

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA AT ERNAKULAM  
PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE P.V.KUNHIKRISHNAN

TUESDAY, THE 05TH DAY OF MAY 2020 / 15TH VAISAKHA, 1942

BA TMP.NO.212 OF 2020

(Crime No.32/2020 of Excise Range Office, Thirupuram,  
Thiruvananthapuram District)

**Petitioners/Accused:**

1. Pramod, S/o Appukuttan, Aged 40 years,  
Kadannurvila Puthenveetil,  
Athiyanoor Village, Neyyattinkara, Thiruvananthapuram
2. Sujith,s/o Maniyan,Aged 26 years,  
M.S Bhavan,Kottukal, Neyyattinkara Village,  
Thiruvananthapuram

By Adv.Latheesh Sebastian

**Respondents/State & Complainant:**

1. State of Kerala, Represented by  
Public Prosecutor, High Court of Kerala, Ernakulam - 682031.
2. Excise Inspector,  
Neyyattinkara Excise Range Office, Thiruvananthapuram- 695121

BY P.P.SRI.AJITH MURALI & SANTHOSH PETER(SR)

THIS BAIL APPLICATION HAVING BEEN FINALLY HEARD ON 05.05.2020,  
THE COURT ON THE SAME DAY PASSED THE FOLLOWING:

**P.V.KUNHIKRISHNAN, J**

-----  
B.A.TMP No.212 of 2020  
-----

Dated this the 5<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2020

**O R D E R**

This Bail Application filed under Section 439 of Criminal Procedure Code was heard through Video Conference.

2. Petitioners are the accused in Crime No.32 of 2020 of Thirupuram Excise Range, Thirupuram registered alleging offences punishable under Section 8(1) and (2) read with Section 67B of Abkari Act. Petitioners were arrested on 8.4.2020 and they are in custody.

3.The prosecution case is that the 1<sup>st</sup> petitioner was found in possession of 1.5 liters of arrack in a scooter

and 2<sup>nd</sup> petitioner was found in possession of 2.25 liters of arrack in a car.

4. The counsel for the petitioners submitted that they are custody from 8.4.2020 and the quantity of arrack alleged to be seized is small.

5.The learned Public Prosecutor, even though opposed the bail application, submitted that if this court grant bail, stringent conditions may be imposed.

6.After hearing both sides, and considering the small quantity of the contraband seized from the petitioners and the date of arrest of the petitioners, I think this bail application can be allowed on stringent conditions.

7. Moreover, considering the need to follow social distancing norms inside prisons so as to avert the spread of the novel Corona Virus Pandemic, the Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Re: Contagion of COVID-19 Virus**

**In Prisons case (Suo Motu Writ Petition(C) No.1 of 2020)** and a Full Bench of this Court in **W.P(C)No.9400 of 2020** issued various salutary directions for minimizing the number of inmates inside prisons.

8. Moreover, it is a well accepted principle that the bail is the rule and the jail is the exception. The Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Chidambaram. P v Directorate of Enforcement (2019 (16) SCALE 870)**, after considering all the earlier judgments, observed that, the basic jurisprudence relating to bail remains the same inasmuch as the grant of bail is the rule and refusal is the exception so as to ensure that the accused has the opportunity of securing fair trial.

9. Considering the dictum laid down in the above decision and considering the facts and circumstances of this case, this Bail Application is allowed with the

following directions:

1. The Superintendent of Jail concerned where the petitioners are incarcerated is directed to release the petitioners on bail on executing a self bond ensuring that they will appear before the Court concerned as and when required if they are not in detention in any other case. It is further directed that the Superintendent of Jail should get the bail bond from the petitioners as stipulated in Section 441 Cr.P.C.

2. The Superintendent of Jail concerned shall also get the phone number and the address at which the petitioners would be residing after their release.

3. The Superintendent of Jail concerned, immediately after release of the petitioners will

forthwith forward the bail bond obtained from the petitioners to the jurisdictional Court.

4. The petitioners immediately after release from the prison, report before the Station House Officer of the Jurisdictional Police Station and shall furnish their phone number and the place where they are going to reside. The Station House Officer concerned shall keep a vigil on the whereabouts of the petitioners and shall ensure that the petitioners do not violate the terms of the undertaking.

5. The petitioners shall appear before the Investigating Officer as and when required. The petitioners shall co-operate with the investigation and shall not threaten or attempt to influence the witnesses or tamper with the

evidence.

6. The petitioners shall within one week from the commencement of the functioning of the jurisdictional court, if the court is not functioning at present, execute a bond for Rs.50,000/- (Rupees Fifty Thousand only) with two solvent sureties each for the like sum to the satisfaction of the jurisdictional Court.

7. The petitioners shall strictly abide by the various guidelines issued by the State Government and Central Government with respect to keeping of social distancing and other directions in the wake of declared lock-down.

8. If any of the above conditions are violated by the petitioners, the jurisdictional Court can cancel the bail in accordance with

law, even though the bail is granted by this  
Court.

**P.V.KUNHIKRISHNAN, JUDGE**

ska