



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE OF BOMBAY
BENCH AT AURANGABAD**

ANTICIPATORY BAIL APPLICATION NO. 77 OF 2026

Deepak @ Dipak s/o Achyutrao Raut,
Age; 32 years, Occ; Private Surveyor,
R/o; Vitthalnagar, Vitthal Chowk,
CIDCO, Chh. Sambhajinagar,
Tq. & Dist. Chh. Sambhajinagar.

...APPLICANT
(Orig. Accused No. 3)

VERSUS

The State of Maharashtra,
Through The Police Inspector,/
Investigating Officer,
Shivajinagar Police Station,
Tq. & Dist. Beed.

...RESPONDENT

...
Advocate for the Applicant : Mr. Sanjeev B. Deshpande i/b Mr. Kiran
D. Jadhav a/w Mr. Vikram L. Bhangе
Public Prosecutor for Respondent/State : Mr. A.B. Girase
...

CORAM : MEHROZ K. PATHAN, J.

Date of Reserving : 17.04.2026.

Date of Pronouncement : 21.04.2026.

PER COURT :

1. Heard learned counsel for the applicant and the learned
Public Prosecutor for the respondent-State.

2. The applicant has approached this Court apprehending

his arrest in connection with Crime No. 544 of 2025, dated 19.11.2025, registered at Shivajinagar Police Station Beed, Taluka and District Beed. The FIR alleges offences punishable under Sections 7 and 13 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, Sections 14 and 34 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, and Sections 318(4), 316(5), 338, 336(3), 340(2), 198, 199, 316(2), 61, and 351(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.

3. The case of the prosecution is that the complainant is serving as Deputy Collector, Land Acquisition, Beed. Pursuant to a letter issued by the District Collector, Beed dated 18.11.2025, and based on the findings of an Enquiry Committee, it was revealed that serious irregularities and large-scale fraud had been committed in land acquisition compensation proceedings, particularly, those pertaining to National Highways projects. As per the National Highways Act, 1956, the Land Acquisition Officer determines the compensation amount for acquired land, and in case of dissatisfaction, the landholder may seek enhancement by approaching the Arbitrator, i.e., the District Collector.

4. It is the case of the prosecution that during the relevant period, especially between 01.03.2025 and 17.04.2025, a systematic manipulation of arbitration proceedings was carried out. After the

transfer of the then District Collector on 22.04.2025 and prior to the assumption of charge by the new Collector on 24.04.2025, several arbitration orders were fraudulently prepared by showing old dates and by misusing the name, designation, and signature of the former Collector. These fabricated orders were processed through the Land Acquisition Co-ordination Branch, which is responsible for maintaining the records, issuing notices, and forwarding arbitration matters. It is alleged that applications for enhanced compensation were falsely shown as processed, notices were purportedly issued to concerned parties including the National High Way Authority of India (for short the "NHAI"), and orders granting enhanced compensation were passed without actual hearings or presence of the parties. The preliminary enquiry dated 01.03.2025 revealed serious irregularities in as many as 154 cases, including issuance of orders without bearing outward numbers, and by using backdated documents and passing the same without conducting any hearings. Notably, on 17.04.2025, around 50 orders were issued on a single day without the presence of concerned parties, which raises grave suspicion.

5. It was further revealed that the original compensation amount of Rs. 68.58 Crores was fraudulently enhanced to Rs. 310.20 Crores, out of which approximately Rs. 73 Crores was disbursed. The enquiry concluded reveals that fake arbitration awards were

generated and used to siphon off the Government funds, thereby, misleading the Competent Authority and causing wrongful loss to the State exchequer. During the course of enquiry, 10 persons, including the present applicant, were identified as being primarily responsible for the said fraudulent activities. It is alleged that the accused persons, in furtherance of their common intention, prepared forged documents, facilitated illegal disbursement of compensation amounts, and received commissions from the misappropriated funds, thereby embezzling huge amount of public money.

6. In view of the aforesaid serious irregularities, the magnitude of the fraud, and the findings of the Enquiry Committee, the present Crime bearing No. 544 of 2025 dated 19.11.2025 came to be registered at Shivajinagar Police Station, Beed, against the accused persons, including the present applicant.

7. It is submitted that during the period from 01.03.2025 to 17.04.2025, there were 154 forged and fake awards were issued in the name of the District Collector and the same were received by the concerned Land Acquisition Officer, which did not have any Outward Numbers. The amount original land acquisition award was Rs. 68.58 Crores, however, the same was enhanced by Rs.310.02 Crores, out of which including interest approximately Rs. 73 Crores, has been

distributed to the concerned persons as many as 50 awards were issued on 17.04.2025 on a single date and that too without any mentioning of the names of the parties being present on the date of the proceedings, in the Roznama.

8. The learned Senior Counsel appearing for the applicant submits that the applicant is falsely implicated in the present crime. The only role attributed to the applicant is that he was continuously on telephonic conversation with the accused persons. The applicant was a contractual employee with the Company, engaged by the NHAI as outsourcing Company. That due to some dispute arising between the applicant and the Advocates appearing for the Claimants of the Advocates Bar Associations, Beed, the regional office of the NHAI, Aurangabad and the Arbitrator had directed to take action against the present applicant, wherein, a complaint was made only as regards the personal behaviour of the applicant and not of any other ground related with the crime in question. The applicant was, therefore, discharged from his duties as contractual employee from 13.10.2025 by the employer '**M/S Safe India Services Pvt. Ltd.**', The applicant was working as private surveyor in NHAI, India and has nothing to do with the Arbitrator's award. The other co-accused against whom there are serious allegations of manipulating the arbitral awards are already released on anticipatory bail vide order

dated 08.04.2026 passed in Anticipatory Bail Application Nos. 2243 of 2025, 2256 of 2025, 2302 of 2025 and 61 of 2026 by this Court. There are no criminal antecedents against the applicant and he is ready to abide any conditions that may be imposed by this Court, hence the applicant may also be released on anticipatory bail by applying principle of parity. The applicant was never posted in Arbitrator's office and has no role regarding enhancement of the compensation or preparing of the bogus awards. The arbitration awards which are alleged to be forged bear the signatures of the Arbitrator. There is no allegation in the FIR nor any statement is recorded during the course of the investigation of the Arbitrator stating that the award passed by him are all bogus and does not bear his signatures and mere conversation of the applicant with another accused Trimbak Pingle would not amount to commission of offence. The applicant who was merely working as private surveyor in the '**M/S Safe India Services Pvt. Ltd.**', engaged by National Highways Authority of India, had no role to play in the aforesaid alleged crime. The applicant is falsely implicated in the aforesaid crime for motives with an intention to save the real culprits who must have committed the aforesaid crime. The applicant may, therefore, be protected.

9. As against this, the learned Public Prosecutor Mr. Girase strongly opposed the present Bail Application on the ground that the

applicant is involved in the serious offences of preparation of bogus awards and the payment of enhanced compensation to the farmers. The Land Acquisition Officer has determined the amount of compensation as about Rs. 68.58 Crores, however, the bogus awards were prepared and the amount was increased as Rs. 310.20 Crores. The role of the present applicant can be revealed from the transcript of the conversation between the applicant and the main accused Trimbak Pingle who was arrested in the present crime. The applicant has made to believe the main accused Trimbak Pingle that the orders of enhancement of compensation were already passed and as such the main accused Trimbak Pingle had released amount in favour of one of the farmer namely 'Wade' even without orders on record. The transcript dated 08.08.2025 shows that the applicant had assured the main accused Trimbak Pingle to release the amount in favour of one of the farmer Wade without there being any award on that date being passed for release of the enhanced compensation amount. The transcript of the telephonic conversation of the applicant with the main accused Trimbak Pingle would, therefore, suggest the role of the present applicant in the commission of the said crime. Thus, the custodial interrogation of the applicant is necessary to complete the investigation from all angles. The magnitude of the present crime is that the offences are economic in nature. The Hon'ble Supreme Court, time and again reiterated that the economic offences

constitute a Class apart and has a tendency to ruin the economy of the country. The Bail Application, is therefore, devoid of substance and the merits and is thus, liable to be rejected. The learned Public Prosecutor further submits that if the applicant is released on bail, there is every likelihood that the applicant may tamper with the evidence of prosecution.

10. I have gone through the investigation papers, made available by the learned Public Prosecutor Mr. Girase. It shows that the preliminary enquiry conducted by the complainant indicates that in all 154 cases were decided between 01.03.2025 and 17.04.2025 and the awards were issued in the earlier dates without assigning Outward Numbers. It is further alleged that the original compensation amount of Rs. 68.58 Crores was enhanced to Rs. 310.20 Crores, on the basis of such backdated awards, resulting in wrongful loss to the Government exchequer. The Enquiry Committee has identified 10 persons, including the present applicant, as being primarily responsible.

11. The careful scrutiny of the entire investigation papers would reveal that the only circumstance relied upon by the prosecution to implicate the applicant in the present crime, is the transcript of the telephonic conversation between the applicant and

the arrested accused Trimbak Pingle, who was working with the Collector Office. The applicant was contractual employee working as Private Surveyor with the NHAI. In the normal course of the professional duty, the applicant is expected to work in tandem with the official of the Collector office, as there were several cases pending with the Arbitrator, which were filed for enhancement of the amount of the awards as granted by the Land Acquisition Officer. The perusal of the record further shows that the cases for enhancement of the award were filed before the Arbitrator and were heard by the Arbitrator on certain dates. However, the allegation is about 154 cases being decided between 01.03.2025 to 17.04.2025 without even there being any Outward Numbers on the said awards and the original compensation awarded by the L.A.O. i.e. Rs. 68.58 Crores was enhanced to Rs. 310.20 Crores on the basis of said back dated awards.

12. The record shows that the Award bears the signatures of the Arbitrator and the awards are purportedly passed in between 01.03.2025 to 17.04.2025. The record further shows that applications were filed by the land owners through Advocates before the learned Arbitrator for enhancement of the compensation against the awards passed by the Land Acquisition Officer. The Roznama of the cases shows that some of the applications were heard by the

Arbitrator. The Investigating Officer has not recorded statement of the Arbitrator till date as to whether the signature appearing on Award is bogus. The Advocates appearing on behalf of the claimants in the said applications are already protected by the orders of this Court dated 08.04.2026 passed in Anticipatory Bail Application No. 2243 of 2025, 2256 of 2025, 2302 of 2025 and 61 of 2026. Thus, applying the principle of parity, the applicant is also entitled for protection.

13. The applicant is terminated from his service vide discontinuation letter dated 14.10.2025, issued by the Company namely 'Blue Spring Enterprises Limited', who was engaged on short term contract basis. Thus, the apprehension of the learned Public Prosecutor that the applicant may tamper with the evidence of the prosecution, is also ruled out at this stage. However, these are the observations prima-facie in nature and are made only with the purpose to decide the present application and the same shall not be influenced by the trial Court.

14. The applicant is not having any criminal antecedents and he is ready to abide any conditions that may be imposed by this Court. Hence, I am inclined to exercise powers under Section 482 of the B.N.S.S., 2023 to protect the applicant, however, upon certain conditions. Hence the following order :

ORDER

1. The Anticipatory Bail Application is allowed.
2. In the event of arrest of the Applicant - Deepak @ Dipak s/o Achyutrao Raut in connection with Crime No. 544 of 2025, dated 19.11.2025, registered at Shivajinagar Police Station Beed, Taluka and District Beed for the offences punishable under Sections 7 and 13 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, Sections 14 and 34 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, and Sections 318(4), 316(5), 338, 336(3), 340(2), 198, 199, 316(2), 61, and 351(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, he be released on bail on furnishing P.R. bond of Rs.50,000/- (Rupees Fifty Thousands) with two solvent sureties in the like amount, on the following conditions :
 - (i) The Applicant shall attend Shivajinagar Police Station, Taluka and District Beed on 22nd, 23rd, 29th, 30th April of 2026 and 4th and 5th of May, 2026 in between 11:00 am. to 01:00 pm. and co-operate with the Investigating Officer and present himself thereafter as and when called by the Investigating Officer till filing of the charge-sheet.
 - (ii) The applicant shall also cooperate with the investigation.
 - (iii) The applicant shall not directly or indirectly, make any inducement, threat or promise to any prosecution witness and shall not tamper with the prosecution evidence in any manner.
 - (iv) The applicant shall furnish copies of his Adhar Card and PAN Card to the Investigating

Officer along with the addresses and mobile numbers of two nearest relatives.

3. Needless to state that a single violation of any of the aforesaid conditions shall entitle the prosecution to seek cancellation of the anticipatory bail granted herein.

4. The observations made herein are prima facie and shall not influence the trial Court, while deciding the case on its own merits.

5. The Anticipatory Bail Application stands disposed of accordingly.

(MEHROZ K. PATHAN, J.)