

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION
ANTICIPATORY BAIL APPLICATION NO.2915 OF 2025

Abhishek Katiyar s/o.
Late Krishna Avtar Katiyar
V/s.

...Applicant

The Union of India and Anr.

...Respondents.

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Dr. Sujay Kantawala a/w. Adv. Adithya R. Iyer, Adv. Aishwarya Kantawala, Adv. Jeffry Caleb, & Adv. Ayushi Jha, for the Applicant.
Mr. Amit Munde, Spl.P.P. a/w. Adv. Jai Vohra for Respondent No.1/UOI- C.B.I.
Mr. V.N. Sagare, APP for the Respondent/State.

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CORAM : N.R. BORKAR, J.
DATE : 18.11.2025.

P.C. :

1. This is an application for anticipatory bail.
2. The applicant is apprehending his arrest in Crime No.RC2182025A0018 of 2025 registered at CBI, AC-III, New Delhi for the offences punishable under Sections 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and Sections 8,9 and 10 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.
3. The applicant is working as Superintendent in Central Goods and Service Tax Office, Mumbai.
4. The first informant is working as Intelligence Officer with the Directorate General of GST Intelligence, Durgapur. The nature of

work of the first informant is to collect the intelligence associated with evasion of GST. According to the prosecution, while examining a file of offshore online betting websites, the first informant discovered that three websites namely, "www.lordexch.com", "www.lorsexch.com" and "www.lotusbook247.com" were using a common payment gateway linked to Artimbe IT Pvt. Ltd. and M/s Appnit Technologies Pvt. Ltd. As there was an issue of GST evasion, he issued a notice to Appnit Technologies seeking KYC and other relevant documents.

5. It is alleged that on 14th August 2025, co-accused Priyanka, who is an Advocate, made a telephonic call to the first informant and offered to settle the issue. It is alleged that the first informant refused her proposal.

6. It is alleged that on next day, i.e. on 15th August 2025, the applicant contacted the first informant on phone and introduced himself as a GST Officer posted in Mumbai, and made enquiry about the action initiated by him against M/s. Appnit Technologies. It is alleged that after two days, i.e. on 17th August 2025, the applicant again contacted the first informant on phone and offered ₹1 crore on behalf of M/s. Appnit Technologies Pvt. Ltd. to settle the ongoing inquiry. It is alleged that the said offer was repeated on 22nd August 2025 and 26th August 2025 and thus the first informant requested the CBI (ACB) to take action. It is alleged that the applicant met the first informant at Hotel Taj, New Town, Kokata and offered bribe amount of ₹20 lakhs to settle the enquiry against M/s.Appnit Technologies and at that time the co-accused

Priyanka was also there. It is alleged that the first informant was asked to come to Delhi to receive the bribe amount. Thus, the trap was laid and the co-accused who came to deliver the bribe amount to the first informant were apprehended.

7. I have heard the learned counsel appearing for the applicant and the learned Special P.P. for the respondent/CBI-UOI.

8. Learned counsel for the applicant submits that the applicant has been falsely implicated in the present matter due to professional rivalry. It is submitted that the applicant's presence in Kolkata during the relevant period was purely coincidental, as he was participating in the "Musclemania Event - India Naturals Tour,". It is submitted that the applicant has appeared before the Investigating Officer on multiple occasions and has rendered full cooperation. It is further submitted that the voice samples of the present applicant has already been recorded and thus there is no need of custodial interrogation.

9. On the other hand, the learned Special P.P. for the respondent/CBI-UOI has drawn my attention to the transcript of conversation between the applicant and the first informant recorded during verification. It is submitted that the fact that the applicant had offered the bribe to the first informant to settle the enquiry against M/s. Appnit Technologies is evident from the said conversation. It is submitted that the applicant is not disputing the fact that he met the first informant at Hotel Taj. Learned Special P.P. submits that after the applicant came to know about the trap,

he destroyed his mobile phone. It is submitted that thus, the custodial interrogation of the present applicant is necessary. It is thus submitted that the present application be rejected.

10. I have perused the papers of investigation and more particularly, the transcript of the alleged conversation between the applicant and the first informant recorded during verification. *Prima faice*, it corroborates the prosecution case. The allegations against the applicant, who is government servant, are of very serious nature of offering the bribe to another government servant. The applicant has not disputed the fact that he destroyed his mobile phone. Considering the overall facts and circumstances, I am not inclined to release the applicant on anticipatory bail. Hence, the Application is rejected.

11. Learned counsel for the applicant submits that to enable the applicant to approach the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the interim order passed by this Court dated 17th October 2025 be continued for a period of three weeks. Learned Special P.P. submits that considering the nature of offence, the same may not be continued. However, considering the fact that the applicant is not likely to abscond the interim order shall remain in force till 9th December 2025.

[N.R.BORKAR, J.]