

THE HONOURABLE SMT. JUSTICE K. SUJANA

CRIMINAL PETITION No.11793 of 2025

ORDER:

Seeking the Court to enlarge the petitioner, who arrayed as Accused Officer No.1 in Crime No.18/ACB-KNR/2025 of ACB Karimnagar Police Station, Karimnagar District, on bail, the present petition is filed.

2 . The brief facts of the case are that, on 03.07.2025, the *de-facto* complainant lodged a report before the Deputy Superintendent of Police, ACB, Karimnagar, stating that he had purchased agricultural land measuring Ac.0-10 guntas in the name of his father. His father submitted an application to the Tahsildar requesting a survey of the said land. In pursuit of this, the complainant met the Tahsildar, who informed him that he had instructed the Mandal Surveyor (Accused Officer No.1) to carry out the survey. After repeated requests, the Mandal Surveyor visited the site on 11.06.2025 and conducted the survey, but failed to provide a copy of the survey panchanama. When the complainant requested the panchanama, the Mandal Surveyor allegedly demanded a bribe of Rs.20,000/- to release the document. Based on this complaint, the ACB, Karimnagar, initiated an enquiry and

recorded the statement of the complainant in the first mediator report. On 04.07.2025, an audio conversation took place between the complainant and the Mandal Surveyor, during which the complainant expressed his inability to pay the full bribe amount. Accused Officer No.1 then agreed to furnish the report for a reduced bribe of Rs.10,000/-. Acting on these instructions, the complainant paid Rs.10,000 to Accused Officer No.2, who subsequently transferred the amount via PhonePe. Based on this evidence, a case was registered as Crime No.18/ACB-KNR/2025 for offences punishable under Sections 7(a) and 12 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

3. Heard Sri C. Hari Preeth, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner as well as Sri T. Bala Mohan Reddy, learned Standing Counsel for ACB, Special Public Prosecutor appearing on behalf of the respondent-State.

4. Learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that the petitioner is innocent and has been falsely implicated in the present case and the allegation against the petitioner is that he demanded and accepted an amount of Rs.10,000 from the complainant through the PhonePe account of Accused No.2. However, as on the date of the report, i.e., 03.07.2025, there was no official favour pending from the petitioner, who is Accused No.1

and that the petitioner had already completed the land survey and handed over the file to the concerned Section Officer, and that he has been falsely implicated in the offence. He further submitted that the petitioner was arrested on 13.08.2025 and has remained in custody since then and that a substantial portion of the investigation has already been completed, and there is no likelihood of the petitioner tampering with evidence or influencing witnesses. Therefore, prayed the Court to grant bail to the petitioner by allowing this criminal petition.

5. On the other hand, learned Standing Counsel for the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) opposed the submissions made by the counsel for the petitioner, contending that, as on the date of the alleged demand, the relevant file was still pending with Accused Officer No.1. He further submitted that there exists a clear audio recording in which Accused Officer No.1 is heard demanding Rs.20,000/- as a bribe for issuing the survey panchanama conducted by him. He further contended that the allegations against the petitioner are grave in nature and that the investigation is still ongoing, releasing the petitioner on bail at this stage may lead to tampering with evidence or intimidation of witnesses and prayed the Court to dismiss the criminal petition.

6. In the light of the submissions made by both the learned counsel and upon perusal of the material available on record, it is evident that the trial Court had earlier dismissed the bail application on the ground that the investigation was still pending and that the statements of material witnesses, including the complainant under Section 183 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), were yet to be recorded. However, it is now noted that the statements under Section 183 of BNSS have been duly recorded and all the witnesses have been examined. Further, the petitioner has been in judicial custody since 13.08.2025. Considering the overall facts and circumstances of the case, including the nature of the allegations, the stage of investigation, and the duration of incarceration, this Court finds it appropriate to grant bail to the petitioner, subject to the following conditions:

- i. The petitioner shall execute a personal bond for a sum of Rs.25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand only), with two sureties for a like sum each to the satisfaction of the learned Special Judge for SPE & ACB cases at Karimnagar.
- ii. The petitioner shall appear before the concerned SHO at 11:00 a.m., on every Monday for a period of eight (8) week or till filing of charge sheet whichever is earlier,

for the purpose of investigation, and thereafter, as and when required.

- iii. The petitioner shall abide by the conditions stipulated in Section 437(3) of Cr.P.C. (presently, Section 480(3) of the BNSS).

7. Accordingly, the Criminal petition is allowed.

Miscellaneous applications, if any pending, shall stand closed.

K. SUJANA, J

Date: 18.09.2025
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