



2025:CGHC:18029

NAFR

HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR

Order reserved on 17-04-2025

Order delivered on 22-04-2025

MCRC No. 2496 of 2025

1 - Taman Singh Sonwani S/o Late Kalyan Singh Sonwani Aged About 64  
Years R/o- Village Sabada, Post- Madeli, District- Dhamtari (C.G.)  
Petitioner(s)

versus

1 - Central Bureau Of Investigation CBI, Anti Corruption Branch Raipur,  
District- Raipur (C.G.)  
Respondent(s)

**(Cause title is taken from the Case Information System)**

For Applicant	: Shri Fouzia Mirza, Sr. Advocate with Shri Ali Afjal Mirza, Advocate
For Respondent/CBI	: Shri B. Gopa Kumar, Advocate through VC along with Shri Himanshu Pandey

C A V Order

Per Bibhu Datta Guru, J.

1. The applicant has preferred this **first bail application** under Section 483 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023<sup>1</sup> for grant of bail as he has been arrested in connection with Crime No.RC1242024A0004 registered at Police Station CBI, Anti Corruption Branch, Raipur, District Raipur (C.G) for the offence punishable under Sections 120B &

<sup>1</sup> henceforth ‘the BNSS’

420 of the Indian Penal Code<sup>2</sup> and Sections 7, 7(A) & 12 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018)<sup>3</sup>.

2. In respect of certain illegalities and irregularities committed by the authorities of the Chhattisgarh Public Service Commission<sup>4</sup> in the recruitment process, two separate FIRs bearing Crime No.05/2024 of EOW/ACB, Chhattisgarh, Raipur and Crime No. 28/2024 of Arjunda PS, Dist. Balod, Chhattisgarh were registered and subsequently, the matter was transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation<sup>5</sup>. In the case, there were seven accused persons. A-1 Taman Singh Sonwani (the applicant herein), the then Chairman of the PSC; A-2 Shravan Kumar Goyal, Director of Bajrang Power and Ispat Ltd.; A-3 Shashank Goyal (son of A-2); A-4 Ms. Bhumika Katiyar (Daughter-in-law of A-2); A-5 Nitesh Sonwani & A-6 Sahil Sonwani (both nephews of A-1) and A-7 Lalit Ganvir, Deputy Controller (Examination) of the PSC. For the sake of convenience, the applicant herein are being referred as A-1.
3. Case of the prosecution, in brief, as far as the present applicant Taman Singh Sonwani (A-1) is concerned is that during the period 2020-2022 the PSC conducted the State Service Examination. At that time, A-1 was the Chairman of the PSC. The allegations is that he along with other officials of the PSC have gave undue advantage to their respective family members. During the course of investigation, it revealed that A-2 gave an amount of Rs. 45 Lacs under the head of Corporate Social

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2 henceforth 'the IPC'

3 henceforth 'the PC Act'

4 henceforth 'the PSC'

5 henceforth 'the CBI'

Responsibility<sup>6</sup> to the Non-Governmental Organization<sup>7</sup> namely Gramin Vikas Samiti<sup>8</sup> to which, the wife of A-1 is the Chairperson. In the said process, the question papers of the PSC examination was leaked to the A-2, who in turn forwarded the same to A-3 & A-4. On the basis of the same, A-3 & A-4 were succeeded in the examination and selected for the post of Deputy Collector. The further allegations of the Investigating Agency is that the brother of the A-1 is the member of GVS. Even the question papers were also provided to A-5 & A-6 who are nephews of A-1, who have got selected in the said examination for the post of Deputy Collector and Deputy Superintendent of Police, respectively. Thus, A-1 committed the offence.

4. (a) Learned senior counsel appearing for the applicant (A-1) would submit that the applicant is innocent person and has been falsely implicated. She would submit that A-1 is not involved in the setting of question papers and even he has no role to play in the examination process. She would submit that the printer has not been made as accused who printed the question papers and sent to the PSC office through Vipin Das and Mahesh Das, who are not the employees of the said AKD Printers. She would submit that the GVS formed by the father of A-1 in the year 2002 itself and as such it cannot be said that only to fetch the money, the family members of the A-1 are operating the NGO/GVS. According to the learned counsel, Mahesh Das categorically stated that when he appeared in the house of the controller of the PSC namely Arti

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6 henceforth 'the CSR'

7 henceforth 'NGO'

8 henceforth 'GVS'

Washnik, one person was sitting there and subsequently, he identified him as A-1, despite the fact that TIP (Test Identification Parade) was conducted. The said witness categorically stated that Arti Washnik asked him not to make any entry in the visitor register and even the security guard also not asked him to make any entry. She would submit that the statement of the security guard has also not been recorded. As far as the statement of brother of A-1 is concerned, he retracted from his statement. She would submit that A-1 is a retired Govt. servant and is suffering from various ailments. A-1 has been in detention since 18/11/2024 and has been he may be released on bail.

(b) Learned counsel would submit that the financial assistance rendered by the company of A-2 under the head of CSR to GVS, as per the statute, has been connected with the examination conducted by the PSC. Learned counsel would next submit that from the statement of Arun Kumar Dwivedi who has printed question papers of the preliminary and final examinations at Kolkata (West Bengal) it is crystal clear that they sent the question papers to the PSC directly and handed over to Ms Arti Washnik, Controller of the Examination, PSC, who has not been made as accused. She would submit that in the present case, the charge-sheet has already been filed on 16/01/2025 and the conclusion of the trial will take a long time for its conclusion as there were several witnesses. According to the learned counsel, the applicants are fully cooperating the investigating agency.

5. (a) Learned counsel appearing for the CBI, *per contra*, would oppose the bail application. He would submit that the brother of A-1 namely;

Anil Kumar Sonwani, who is the Secretary of GVS, has categorically stated that the question papers brought for A-5 & A-6 (nephews of this witness and A-1), were provided by A-7, under the instruction of A-1, to A-2 for onward sharing of the same to A-3 & A-4. The said witness categorically accepted receipt of payment of Rs.20.00 lacs and Rs.25.00 lacs on 02/03/2022 & 18/05/2022, respectively under the CSR head from Barjang Ispat Limited.

(b) Learned counsel would submit that A-1 is the kingpin who perpetrated for the commission of this grave offence which has pinched the sentiments of lakhs of aspirants. He would submit that A-1 cunningly replaced the word 'Family' in place of 'Relative' in the year 2021 itself with the modifying definition of family he ensured deletion of the word 'Nephew' and thereafter, he actively participated in the examination process/selection process. As a result of which, A-5 & A-6, who are his nephews have been selected to the post of Deputy Collector and Deputy Superintendent of Police, respectively. He would submit that A-1, being the Chairman of the PSC, is the responsible for the crime in question because the officers of the PSC have acted as per the directions of the A-1. In fact, A-7 who is the Deputy Controller of the PSC as also the member of the GVS has provided the question paper to A-2 on the instructions of A-1 for onward sharing to A-3 & A-4. According to the learned counsel, A-1 completely through away all norms, rules and regulations for his own benefit. The solved question papers promoting the corruption of the highest decree. He would submit that corruption corrodes public service like cancer. From all these facts,

it is crystal clear that the entire episode is under the active participation of A-1. As far as the retraction of the brother of A-1 is concerned, the said application has already been considered and rejected by the concerned Trial Court.

(c) So far as, the submission of the applicant that the controller of the examination, printer, question papers delivery personnel, etc., have not been made as accused in the case is concerned, learned counsel would submit that all the persons/ authorities who are allegedly involved in the crime in question, are under the radar of the Investigating Agency and they would take appropriate steps against the culprits in accordance with law, as the charge-sheet itself shows that the investigation regarding some of the persons who are allegedly involved in the subject crime is still going on. He would submit that the bail application bearing no. MCRC No. 1307/2025 of A-2 & MCRC No. 1631/2025 of A-3 & A-4 have been considered and rejected by this Court. Thus, the applicant (A-1) is not entitle for bail and he would pray the bail application may be rejected.

6. I have heard learned counsel appearing for the parties at length and also gone through the copy of charge sheet, which has been placed before this Court.
7. From bare perusal of the charge sheet and the statement of brother of A-1 namely; Anil Kumar Sonwani, Secretary of GVS, it is quite vivid that the wife, brother and nephew (A-5) of A-1 (the then Chairman of the PSC), were the Chairperson, Secretary and Member, respectively of the

NGO i.e. GVS. In the name of GVS, obtained financial approval from the CSR and BoD of Bajrang Ispat and thereafter the same has been siphoned to the family members of A-1 prior to preliminary and final examination of PSC. For the said financial help, under the instruction of A-1, A-7 leaked the question papers to A-2 for onward providing the same to the A-3 & A-4 who are son and daughter-in-law of A-2, who got selected on the post of Deputy Collectors.

8. At the cost of repetition, it is reiterated that a person who indulges in facilitating leakage of question paper relating to competitive examinations, plays with the career and future of lacs of young aspirants, who are '*burning the midnight oil*' to prepare for competitive exams. Such an act is more heinous than an offence of murder because by killing a person, only one family gets affected but by ruining the career of lacs of aspirants whole society is adversely impacted. Therefore, the alleged charges levelled against the accused persons including the present applicant can by no stretch of imagination be termed as ordinary charges. The action of the accused person is clear example of '*fence eating the crop*'.
9. Having considered the entire facts and circumstances of the case, particularly considering the seriousness of allegations levelled against the applicant and also considering the statement of brother of A-1 namely; Anil Kumar Sonwani, who categorically stated that the question paper leaked for A-5 & A-6, who are nephews of this witness and A-1, and the said question papers also provided to A-2 by A-7, under the instruction of A-1, for onward supply to A-3 & A-4, who are son and

daughter-in-law of A-2, respectively and on the basis of the same, A-5, A-3 & A-4 got selected for the post of Deputy Collector and A-6 got selected on the post of Deputy Superintendent of Police and also particularly considering the fact that the bail applications of A-2, A-3 & A-4 have already been rejected, and further considering the fact that according to CBI, the investigation is still going on in respect of other persons who are allegedly involved in the crime in question, *prima facie*, this Court is of the considered opinion that present is not a fit case to grant bail to the applicant (A-1).

10. As a sequel, the present bail application is rejected.

Sd/-

**(Bibhu Datta Guru)**  
**Judge**