HC-KAR

NC: 2026:KHC:61319
CRL.P No. 16282 of 2026

CNR: KAHC010719272026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA AT BENGALURU

DATED THIS THE 4TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2026

BEFORE

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE S VISHWAJITH SHETTY

CRIMINAL PETITION NO. 16282 OF 2026

BETWEEN:

1. MR. U.M. MOHANKUMAR
S/O LATE U.L. MARISIDDEGOWDA
AGED ABOUT 60 YEARS
R/AT MOGAVI NILAYA
DEVAMMA DEVARA ROAD
JAYANAGARA 2ND STAGE
CHIKKAHONNENAHALLI
HASSAN DISTRICT - 573 118.

2. MR. B.S. PUTTASHETTI
S/O B.R. SAGANASHETTI
AGED ABOUT 69 YEARS
VASUDEVA NILAYA, 2ND STAGE
VIJAYANAGARA EXTENSION, BELUR ROAD.
HASSAN DISTRICT - 573 118.

...PETITIONERS

(BY SRI CHETHAN S.P, ADV., FOR
SRI NISHANTH A.V, ADV.)

Digitally signed by NANDINI D
Location: HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA

AND:

STATE OF KARNATAKA
BY HASSAN POLICE STATION
HASSAN DISTRICT, REPRESENTED BY
STATE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
HIGH COURT BUILDING
DR. AMBEDKAR VEEDHI
BENGALURU - 560 001.

...RESPONDENT

(BY SRI RAHUL RAI K, HCGP)

THIS CRL.P IS FILED U/S 438 CR.PC (FILED U/S 482 BNNS) PRAYING TO ALLOW THIS CRIMINAL PETITION AND SET ASIDE THE ORDER DATED 30.09.2026 PASSED IN CRL.MISC.NO.924/2026 BY

THE PRINCIPAL DISTRICT & SESSIONS JUDGE, HASSAN AND DIRECT THE RESPONDENT-POLICE TO RELEASE THE PETITIONERS ON BAIL IN THE EVENT OF THEIR ARREST IN CRIME NO.157/2019 REGISTERED BY HASSAN CITY POLICE STATION (NOW INVESTIGATED BY THE CID) FOR THE OFFENCES PUNISHABLE UNDER SECTIONS 465, 468 AND 420 OF THE IPC, SECTION 192(a)(1)(2)(3) OF THE KARNATAKA LAND REVENUE ACT, 1964 AND SECTION 4(1)(2)(3) AND (5) OF THE KARNATAKA LAND GRABBING PROHIBITION ACT, 2007.

THIS PETITION, COMING ON FOR ORDERS, THIS DAY, ORDER WAS MADE THEREIN AS UNDER:

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE S VISHWAJITH SHETTY

ORAL ORDER

Petitioners, who are apprehending arrest in Crime No.157/2019 registered by Hassan City Police Station, Hassan, for the offences punishable under Section 465, 468 and 420 of Indian Penal Code, 1860, Section 192(a)(1)(2)(3) of Karnataka Land Revenue Act, 1964 and Section 4(1)(2)(3) and (5) of Karnataka Land Grabbing Prohibition Act, 2007 are before this Court in this petition filed under Section 482 of BNSS, 2023 seeking anticipatory bail.

2. Heard the learned counsel for the parties.

3. It is brought to the notice of this Court that the petitioners were working in the office of the Tahasildar at Hassan. Similarly situated other employees, who had

apprehended arrest in the present case, have been granted anticipatory bail by this Court in Crl.P. No. 14205/2026 C/w Crl.P. No. 14007/2026, Crl.P. No. 14025/2026, Crl.P. No. 14027/2026, Crl.P. No. 14125/2026, Crl.P. No. 14130/2026 and Crl.P. No. 14367/2026.

4. Learned High Court Government Pleader has not disputed the said fact.

5. Similarly placed other accused persons had approached this Court in Crl.P.No.14205/2026 and connected criminal petitions seeking anticipatory bail and the said petitions were allowed by this Court on 28.09.2026. In paragraph Nos.3 to 6 of the order passed in Crl.P.No.14205/2026 and connected petitions, it is observed as follows:

> *"3. FIR in Crime No.157/2019 was registered by Hassan City Police Station, Hassan for the offences punishable under Sections 465, 468 and 420 of IPC, 1860 against unknown person, based on the first information dated 24.10.2019 received from the Special Land Acquisition Officer, Hemavathi River Project, Hassan. Apprehending arrest in the said case, the petitioners had approached jurisdictional Sessions Court seeking anticipatory bail. Since their petitions were dismissed by the learned Sessions Judge, they are before this Court in the above captioned petitions.*
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> *4. A reading of the first information dated 24.10.2019 received from the Special Land Acquisition Officer, Hemavathi River Project, Hassan, would go to show that, during the period from 01.01.2015 to 30.11.2018, fraudulent grants were made in*

respect of land that was reserved for the purpose of allotment to the land losers of Hemavathi River Project, to undeserving persons by the revenue officials in collusion with such persons. A reading of the first information would further go to show that as many as 414 such cases were traced and thereafter, the Land acquisition officer had approached the Police.

5. It appears that, on 16.03.2026, the Deputy Commissioner, Hassan, has directed to hold an enquiry as against 141 persons who were working in various capacities in the Department of Revenue during the period from 2015 to 2019. It is under these circumstances, the petitioners apprehended arrest and therefore, they had approached the Jurisdictional Sessions Court.

6. Material made available to this Court would go to show that the learned Sessions Judge has granted anticipatory bail to similarly placed other accused persons in Crl.Misc.No.808/2026 and Crl.Misc.No.780/2026. The petitioners have undertaken to co-operate with the Police for the purpose of investigation. The maximum punishment for the alleged offences is imprisonment for a period of seven years."

6. In view of the aforesaid, I am of the opinion that even the petitioner's prayer for grant of anticipatory bail needs to be answered affirmatively. Accordingly, the following:

ORDER

i) The criminal petition is ***allowed***.

ii) The respondent - Police or any other police in the State of Karnataka are directed to release the petitioners in the event of their arrest in Crime No.157/2019 registered by Hassan City Police Station, Hassan, for the offences punishable under Section 465, 468 and 420 of IPC, 1860, Section

192(a)(1)(2)(3) of Karnataka Land Revenue Act, 1964 and Section 4(1)(2)(3) and (5) of Karnataka Land Grabbing Prohibition Act, 2007, subject to the following conditions:

a) Petitioners shall appear before the Investigating Officer within 15 days from the date of receipt of the copy of this order and shall execute a personal bond for a sum of Rs.1,00,000/- each with two sureties for the likesum to the satisfaction of the investigating officer.

b) Petitioners shall regularly appear before the Trial Court without fail unless exempted by the Trial Court for valid reasons.

c) Petitioners shall not tamper with the prosecution witness and they shall co-operate with the police for investigation and appear before them whenever called upon.

d) Petitioners shall not involve in similar offences in future.

Sd/-
(S VISHWAJITH SHETTY)
JUDGE

SHS/List No.: 1 Sl No.: 16