

2023 SCC OnLine Guj 3127

In the High Court of Gujarat at Ahmedabad
(BEFORE HASMUKH D. SUTHAR, J.)

Parixit Dilipkumar Vyas

Versus

State of Gujarat

R/Criminal Misc. Application No. 10158 of 2023

Decided on September 21, 2023

Advocates who appeared in this case:

Learned Senior Advocate Mr. N.D. Nanavaty Assisted by Mr. Nirav C. Sanghavi(5950) for the Applicant(s) No. 1

Mr. LB Dabhi, APP for the Respondent(s) No. 1

The Order of the Court was delivered by

HASMUKH D. SUTHAR, J.:— Rule. Learned APP waives service of notice of rule on behalf of respondent-State.

2. By way of the present application under Section 438 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973, the applicant accused has prayed to release him on anticipatory bail in the event of his arrest in connection with the FIR being I-C.R. No. 11218015230021 of 2023 with Ranavav Police Station, Porbandar, for the offences punishable under Sections 406, 409, 120(b), 465, 467, 471, 477(a) of the Penal Code, 1860 and Sections 3 and 7 of the Essential Commodities Act.

3. Learned Senior Advocate Mr. N.D. Nanavaty assisted by learned advocate Nirav C. Sanghavi appearing for the applicant submits that the nature of allegations are such for which custodial interrogation at this stage is not necessary. Besides, the applicant is available during the course of investigation and will not flee from justice. Learned advocate for the applicant has submitted that the present applicant is falsely implicated in the offence. He is nothing to do in the offence. Learned Senior advocate has submitted that the present applicant was a transport contractor for a period from 27.09.2021 to 22.03.2023. It is submitted that his duty was only to supply the goods from FCI godown to Ranavav godown except this no work is entrusted to the present applicant. During the said transportation of the goods, no any shortfall is noticed. The allegation levelled against the present applicant is that he breached the condition of the contract and when he submitted the contract, he committed irregularity as he has employed the unauthorized persons. As per the allegation in the complaint, notice for blacklisting came to be issued and contract of the present applicant

was terminated and bills raised qua transportation are withheld and security deposit had been forfeited. In view of above, he has requested to exercise the discretion in favour of the applicant. It is further submitted that nothing is required to be recovered and discovered from the accused. Learned advocate for the applicant has submitted that he is ready and willing to join the investigation. In view of the above, the applicant may be granted anticipatory bail.

4. Learned advocate for the applicant, on instructions, states that the applicant is ready and willing to abide by all the conditions including imposition of conditions with regard to powers of Investigating Agency to file an application before the competent Court for his remand. He would further submit that upon filing of such application by the Investigating Agency, the right of applicant accused to oppose such application on merits may be kept open.

5. Learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing on behalf of the respondent - State has opposed grant of anticipatory bail looking to the nature and gravity of the offence. Learned APP has stated that the present applicant is involved in the present offence and large-scale conspiracy hatched. It is submitted that Essential Commodities like wheat, rice, sugar, grams, Tuvar pulse and groundnut oil to the tune of Rs. 99,77,551/- are siphoned and in this regard, after the investigation, offence is registered. In this offence, there appears to be involvement of go-down keeper, Supervisor and transporter. It is alleged that they have forged the gate passes, stock register and siphoned the aforesaid amount and the applicant is facing charge of conspiracy. It is submitted that present applicant is involved in the offence and at his instance, scam being done. It is submitted that as the applicant was involved and during the transportation, shortfall is noticed, though, there was a prohibition to sublet the contract though he has engaged the private person through sub-contractor, the applicant has taken undue benefit and hatched the conspiracy. Hence, custodial interrogation is required. Hence, he requested to dismiss the present application.

6. Having heard the learned advocate for the parties and perusing the investigation papers, it is equally incumbent upon the Court to exercise its discretion judiciously, cautiously and strictly in compliance with the basic principles laid down in a plethora of decisions of the Hon'ble Apex Court on the point. It is well settled that, among other circumstances, the factors to be borne in mind while considering an application for bail are (i) whether there is any prima facie or reasonable ground to believe that the accused had committed the offence; (ii) nature and gravity of the accusation; (iii) severity of the punishment in the event of conviction; (iv) danger of the accused absconding or fleeing, if released on bail; (v) character, behaviour, means, position and standing of the accused; (vi) likelihood of the

offence being repeated; (vii) reasonable apprehension of the witnesses being influenced; and (viii) danger, of course, of justice being thwarted by grant of bail. Though at the stage of granting bail an elaborate examination of evidence and detailed reasons touching the merit of the case, which may prejudice the accused, should be avoided. I have considered the following aspects:

- (1) Present applicant is a transport contractor. Considering the fact that no any shortfall is noticed to the jurisdiction from FCI godown to Ranavav, Porbandar for fair price shop price.
- (2) applicant was not involved in the door step delivery.
- (3) Bill raised by the applicant for contract is withheld and security deposit had been forfeited and his contract is also terminated.
- (4) This Court has taken care of custodial interrogation of applicant as right to seek remand of applicant is also kept open.

7. Considering the aforesaid aspects and the law laid down by the Hon'ble Apex Court in the case of *Siddharam Satlingappa Mhetre v. State of Maharashtra*, (2011) 1 SCC 694, wherein the Hon'ble Apex Court reiterated the law laid down by the Constitution Bench in the case of *Shri Gurubaksh Singh Sibbia*, (1980) 2 SCC 665 and also the decision in the case of *Sushila Aggarwal v. State (NCT of Delhi)*, (2020) 5 SCC 1, I am inclined to allow the present application.

8. In the result, the present application is allowed by directing that in the event of applicant herein being arrested in connection with the FIR being I-C.R. No. 11218015230021 of 2023 with Ranavav Police Station, Porbandar, the applicant shall be released on bail on furnishing a personal bond of Rs. 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only) with one surety of like amount on the following conditions that he:

- (a) shall cooperate with the investigation and make himself available for interrogation whenever required;
- (b) shall remain present at the concerned Police Station on 30/09/2023 between 11.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. and the IO shall ensure that no unnecessary harassment or inconvenience is caused to the applicant;
- (c) shall not directly or indirectly make any inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the fact of the case so as to dissuade him from disclosing such facts to the court or to any police officer;
- (d) shall not obstruct or hamper the police investigation and not to play mischief with the evidence collected or yet to be collected by the police;
- (e) shall at the time of execution of bond, furnish the address to the investigating officer and the court concerned and shall not change

his residence till the final disposal of the case till further orders;

(f) shall not leave India without the permission of the Court and if having passport shall deposit the same before the Trial Court within a week; and

(g) it would be open to the Investigating Officer to file an application for remand if he considers it proper and just and the learned Magistrate would decide it on merits;

9. Despite this order, it would be open for the Investigating Agency to apply to the competent Magistrate, for police remand of the applicant. The applicant shall remain present before the learned Magistrate on the first date of hearing of such application and on all subsequent occasions, as may be directed by the learned Magistrate. This would be sufficient to treat the accused in the judicial custody for the purpose of entertaining application of the prosecution for police remand. It is clarified that the applicant, even if, remanded to the police custody, upon completion of such period of police remand, shall be set free immediately, subject to other conditions of this anticipatory bail order.

10. At the trial, the Trial Court shall not be influenced by the *prima facie* observations made by this Court while enlarging the applicant on bail.

11. Rule is made absolute to the aforesaid extent. Application is disposed of accordingly. Direct service is permitted.

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