



**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION**

**CRIMINAL APPEAL No. ___/2026
[Arising out of SLP (Crl.) No.1245/2026]**

MANOJ PILLEY

APPELLANT

VERSUS

THE STATE OF MADHYA PRADESH RESPONDENT

ORDER

1. Leave granted.
2. The High Court of Madhya Pradesh at Jabalpur, by the impugned judgment and order dated 05th December, 2025, has rejected the appellant's prayer for bail.
3. Appellant, figuring as an accused in FIR No.0457 of 2025 dated 18th June, 2025 registered at Police Station Ranjhi, District Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh under Sections 3 and 5 of Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 2021, was arrested on 15th October, 2025.
4. We have heard learned counsel for the

parties.

5. Chargesheet has been filed on 13th December, 2025 and charges have been framed on 12th February, 2026. Prosecution proposes to examine 09 witnesses to drive home the charges against the appellant.

6. Since the charges have recently been framed, the trial is likely to take some time to conclude.

7. Taking an overall view of the matter, we are of the considered opinion that further detention of the appellant pending trial is not necessary; and, since the appeal deserves acceptance, the appellant may be admitted to an order for grant of bail.

8. Accordingly, we set aside the impugned judgment and order.

9. Appellant shall be released on bail, subject to furnishing of bail bonds to the satisfaction of the trial court and subject to such other terms

and conditions as may be imposed by it.

10. Needless to observe, the appellant shall not, directly or indirectly, by making inducement, threat or promise, dissuade any person acquainted with the facts of the case from disclosing such facts to the court.

11. In the event there is any breach of the terms and conditions for grant of bail, the trial court shall be at liberty to cancel the bail of the appellant.

12. It is also ordered that the appellant shall diligently attend proceedings of the trial, unless exempted. If he abstains from attending the proceedings without justifiable cause, that could also be seen as breach of the conditions for grant of bail and the trial court will be free to pass appropriate orders.

13. We clarify that the observations made in this order and grant of bail will not be treated as findings on the merits of the case.

14. The appeal is, accordingly, allowed on the aforesaid terms.

15. Pending application(s), if any, shall stand disposed of.

.....J.
(DIPANKAR DATTA)

.....J.
(SATISH CHANDRA SHARMA)

**New Delhi;
March 16, 2026.**

ITEM NO.9

COURT NO.8

SECTION II-E

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Petition for Special Leave to Appeal (Crl.)
No.1245/2026

[Arising out of impugned final judgment and order dated 05-12-2025 in MCRC No.52453/2025 passed by the High Court of Madhya Pradesh Principal Seat at Jabalpur]

MANOJ PILLEY

Petitioner

VERSUS

THE STATE OF MADHYA PRADESH

Respondent

I.A. No.21263/2026-EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T.

Date : 16-03-2026 This matter was called on for hearing today.

CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE DIPANKAR DATTA
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SATISH CHANDRA SHARMA

For Petitioner(s) : Mr. Beno Bencigar, Adv.
Mr. Sumit Kumar, Adv.
Mr. Sidharth Mahajan, AOR
Mr. Vineet Kumar Tripathi, Adv.
Mr. Kumar Utkarsh, Adv.

For Respondent(s) : Ms. Mrinal Gopal Elker, AOR
Mr. Rajan K Chaurasia, Adv.
Mr. Amit Sharma, Adv.
Ms. Silpi S Swain, Adv.

**UPON hearing the counsel the Court made
the following
O R D E R**

1. Leave granted.
2. The appeal is allowed in terms of the signed order.
3. Pending application(s), if any, shall stand disposed of.

(MANIK KUMAR)
SENIOR PERSONAL ASSISTANT
(SUDHIR KUMAR SHARMA)
COURT MASTER (NSH)
(signed order is placed on the file)