

Criminal Law Judgments

A Monthly Wrap | **June 2026** 



Title and Case details	Case Brief
Supreme Court: Sovereignty of nation prevails over personal liberty in drug trafficking cases; bail under NDPS Act must meet strict conditions <i>State of Punjab vs. Balraj Singh @ Billa</i> (MANU/SC/0609/2026; 2026 INSC 618)	The Supreme Court has set aside the grant of regular bail to an accused in a heroin trafficking case, holding that sovereignty of the nation must prevail over personal liberty, especially in offences involving drug supply that impact public health and the national economy. A bench observed that drug trafficking amounts to a serious threat against the nation, and in such cases, individual liberty cannot override national interest. The Court also held that the High Court failed to properly apply the mandatory twin conditions under Section 37 of the NDPS Act, which govern the grant of bail in cases involving commercial quantities of narcotic substances.
Supreme Court: Sex selection continues due to preference for male child; strict enforcement of PCPNDT Act needed <i>Dr. Ramesh vs. State of Maharashtra & Anr.,</i> (MANU/SC/0629/2026; 2026 INSC 635)	The Supreme Court has emphasised the need for strict enforcement of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 (PCPNDT). The Court made the observation while dismissing a doctor's challenge to criminal proceedings for alleged violations of the Act. It noted that deep-rooted patriarchal preferences for male children continue to fuel sex-selection practices, leaving no room for complacency in the fight against female foeticide. The Court further observed that such welfare legislation remains necessary until there is a fundamental change in societal attitudes towards women.

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Delhi High Court : Anticipatory Bail plea is an exceptional remedy particularly in serious economic offence cases <i>Aswath Reddy N. vs. State (NCT of Delhi) and Ors.</i> (MANU/DE/4412/2026; 2026 :DHC:5091)	The High Court of Delhi addressed the anticipatory bail concerning allegations of economic offences under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita. The core issue was whether accused misappropriated funds intended for an Escrow Account, as alleged. The court, referencing precedents like <i>Nikita Jagganath Shetty v. State of Maharashtra</i>, emphasized that anticipatory bail is an exceptional remedy, particularly in economic offences. Given the discrepancies in documents and the gravity of allegations, the court dismissed the application, denying anticipatory bail.
Delhi High Court upheld the requirement of a seven-day notice before coercive action, emphasized principles of natural justice, dismissed the petitions, and directed the respondents to cooperate with the investigation <i>Directorate General of GST Intelligence vs. Girish Sachdeva</i> (MANU/DE/4401/2026 2026:DHC:5079)	The High Court of Delhi addressed the issue of whether the Directorate General of GST Intelligence should provide a seven-day notice before taking coercive action against Girish Sachdeva and others, who were involved in alleged GST fraud. The court considered the legal context of anticipatory bail and the requirement for prior notice, referencing precedents like <i>Union of India v. Padam Narain Aggarwal</i> and <i>Sushila Aggarwal v. State (NCT of Delhi)</i>. The court found that the anticipatory bail applications were premature as no arrest was imminent, and upheld the lower court's order for a seven-day notice, emphasizing the principles of natural justice. The petitions were dismissed, affirming the need for the respondents to join the investigation.
Delhi High Court : Circumstantial evidence to be considered for proving guilt of accused <i>Ajay Singh vs. The State</i> (MANU/DE/4418/2026; 2026:DHC:5090-DB)	The High Court of Delhi addressed the appeal against conviction and life sentence of accused for committing murder under Section 302/34 IPC. The core issue was whether the circumstantial evidence, including the "last seen" theory and motive of an alleged illicit relationship, was sufficient to uphold their conviction. The court found that the prosecution established a complete chain of evidence, including the appellants' unexplained presence at the crime scene and their subsequent absconding, which pointed to their guilt. The defense's arguments, including alibi and property dispute, were deemed unconvincing. The court dismissed the appeals, affirming the conviction and sentence, and directed the appellants to surrender to serve their remaining sentence.

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Bombay High Court: Long time in jail alone is not enough for bail if accused has serious criminal history <i>Swapnil s/o Chandrakant Kashikar vs. State of Maharashtra,</i> (MANU/MH/4814/2026; 2026:BHC-NAG:7555)	The Bombay High Court has held that the right to personal liberty under Article 21 is not absolute and that bail cannot be granted solely on the ground of prolonged incarceration when the accused has serious criminal antecedents. Refusing bail to a murder accused who had been in custody since January 2024, the Court noted that he was involved in several serious offences, including murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping, and dacoity. The Court observed that while personal liberty is an important constitutional right, it must be balanced against the interests of society, and criminal antecedents remain a relevant factor while deciding bail applications.
Bombay High Court: Delay in reporting sexual offences in traditional society cannot alone justify quashing of case <i>Nandakumar Sukumar Panicker vs. State of Maharashtra</i> (MANU/MH/4795/2026; 2026:BHC-AS:23432-DB)	The Bombay High Court has observed that in a traditional society like India, families often face genuine difficulty in immediately reporting sexual offences due to social stigma and other pressures. The Court made the observation while refusing to quash a sexual assault case filed against a Mumbai resident accused of groping his domestic worker. It held that delay in lodging complaints in such cases cannot by itself be a reason to dismiss the case unless it is shown that the delay was caused by malice or a false motive. The Court further noted that each case must be examined in its own facts and circumstances, especially in offences involving sexual violence, where hesitation in reporting is common
Bombay High Court: ICC cannot hear POSH complaint over incident in shared public transport <i>Siddhesh Pradeep Satpute vs. State Bank of India & Ors.</i> (MANU/MH/4981/2026; 2026:BHC-OS:13187-DB)	The Bombay High Court has held that an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) cannot entertain a complaint under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) when the alleged incident occurs in a shared public transport vehicle that is not provided by the employer. Quashing proceedings against a banker accused of inappropriate conduct towards a woman while travelling in a shared autorickshaw to work in Mumbai, a division bench of Justice Suman Shyam and Justice Firdosh Pooniwalla observed that the POSH Act extends to incidents occurring at the workplace or during travel in employer-provided transportation, but does not cover incidents in public transport unconnected to the employer. The Court therefore held that the ICC lacked jurisdiction to inquire into the complaint under the POSH Act

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Madras High Court: Consensual romantic relationship with minor is not defence in POCSO cases <i>Arumugam vs. The Deputy Superintendent of Police & Anr.</i> (MANU/TN/1630/2026; 2026:MHC:2112)	The Madras High Court has held that an accused cannot avoid liability under the POCSO Act by claiming that he was in a consensual romantic relationship with a minor. The Court observed that the Act does not recognise the consent of a person below 18 years of age and provides no exception for romantic relationships involving minors. Rejecting the argument of a 19-year-old accused who claimed that the relationship was consensual, the Court emphasised that the primary objective of the POCSO Act is to protect children from sexual offences and that a minor's consent has no legal validity under the Act.
Chhattisgarh High Court: Rape accused can be held responsible for victim's suicide if trauma from assault led to victim's death <i>Vijay Kumar vs. State of Chhattisgarh</i> (MANU/CG/1175/2026; 2026:CGHC:23801)	The Chhattisgarh High Court has held that a person convicted of rape can also be held guilty of abetment of suicide if the victim takes her own life as a result of the trauma, humiliation, and emotional distress caused by the sexual assault. The Court observed that rape can severely affect a woman's dignity, self-esteem, and ability to face society, and such consequences may be sufficient to drive a victim to suicide. In the case before it, the Court found sufficient material to conclude that the victim's suicide was directly linked to the rape committed on her, thereby attracting the offence of abetment of suicide under the law.
J&K and Ladakh High Court: Rape conviction cannot be sustained when medical evidence does not prove penetration <i>Showkat Ahmad Seer vs. UT of J&K Through Police Station Qalamabad</i> (MANU/JK/0490/2026; CrlA(S) No. 02/2024)	The High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has held that a rape conviction cannot be sustained where the prosecution fails to prove penetration beyond reasonable doubt and the medical evidence does not support the allegation. Altering the conviction from rape to attempt to rape, the Court observed that while the evidence established a determined attempt to commit the offence, the essential ingredient of penetration was not proved. It further held that the testimony of the prosecutrix, though important, cannot be treated as unquestionable proof in every case and must be carefully examined along with the medical and other evidence on record.

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Uttarakhand High Court : Quashing of proceedings in personal disputes should be considered if it serves justice <i>X vs. State of Uttarakhand and Ors.</i> (MANU/UC/0224/2026; 2026:UHC:4467)	The High Court of Uttarakhand addressed the issue of whether to quash criminal proceedings against X, a minor, accused of throwing acid on the complainant's son, also a minor, during a chemistry class. The court considered the amicable settlement reached between the parties' guardians, despite the State's opposition, and referenced precedents like Gian Singh v. State of Punjab, which allow quashing proceedings in personal disputes if it serves justice. Given the minors' ages and the genuine compromise, the court quashed the proceedings to prevent abuse of process and promote justice.
Uttarakhand High Court : Trial arising from two FIRs relating to the same incident should be compounded <i>Ravi Kumar and Ors. vs. State of Uttarakhand and Ors.</i> (MANU/UC/0223/2026; 2026: UHC:4489)	The court considered the compounding applications supported by affidavits from all involved parties, who had settled their disputes. Citing the Supreme Court's guidelines in State of M.P. Vs. Laxmi Narayan, the court found no purpose in continuing the trial as the parties had reconciled. Consequently, the court quashed the proceedings and directed the parties to plant 200 trees in their village, with oversight from local officials.
Allahabad High Court: Magistrates and police may be held personally liable if preventive detention powers are misused under BNSS <i>Chander Pal Singh & Anr. vs. State of Uttar Pradesh & Ors., Dated: 08.06.202</i> (MANU/UP/1254/2026; PETITION No.-214 of 2026)	The Allahabad High Court has issued guidelines to prevent misuse of preventive detention powers under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Code of Criminal Procedure for alleged breach of peace. The Court directed that persons detained under such provisions should ordinarily be released on a personal bond without insisting on sureties. It further fixed that the bond amount should not exceed ₹20,000. The Court also cautioned that magistrates and police officers may face personal liability, including compensation, if these safeguards are violated or detention powers are abused.

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Madras High Court: Dying declaration can be relied upon even with 100% burn injuries if victim was conscious and mentally fit <i>M. Vigneshwaran vs. The State, represented by the Inspector of Police, Sivakasi Town Police Station, Virudhunagar District</i> (MANU/TN/1554/2026; 2026:MHC:1796)	The Madras High Court has observed that a dying declaration remains reliable even where the deceased suffered 100% burn injuries, provided the victim was conscious and in a fit state of mind when making the statement. The Court clarified that the extent of burns is not the decisive factor. What matters is whether there is credible evidence showing that the deceased was mentally capable of understanding and communicating the facts. A dying declaration may be rejected only if the declarant was unconscious or otherwise incapable of making the statement.
Himachal Pradesh HC: Approaching DGP instead of officer-in-charge of police station does not satisfy section 154 CrPC <i>Sanjeev Kumar Sharma vs. State of Himachal Pradesh & Ors.</i> (MANU/HP/1355/2026; 2026:HHC:21234)	The Himachal Pradesh High Court has held that a complainant must first provide information to the officer-in-charge of the concerned police station before approaching a Magistrate under Section 156(3) CrPC. The Court clarified that merely approaching the Director General of Police (DGP) does not satisfy the requirement under Section 154(1) CrPC. Accordingly, it quashed an FIR and a Magistrate's order after finding that the mandatory procedure had not been followed.
Manipur High Court ruled that setting a three-week limit for a detenu to make representations under the NSA violated the constitutional right to effectively challenge preventive detention under Article 22(5) <i>Yambem Manichandra Singh vs. The State of Manipur and Ors.</i> (MANU/MN/0040/2026; W.P.(CRL.) No. 10 of 2026)	The High Court of Manipur addressed the legality of a preventive detention order where the core issue was whether the detaining authority's imposition of a three-week time limit for the detenu to make representations violated Article 22(5) of the Indian Constitution. The court found that such a time limit infringed upon the detenu's constitutional rights, as established in precedents like Prem Lata Sharma and Mutum Ranjan Meitei. Consequently, the court set aside the detention order and directed the release of the detenu.

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Meghalaya High Court : Intent and act must concur to constitute a crime <i>Louis Dohtdong vs. The State of Meghalaya and Ors. (09.06.2026 -Meghalaya)</i> (MANU/MG/0145/2026; 2026:MLHC:552)	The High Court of Meghalaya addressed the appeal of conviction under Section 304 Part II/34 IPC for the death of victim following an altercation. The court found that the evidence, including eyewitness testimonies and the Test Identification Parade, did not conclusively prove beyond reasonable doubt that the appellants inflicted the fatal blows. Citing the principle that intent and act must concur to constitute a crime, the court extended the benefit of doubt to the appellants. Consequently, the conviction and sentence were set aside, and the appellants were ordered to be released.
Manipur High Court : Rely on ossification test and birth certificate as evidence in determining the accused's age <i>National Investigation Agency, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India vs. Tuishimla</i> (MANU/MN/0041/2026; CRIMINAL APPEAL No. 27 of 2023)	The High Court of Manipur addressed the appeal by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) against an order by the Special Judge (NIA), which found child in conflict with law (CCL) based on an ossification test. The court noted that the NIA court erroneously applied outdated rules and failed to consider the birth certificate, which was marked as evidence. The court set aside the previous orders and remanded the case for reconsideration, instructing the NIA court to evaluate all evidence, including the birth certificate, and determine juvenile's status as a CCL.
Punjab and Haryana High Court : Government sanction under Section 197 Cr.P.C. necessary for prosecuting public servants <i>Joga Singh and Ors. vs. Manmohan Singh</i> (MANU/PH/3533/2026; 2026:PHHC:086831)	The High Court of Punjab and Haryana explained object behind Section 197 Cr.P.C was to afford reasonable protection to public servants against frivolous, vexatious or ill motivated prosecution and such officers are able to discharge their duties independently and fearlessly. Furthermore, the court noted no Court shall take cognizance of an offence alleged to have been committed by the public servant, not removable from the office except with the sanction of the Government, while acting or purporting to act in discharge of official duties, unless prior sanction of the Government is obtained. the absence of necessary government sanction under Section 197 Cr.P.C. for prosecuting public servants. Consequently, the court quashed the impugned order and the complaint against the appellants.