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Crl.O.P.Nos.10807, 12409 and 12331 of 2026



IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 15.06.2026

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE Mr. JUSTICE C.KUMARAPPAN

Crl.O.P.Nos.10807, 12409 and 12331 of 2026

Crl.O.P.No.10807 of 2026

K.Haridharan

... Petitioner

Vs.

1. The State

Rep. by Special Investigation Officer
Assistant Commissioner of Police,
M.K.B.Nagar Police Range,
M.K.B.Nagar, Chennai.

2. The Inspector of Police,

K-1, Sembium Police Station, Chennai District.

3. The Superintendent of Police,

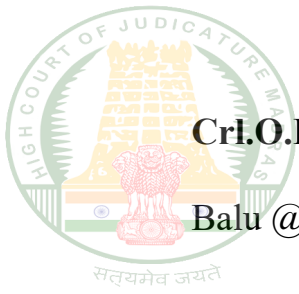
Central Bureau of Investigation,
Besant Nagar, Chennai.

... Respondents

PRAYER : Criminal Original Petition filed under Section 483 of BNSS., to enlarge the petitioner on bail in connection S.C.No.425 of 2024 on the file of the Principal Sessions Judge, Chennai.

For Petitioners : Mr.M.R.Ashok Kumar

For Respondents : Mr.R.Ganesh Kumar,
Government Advocate (Crl.Side) and
Mr.S.Yoga Rajasekar,
Government Advocate (Crl.Side)



Crl.O.P.No.12409 of 2026

Balu @ Ponnai Balu

... Petitioner

Vs.

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1. The State Rep. By
Assistant Commissioner of Police,
Koyambedu Police Range,
Chennai District.

2. The Inspector of Police,
K-1, Sembium Police Station,
Chennai.

... Respondents

PRAYER : Criminal Original Petition filed under Section 483 of BNSS., to enlarge the petitioner on bail in S.C.No.425 of 2024, on the file of the Principal Sessions Judge, Chennai, in Crime No.293 of 2024.

For Petitioners : Mr.M.Shreedhar

For Respondents : Mr.R.Ganesh Kumar,
Government Advocate (Crl.Side) and
Mr.S.Yoga Rajasekar,
Government Advocate (Crl.Side)

Crl.O.P.No.12331 of 2026

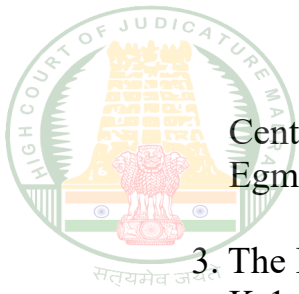
1. Manna @ Manivannan
2. Santhosh

... Petitioners

Vs.

1. The State Rep. By
Assistant Commissioner of Police,
Koyambedu Police Range,
Chennai District.

2. The Superintendent of Police,



Central Bureau of Investigation,
Egmore, Chennai.

3. The Inspector of Police,
K-1, Sembium Police Station,
Chennai.
(Crime No.293 of 2024)

... Respondents

PRAYER : Criminal Original Petition filed under Section 483 of BNSS., to enlarge the petitioner on bail in S.C.No.425 of 2024, on the file of the Principal Sessions Judge, Chennai, in Crime No.293 of 2024.

For Petitioners : Mr.M.Shreedhar

For Respondents : Mr.R.Ganesh Kumar,
Government Advocate (Crl.Side) and
Mr.S.Yoga Rajasekar,
Government Advocate (Crl.Side)

COMMON ORDER

The petitioner in Crl.O.P.No.10807 of 2026, who was arrested and remanded to judicial custody on 19.07.2024 for the offences punishable under Sections 191(2), 191(3), 118(1), 103 and 351(3) of BNS subsequently altered on 01.10.2024 to Sections 61(2)(a) r/w 103(1), 191(3), 351(3), 109, 238 r/w 190 and 49 of BNS and Sections 4(b) r/w 5 & 6 of the Explosive Substances Act and Section 3 r/w 25(1B) (a) of the Arms Act in Crime No.293 of 2024 on the file of the second respondent, seeks bail.



2. The petitioner in Crl.O.P.No.12409 of 2026, who was arrested and remanded to judicial custody on 06.07.2024 for the offences punishable under Sections 191(2), 191(3), 118(1), 103, 351(3) r/w. 61(2), 49, 238 of BNS and Section 4(b) r/w. Section 5 of the Explosive Substances Act, 1908 and Section 25(1) of the Arms Act, 1959 in Crime No.293 of 2024 on the file of the respondent, seeks bail.

3. The petitioners in Crl.O.P.No.12331 of 2026, who were arrested and remanded to judicial custody on 06.07.2024 for the offences punishable under Sections 190, 191(3), 109, 103(1), 351(3), r/w 61(2)(a), 49, 238 of BNS and 4(b)(1) r/w 5, 6 of the Explosive Substances Act, 1908 and Section 3 r/w 25(1B) (a) of the Arms Act, 1959 in Crime No.293 of 2024 on the file of the respondent, seek bail.

4. The petitioner in Crl.O.P.No.10807 of 2026 is arrayed as A19. The petitioner in Crl.O.P.No.12409 of 2026 is arrayed as A5, and the petitioners in Crl.O.P.No.12331 of 2026 are arrayed as A9 and A13. All the petitioners are accused in a case registered for the murder of one Armstrong, which is alleged to have taken place on 05.07.2024. The petitioners in Crl.O.P.Nos.12409 and 12331 of 2026 were arrested on 06.07.2024, whereas the petitioner in Crl.O.P.No.10807 of 2026 was arrested on 19.07.2024. They are presently in



judicial custody.

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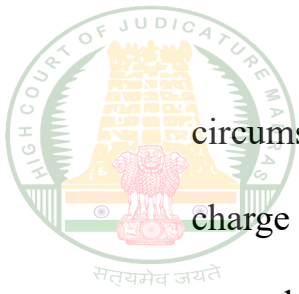
5. The case of the prosecution is that on 05.07.2024, at about 7.00 p.m., one Veeramani along with his younger brother deceased Armstrong, who was a State President in Bahujan Samaj Party of the state, land broker Balaji, Abdul Kani (Armstrong's driver) and building construction workers Mohanraj and Suresh were gathered at Armstrong's property (work site) in order to monitor new building construction, at that time, suddenly, eight persons, armed with knives and deadly weapons came as Zomato delivery persons in two-wheeler, stabbed his younger brother Armstrong, on the back of his head, face, neck hand and back and the unknown persons constantly attacked the deceased he was fell down on the ground and when Veeramani intervened to protect his younger brother, the assailants stabbed him on his right side of the head and back with a knife. They also pushed the said Balaji (land broker) into a basement ditch, fracturing his left lower leg and when Abdul Kani (Armstrong's driver) tried to intervene, they stabbed him on his back with a knife. Upon seeking this, the public gathered and all the assailants brandished their knives and escaped. The said Veeramani went to Sen Hospital with his wife for treatment and was admitted and later he came to know that his younger brother Armstrong had been declared as brought dead. Hence, a case has been registered based on the complaint lodged by the deceased's elder brother Veeramani. During the course



of investigation, it revealed that totally there are 30 accused involved in this case and mobile phones were recovered from the Kosasthalaiyar River, along with forensic reports, directly links the accused to the crime.

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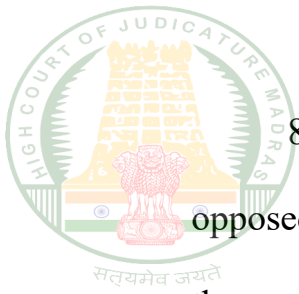
6. Mr. M.R.Ashok Kumar, the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner/A19, submitted that several accused against whom even under graver allegations and direct overt acts attributed, have already been granted bail. According to him, the petitioner is an Advocate by profession and was not present at the scene of occurrence. It is his contention that the petitioner has been implicated only because of his act of facilitation of the surrender of certain accused, only for long and short he was implicated as accused for discharging of his professional duties. The learned counsel further submitted that the petitioner was arrested belatedly on 19.07.2024, which itself demonstrates his non-involvement in the occurrence. Even according to the prosecution, the petitioner did not wield any weapon, use explosives, or otherwise participate in the commission of the offence. Except for his professional association, he had no other connection with the co-accused. It was further submitted that the petitioner is suffering from certain ailments and has undergone treatment in hospital. Having been in judicial custody for more than 600 days, he seeks enlargement on bail. The learned counsel also pointed out that though an earlier bail application was dismissed on 27.02.2026, there has been a change in



circumstances inasmuch as the proceedings relating to the quashing of the charge sheet are presently pending before the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Hence, he prayed for grant of bail.

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7. Mr.M.Shreedhar, the learned counsel appearing for the petitioners/A5, A9 and A13 submitted that, insofar as A9 is concerned, the present petition is his first application seeking bail. It was further submitted that A9 belongs to a Scheduled Tribe community and has been in judicial custody since 06.07.2024. According to the learned counsel, A9 and A13 have been implicated only on account of their relationship with one Arcot Suresh, who, according to the prosecution, was allegedly murdered at the instance of the deceased Armstrong. The learned counsel further contended that the petitioners have undergone prolonged incarceration for more than two years and are therefore entitled to be enlarged on bail. The apprehensions expressed by the prosecution regarding security concerns are, according to the learned counsel, merely speculative and cannot be a ground to deny the valuable right of liberty. In support of his submissions, reliance was placed upon the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Pradeep Kumar @ Banu v. State of Punjab** in Criminal Appeal No.1341 of 2026 arising out of SLP(Crl).No.18775 of 2025 dated 13.03.2026 and the judgment in **Vaibhav Singh v. State of Uttar Pradesh** in S.L.P. (Crl.) No.7416 of 2026 dated 29.04.2026. Accordingly, he prayed for grant of bail.



8. Per contra, the learned Government Advocate (Crl.Side) strongly opposed the petitions and submitted that the petitioners had conspired to commit the murder of Armstrong, a political leader. Insofar as A19 is concerned, the contention that he was merely discharging his professional duties as an Advocate is belied by the materials collected during investigation. According to the prosecution, there are materials to show his involvement in the conspiracy, destruction of evidence, and the money trail connected with the offence. It is further submitted that the call detail records establish that A19 was in contact with the other accused both prior to and subsequent to the occurrence.

8.1. The learned Government Advocate (Crl.Side) further submitted that this Court had subsequently cancelled the bail granted to certain co-accused. Therefore, the plea of parity advanced by the petitioners cannot be sustained. It was also submitted that A9 is involved in two previous criminal cases and A5 is involved in nine previous cases, including two murder cases. Further, A5, A9 and A13 are alleged to have committed prison offences by assaulting prison officials, in respect of which a separate FIR has been registered and is under investigation.

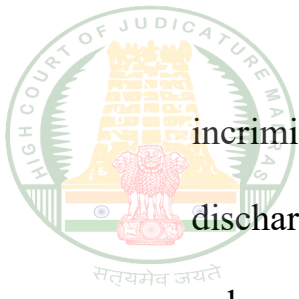
8.2. The learned Government Advocate (Crl.Side) also contended that if the petitioners are enlarged on bail, there exists a serious threat to their lives



owing to the possibility of retaliation. Though reliance was placed on the bail granted to A4, it was pointed out that the same was granted only on medical grounds and was subsequently cancelled. Since the cancellation of bail and the quashing proceedings are now the subject matter of consideration before the Hon'ble Supreme Court. It is contended that there is no change in circumstances warranting reconsideration of the earlier order refusing bail to A19. Hence, he prayed for dismissal of the petitions.

9. I have given my anxious consideration to either side submissions.

10. Insofar as A19 is concerned, the principal grounds urged are parity and the contention that he has been implicated merely for discharging his professional duties as an Advocate. It is not in dispute that the petitioner is an Advocate. However, according to the prosecution, the petitioner actively participated in the conspiracy. The materials collected during investigation indicate that he destroyed material evidence by smashing a mobile phone and disposing of the same in the Kosasthalaiyar River in furtherance of the conspiracy allegedly hatched along with the other accused. It is also alleged that the petitioner transferred certain amounts to the accused who were directly involved in the commission of the murder. Though these allegations are disputed by the petitioner, the fact remains that there are specific allegations and



incriminating materials against him. Therefore, his contention that he merely discharged his professional duties cannot, at this stage, be accepted on its face value.

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11. As regards the plea of parity, this Court finds force in the submission of the learned Government Advocate (Crl.Side) that the bail granted to certain co-accused was subsequently cancelled. Though the operation of such orders may presently be under consideration before the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the fact remains that the issue is sub judice. In such circumstances, this Court is not inclined to extend the benefit of parity to A19.

12. Coming to A5, A9 and A13, it is seen that A5 and A9 have criminal antecedents, and A5, in particular, is involved in serious offences, including murder cases. The learned Government Advocate (Crl.Side) has also placed materials before this Court indicating the possibility of retaliation against the accused. According to the prosecution, the petitioners face a serious threat to their lives, considering that the deceased was a prominent political leader. Though the petitioners have undergone considerable incarceration, it is well settled that long incarceration by itself cannot be the sole ground for grant of bail, particularly in cases involving grave offences.



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13. At this juncture, it is necessary to refer to the judgment relied upon by the learned counsel for the petitioners in ***Pradeep Kumar @ Banu's case*** (cited supra). In the said case, the Hon'ble Supreme Court granted bail taking into account the nature of the offences involved and the likelihood of delay in the completion of trial. The offences therein were under Sections 386, 307, 506 and 120-B IPC. The present case, however, relates to a premeditated murder of a prominent political leader. Therefore, the said judgment is clearly distinguishable on facts. Similarly, the reliance placed on ***Vaibhav Singh's case*** (cited supra) is also misplaced. In that case, the accused had remained in custody for more than nine years as an under trial prisoner and the trial had not progressed. It was in those peculiar circumstances that the Hon'ble Supreme Court found a violation of the fundamental right to speedy trial and granted bail.

14. In the present case, the occurrence took place in the year 2024 and the final report has already been filed. Though this Court had quashed the charge sheet, it is submitted by the prosecution that the said order has been stayed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Therefore, the apprehension regarding indefinite delay in trial is, at present, only speculative.



15. In view of the above facts and circumstances, this Court is of the considered opinion that the judgments relied upon by the petitioners are distinguishable and do not advance their case. Since the final report has been filed and the issues relating to cancellation of bail as well as the quashing proceedings are presently pending before the Hon'ble Supreme Court, this Court is not inclined to enlarge the petitioners on bail.

16. Accordingly, these Criminal Original Petitions stand dismissed.

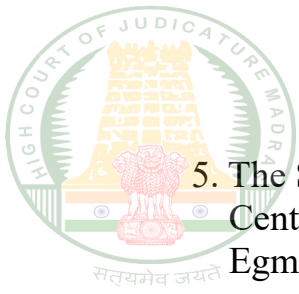
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To:

1. The Special Investigation Officer
Assistant Commissioner of Police,
M.K.B.Nagar Police Range,
M.K.B.Nagar, Chennai.
2. The Inspector of Police,
K-1, Sembium Police Station, Chennai District.
3. The Superintendent of Police,
Central Bureau of Investigation,
Besant Nagar, Chennai.
4. The Assistant Commissioner of Police,
Koyambedu Police Range,
Chennai District.

12/14



5. The Superintendent of Police,
Central Bureau of Investigation,
Egmore, Chennai.

6. The Principal Sessions Judge, Chennai.

7. The Public Prosecutor, High Court of Madras.



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C.KUMARAPPA, J.

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Crl.O.P.Nos.10807, 12409 and 12331 of 2026

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