

Fraud-accused former UCO Bank Chairman moves bail citing ill health

Sanjay Sureka, the main promoter of CSPL, who was arrested by the ED in December 2024, also moved for bail on Wednesday

On Wednesday, former Chairman and Managing Director of UCO Bank, Subodh Kumar Goel, was produced before Chief Judge Sukumar Ray at the City Sessions Court. Goel's counsel moved for bail, citing the 74-year-old's deteriorating health, including Parkinson's disease and a rare hereditary condition.

"My client is not only sick but also infirm," his counsel stated. "He has been suffering from SCA-12 (a rare neurodegenerative disorder characterised by progressive hand tremors, mild to moderate gait ataxia, and other neurological and neuropsychiatric symptoms) since 2018. The disease is progressive in nature."

Describing Goel's current state, the counsel added, "A scan has been done. He is dependent on assistance for daily living. An MRI of the brain shows decreased brain volume and impaired blood flow. He is wheelchair-bound, reliant on family members, has a history of falls, has Parkinson's, diabetes, and is disoriented to time and place."

The counsel further argued that during the five days of Enforcement Directorate (ED) custody, Goel developed oral fungal infections and his condition has worsened. "Due to his declining health, bail should be granted under any circumstances," he stated.

"I have responded to the summons and fully cooperated. My statement has been recorded. I submitted 25 documents on May 7. On May 12, I informed authorities that I was undergoing treatment and needed time to recover. What changed suddenly? My family has fully cooperated. I need medical treatment and can remain in Kolkata," the counsel stated on Goel's behalf.

However, the ED opposed the bail plea. "I arrested him on May 16 and took him to a government hospital in Delhi," said the ED representative. "Reports from AIIMS and RML hospitals state that he is slow but able to walk, follows verbal commands, and can continue oral and anti-Parkinson medication."

Refuting claims of medical neglect, the ED submitted, "On May 17, the Salt Lake Subdivisional Hospital reported the patient was clinically stable. On May 18, after custody, no abnormalities were detected, including in his heart, though a cardiology consultation was advised. On May 19, the doctor noted that while the patient claimed to have Parkinson's, he was unable to provide proper medical history. Over the last four days, he managed basic tasks—eating, using the washroom, changing clothes—by himself. Only from May 19 did he claim he couldn't walk and needed a wheelchair. Since he allegedly suffers from an incurable condition, further hospital treatment is not necessary, and the ground of infirmity does not arise."

Goel was arrested from his Delhi residence on May 16 in connection with a massive Rs 6,210 crore bank loan fraud case. The investigation is being conducted under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and involves M/s Concast Steel & Power Limited (CSPL) and others.

Meanwhile, Sanjay Sureka, the main promoter of CSPL, who was arrested by the ED in December 2024, also moved for bail on Wednesday. A chargesheet against him was filed before the Kolkata court in February this year. The ED had attached assets worth Rs 510 crore belonging to Sureka and CSPL through two orders issued under the PMLA.

Sureka's counsel argued that after 156 days in custody and with no imminent commencement of trial, bail should be granted. The court has adjourned his bail plea till June 2