# Legal Case Summary: Ajay Malik vs State of Uttarakhand (2025)

Case Title: Ajay Malik vs State of Uttarakhand

Citation: 2025 INSC 128

Court: Supreme Court of India

Date of Judgment: 29 January 2025

Bench: Justice Abhay S. Oka, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan

## Facts of the Case:

- The appellant, Ajay Malik, was convicted under Section 302 IPC for the murder of one Mahesh Chand.  
- The incident occurred in 2005; Ajay was alleged to have fired two shots, one hitting the victim fatally.  
- Prosecution relied heavily on eyewitness testimony from Mahesh’s brother and another witness.  
- The Trial Court convicted the appellant, and the High Court upheld the conviction.  
- The present appeal challenges the findings on grounds of unreliable eyewitness accounts and procedural lapses.

## Procedural History:

- Trial Court convicted Ajay Malik for murder (Section 302 IPC) and sentenced him to life imprisonment.  
- The High Court of Uttarakhand dismissed the appeal and upheld the conviction.  
- Ajay Malik appealed to the Supreme Court on the grounds of inconsistencies and unreliable evidence.

## Issues before the Court:

1. Whether the prosecution proved the guilt of the appellant beyond reasonable doubt.  
2. Whether the eyewitness testimonies were credible and consistent.  
3. Whether the appellant’s conviction was sustainable in the absence of corroborative evidence.

## Judgment:

- The Supreme Court found material inconsistencies in eyewitness accounts.  
- Delay in recording witness statements weakened the prosecution case.  
- The medical evidence and ballistic reports were not consistent with the alleged sequence of events.  
- The Court noted the possibility of false implication due to enmity between the parties.  
- Held that conviction solely based on doubtful eyewitness testimony was unsafe.

## Key Legal Findings:

1. Delay in witness examination diminished credibility.  
2. Contradictions in FIR and witness statements.  
3. Absence of proper forensic corroboration (bullet not matched conclusively).  
4. Failure of prosecution to rule out motive for false implication.  
5. The benefit of doubt must go to the accused.

## Final Decision:

✅ Appeal allowed  
✅ Conviction under Section 302 IPC set aside  
✅ Appellant acquitted of all charges  
✅ Appellant to be released forthwith if not required in any other case  
✅ No order as to costs