point can be made from the verdict delivered by Hon'ble Bombay High Court, Nagpur Bench, in the case of ***Akshay Rathod V/s The State (2023 ALL MR (Cri) 2254***).

19. ***Secondly***, it has to be seen whether the offence committed falls under the definition of 'organized crime' as defined under section 2(1) (e) of MCOCA. In the present case, it is urged that to cause dacoity all accused including applicant being together murdered deceased with several injuries to his person. Though Said offence can be held to be pecuniary gain as contemplated under 'organized crime' but when there is no ample incriminating material revealing that the applicant was present there as part of organized crime then question of looking into pecuniary benefits does not arise. Even there is no any reported crime registered against the applicant thereby suggesting that he is working for getting pecuniary benefits and as such as a part of crime syndicate. There are no *prima facie* elements thereby showing that the applicant is persistently involved in any of the continuing unlawful activity. Ultimately, it cannot be inferred that he is broadly involved into organized crime as in substance.

20. ***Thirdly***, it has to be seen whether the accused has committed continuing unlawful activity as defined under section 2(1)(d) of MCOCA. The Learned APP has not shown any *nexus* between any past offence and the present offence. The prosecution has not shown any similarity between the *modus operandi* of any offence and present offence. The accused is not convicted of any offence so far.

21. For the aforesaid reasoning, it is not visible *prima facie* that the applicant is a member of organized crime syndicate and he committed organized crime with the objective of gaining pecuniary benefit and he continued indulging in unlawful activities. Thus, *Prima facie* there are reasonable grounds for believing that the applicant accused is not guilty of such offence and that he is not likely to commit any offence while on bail.

22. Up-shot of factual scenario manifested above it is crystalline that *prima facie* the attribution of provisions of MCOCA against applicant accused are having little shades of doubt but only the provisions of IPC and other Acts are attracted. ***This being prima facie analysis only for the just decision of the bail application and whether such provisions of MCOCA would be tenable and proved or not is subject matter of the trial and it is not the stage for considering merits and demerits of the same.***

23. Now, averting towards remaining set and bunch of allegations, ***Having mused over FIR it*** is loud clear that except being member of dacoity no as such otherwise specific role is attributed towards accused/applicant. ***Virtually the informant is not an eyewitness of the incident.*** The brother of the deceased is also not an eye witness. He is not having first hand information as regards to the incident. He has not witnessed the alleged incident. With regards to other witnesses are concerned, none has stated that they have actually seen the accused applicant at the time of alleged incident. As regards statement of Digambar Adhao is concerned, is recorded on 10.09.2023 i.e. after four months of incident so also he has nowhere uttered that the deceased to whom he had seen beating was applicant only. His statement is vague. Except his statement there is no as such any direct evidence against the applicant thereby attributing accusations against him. The rest of the evidence is circumstantial in nature which deserves due consideration at the time of trial. Pertinent to note that there are no *prima facie*

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circumstances indicating that applicant accused is the same person who was friend of Dipak Umate and allegedly involved in the crime. No doubt, the injury which has led to the death of the deceased is certainly caused by the severe assault. The medical papers including postmortem report are throwing light upon it. In the backdrop, it is not apparently shown by the prosecution that it was applicant accused who assaulted and killed the deceased. Merely because the confessional statement of co-accused reflecting the name of the applicant is not the sole reason for ascribing such act against him. The confessional statement of the Co-accused is not much useful and labelled as incriminating against the applicant. Except such statement there is nothing as such direct evidence pinpointing role of the applicant in the instant crime. There is no direct evidence suggestive of the fact that the applicant accused has allegedly assaulted the deceased. The entire case against him rests upon circumstantial evidence which deserves weightage at the time of trial. In addition, it is also not the case of the prosecution that applicant is master mind behind the incident and entire crime plot. ***It would not be worthy to go into the merit and demerits of the case viz-a-viz case at this stage.***

24. *Prima facie* the role attributed towards applicant is little blurred. It seems that the weapon allegedly used in the crime are recovered at the instance of the co-accused. At this stage, it is not desirable to consider the merits and demerits of the case. In present crime ***though there is memorandum statement of the accused u/s 27 of the Evidence Act but merely on that count application can not be thwarted squarely.*** As such, there is no specific reason put forth by the prosecution to disown bail relief to the accused. Was there any conspiracy to kill the deceased and what is the efficacy of all circumstances is matter of trial. Thus, ***merely on the aforesaid aspects it is not desirable to junk instant bail application outrightly.*** As regards disappearing of evidence is concerned, there is no direct incriminating material against the applicant. More and above, adverting

towards charges under Atrocities Act are concerned, they are subject matter of trial. Though the offence is grave and serious and nature of evidence against instant accused appears to be circumstantial cum indirect, it would be just and proper to admit the applicant to bail, as a normal rule of criminal jurisprudence is bail and not the jail. What is principally required to be seen is as to whether the applicant's presence can be procured during the trial of the case or not. The applicant is permanent resident of *Distt. Yavatmal*. He is having his roots therein. ***There are no likely chances that he would flee from the justice.*** Having pore over entire material placed on record, considering the period the accused is behind the bar, and as such his further custodial interrogation seems not required, I am of the opinion that the accused applicant would be admitted to the bail.

25. To add, now as such nothing is remained to investigate anymore and ***the accused /applicant is incarcerated for more than last 01 year.*** The alleged weapon is already recovered. As of now nothing is left to be recovered or discovered at the instance of this accused. Presence of accused behind bar for any sort of custodial interrogation does not require for. The accused is ready to attend court regularly. As such, anxiety expressed by the prosecution as regards gravity of crime is concerned, it can be taken care of by putting stringent condition upon him. The elements of further investigation are not shown by the prosecution. More-so, ***it is not aptly shown by the prosecution that present accused by virtue of his status may tamper with evidence.*** In addition, as of now other co-accused are already released on the bail. There is no complaint against them. Thus, there are no potent objection to disown the applicant accused with reliefs of bail.

26. Utmost recently, the Hon'ble Supreme court observed in the case of ***Mohd Muslim V/S State (NCT Of Delhi) Cri. Appeal (S) Of 2023 (@ SLP (CRL.) No.S). 915 Of 2023) dated 28/03/23*** that

“ 23. *There is a further danger of the prisoner turning to crime, “as crime not only turns admirable, but the more professional the crime, more honour is paid to the criminal (also see Donald Clemmer’s ‘The Prison Community’ published in 1940). Incarceration has further deleterious effects – where the accused belongs to the weakest economic strata: immediate loss of livelihood, and in several cases, scattering of families as well as loss of family bonds and alienation from society. The courts therefore, have to be sensitive to these aspects (because in the event of an acquittal, the loss to the accused is irreparable), and ensure that trials – especially in cases, where special laws enact stringent provisions, are taken up and concluded speedily.”*

Precisely, the Hon'ble Supreme Court unfolded the evil impact of the long incarceration and enlarged the concern accused on bail by pressing upon the constitutional right of personal liberty and speedy trial of the accused persons. The Hon'ble court reasserted the observations made by the Court in the celebrated verdict of ***Abdul Rehman Antulay V/s R.S.Nayak ((1992) 1 SCC 225)***

27. Indeed, it is well settled legal proposition, while dealing with regular bail application, is that the object of the bail is to secure appearance of the accused at the time of his trial by reasonable amount of bail. Its object is neither punitive nor preventive. Application of similar object and scanning instant application under same object is holding significance. A useful reference on the point can be made from the law guided by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the Case of ***Sanjay Chandra V/s CBI reported in (2012 AIR(SC)830)***. In present case there are no special reasons put-forth before this court that may lead to raise exception to aforesaid object. In ***P. Chidambaram V/s Directorate Of Enforcement reported in (2020(13)SCC 791)*** the Hon'ble supreme Court repeatedly highlighted the proposition that Bail the rule and jail the exception. A gainful reference on the point can also be made from the

recent landmark verdict delivered by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case ***Satender Kumar Antil V/s CBI ((2022) 10 SCC 51)***

28. While enlightening on the aspect of bail in other acts the Hon'ble Court expounded in loud manner in the case of ***Uttamsingh V/s. State of Himachal Pradesh (2021 All MR (Cri) Journal 75)*** that the object of the bail is to secure the attendance of the accused in the trial and the proper test to be applied in the solution of the question whether bail should be granted or refused is whether it is probable that the party will appear to take his trial. In instant matter there is no such anxiety that the accused may flee from justice and remain absent for the trial. Certainly, the legal position tilts in favour of the applicant accused.

29. As of now, the Final report is filed in the instant crime. The case is stand over for further due deliberation cum trial. It will take time to commence and conclude the trial. Presence of accused behind bar for any sort of custodial interrogation does not require for. The accused is ready to attend court regularly. Resultantly, in the light of aforesaid scenario specially in view of legal verdicts elucidated above, I believe, the applicant accused deserves bail. All these factors too enlarges the scope to release the applicant on bail under Section 439 of the Code of Criminal Procedure as well.

30. Precisely alleged offences are grave and serious but, it would be just and proper to admit the applicant to bail, as a normal rule of criminal jurisprudence is *bail and not the jail*. There are no vital attributions against him, thus he deserves approval for bail.

31. *Culmination of all above facts*, foregoing peculiarities and factual scenario, speaks in clarion manner that the application needs to be allowed, however, by putting certain restrictions. In instant case when

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the investigation as regards instant accused is concern is over by all means, so also when he is committed to attend the I.O. & Court and follow terms and conditions, imposed if any, I believe there is no hurdle for bail. Ultimately, owing to preceding distinctive features, the application deserves approval, however, by putting certain conditions.

32. Conspectus of the circumstances leads to pass the following order for omega.

ORDER

1. Application is allowed.
2. The accused applicant– Deepak Uttam Puram, in connection with Crime No.682/2023 registered with Awadhutwadi Police Station, District Yavatmal, for the offence punishable U/secs. U/secs. 302, 201, 396, 364 of the Indian Penal Code, Section 3(2)(v) of The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities (Act) 1989 r/w sections 3(1)(i), 3(2) and 3(4) of the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act, 1999 (MCOC Act), be released on **P.B. of Rs. 1,00,000/- with One solvent surety in the like amount**, on the following terms and conditions;
Conditions
 - (i) The accused 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 him from disclosing such facts to the Court or to any police officer.
 - (ii) He shall attend each and every date before this court, failing which his bail shall be treated as cancelled without any further reference to this court.
 - (iii) The accused not to indulge in any illegal activities or in committing the offence of like nature.
 - (iv) He shall not foster any interaction with the Informant or with any of his relatives cum prosecution witnesses.

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- (v) He shall furnish his cell number and intended address of his residence to the concerned investigating officer and the court.
- (vi) His surety shall produce verified copy of his / her Aadhaar Card, Contact Details, Copy of Bank Passbook and other Address Proofs.
- (vii) He shall not enter into the territorial jurisdiction of entire Yavatmal District, (except for attending Court proceedings), for a period of one year from the date of his actual release.

Date : 08/11/2024.

(Amit Anant Laulkar)
Judge, Special Court,
Yavatmal.