

nizance has wrongly been taken) or such minor offences where punishment, even if ultimately awarded, may not be death sentence, or life imprisonment or imprisonment exceeding 7 (seven) years or thereafter, in a private complaint relating to such offences, the trial court should, in normal circumstances, on the date the accused appears in execution of the process issued against him, should accept the bail bond of the accused along with the surety bond and order his being enlarged on bail.

3. On the question of grant of bail to accused I may also observe that there is another category of offences where normally bail should be granted and refusal should be an exception. I am talking of offences under Section 498A I.P.C. and Section 4 of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. My experience has shown me that invariably in almost all cases relating to the alleged commission of the aforesaid offences, whether lodged on police report or through a private complaint, the accused are denied bail. Just because the police report of the private complaint carries with it the label of Section 498A I.P.C. or Section 4 of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, does not mean that the bail should be denied to the accused. In relation to the aforesaid offences only if a Court finds that there are very serious allegations against the accused; his involvement and implicity in the commission of offences being directly linked with the facts alleged and either it is a very blatant and serious allegation of immediate and proximate demand of dowry, or if the offence relates to Section 498A I.P.C., there are serious allegations supported with clear proof, that indeed physical injury has been inflicted upon the alleged victim, only in these cases, rejection of the bail may be resorted to, and its grant should be an exception. Of course, in those cases where it is manifestly clear, on a plain reading of the police report or

the contents of the private complaint that neither any grievous injury has been inflicted upon the alleged victim nor is there any other clear proof of the alleged victim having physically suffered and that there is also no serious allegation supported with positive proof of dowry having been demanded in the immediate proximity of the marriage or thereabout, the bail should be granted. It happens quite often that in ordinary matrimonial disputes or where there is some discordant note in a matrimonial relationship, the women as an alleged victim sets in motion the machinery of law by invoking Section 498A I.P.C. or Section 4 of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. The Courts should, therefore, be circumspect and careful, while considering the question of grant or refusal of bail, to find out whether there are indeed genuine and serious allegations and only then, if it does find that such allegations exist and are clearly made out, should bail be refused to the accused persons. Similarly, while considering the request of the accused persons for bail in such cases, the Court should also find out whether a particular accused had any role to play in the transaction or in the occurrence and whether, in the background of the facts and circumstances, there are any probabilities of his having played such a role, regard being had to the relationship of such an accused with the main parties, such as the husband, or the in-laws of the alleged victim. While considering all such aspects with relation to the question whether to refuse bail or to grant bail, the courts, therefore, should be very careful in also assessing with reference to the contents of the police report or the complaint, the nature of the allegation made, the supporting proof and documents etc. to find out whether the prosecution, the *defacto* complainant or the informant are trying to unnecessarily harass the accused and jeopardize their interest and if in fact, there are grounds to believe that an of-