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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 10-11-2026

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE N.RAMESH

CRL OP No. 31388 of 2026

CNR: {HCMA012581262026}

Ravichandran
Son of Muthuvel,
No.1/114, Krishnapuram,
Orathanadu Taluk,
Vettikkaddu,
Tanjore District.

Case QR

..Petitioner(s)

Vs

The State Rep by The Inspector of Police
CBCID, Counterfeit Currency Wing (CCW),
Chennai,
Crime No.0001 of 2026.

..Respondent(s)

PRAYER : Criminal Original Petition filed under Section 483 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, to enlarge the petitioner on bail, pending any further investigation in Crime No.0001 of 2026 on the file of on the file of the CBCID Counterfeit Currency Wing (CCW) Chennai.

For Petitioner(s): Mr.S.Sai Shankar

For Respondent(s): Mr.M.M.I. Khaleel
Government Advocate (Crl.Side)

ORDER

1. This is a petition for regular bail under Section 483 of the BNSS. The petitioner is the first accused in Crime No.1 of 2026 on the file of the Inspector of Police, Counterfeit Currency Wing, CB-CID, Chennai, re-registered on 03.08.2026 on the transfer of Crime No.218 of 2026 of the Triplicane Police Station. The case was registered under Section 180 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS), and the

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offences now stand altered to Sections 61(2), 179, 180 and 238(b) of the BNS. The gravest of them, Section 179, which punishes trafficking in counterfeit currency notes, carries imprisonment for life or imprisonment which may extend to ten years. The final report has been laid against four accused and taken on file in P.R.C. No.242 of 2026 by the Special Court for Fake Stamp Papers and Fake Counterfeit Currency Cases, Egmore, Chennai, and the case has been committed to the Court of Session, Chennai, where it stands posted to 10.11.2026.

2. The case of the prosecution, briefly stated, is this. On 15.07.2026 the third accused was apprehended in a lodge at Triplicane with two bags of currency notes of a face value of Rs.22,21,300/-, said to include counterfeit notes of Rs.500/- denomination, together with 500 notes of 50 Euro, and he named the petitioner as the person who had supplied the counterfeit notes. The investigation is said to show that, at the instance of the petitioner, he, the third accused and the fourth accused flew together to Malaysia on 02.07.2026, and that counterfeit Indian currency of Rs.12,00,000/- was bought there from one Kasim with Rs.5,00,000/- which the second accused had transferred to the petitioner's bank account on 11.06.2026 and which the petitioner sent on to Kasim. Rs.11,00,000/- of it is said to have been carried into India by one Parimala, and Rs.1,00,000/- by the petitioner himself, who handed it to the second accused at the Thiruvananthapuram airport on 07.07.2026. When the second accused rejected the notes as being of poor quality and burnt what he had received, the petitioner is said to have set about disposing of the rest through the third accused. Kasim and Parimala are Malaysian nationals and are yet to be secured.

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3. The petitioner was arrested on 16.07.2026 and remanded the same day, and he has been in custody since, for a little under four months. According to the counter affidavit, counterfeit notes of Rs.7,500/-, genuine notes of Rs.22,79,000/-, a mobile phone and fifteen passports of other persons were seized from him on his arrest. He was in police custody for four days from 12.08.2026. The learned Principal Sessions Judge, Chennai, dismissed his petitions for bail on 12.08.2026, when the investigation was at a crucial stage, and on 11.09.2026, declining the parity he claimed with a co-accused who had been granted bail by that Court.

4. Learned counsel for the petitioner made these submissions.

[a] The petitioner is an agriculturist of Thanjavur with no connection to the third accused, and he has been implicated only on the statement of the third accused.

[b] What was recovered from his residence at Thanjavur was genuine currency, earned from the sale of his crops to the Co-operative Society, and he has no need to deal in counterfeit notes.

[c] The investigation is complete, the final report has been laid, and no further custodial interrogation is required.

[d] He has been in custody for over a hundred days.

5. The respondent has filed a counter affidavit and the petition is opposed on its lines. At the hearing it was strongly urged on behalf of the respondent that the petitioner

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is the kingpin of the operation, and that his release would enable him to alert the two foreign accused against whom further investigation has been sought.

6. I have considered the rival submissions and perused the material placed before me.

7. While considering the material, I keep apart what the petitioner and his co-accused are said to have told the police. Those statements are not substantive evidence and cannot be proved against them, save to the extent that a fact is discovered in consequence of them, under Section 23 of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023. Approached in that manner, the case against the petitioner does not rest on the word of the third accused alone. *Three things* stand apart from the confessions.

(a) The *first* is the flight tickets and the arrival and departure records of the Foreigners Regional Registration Office, which, according to paragraph 6 of the counter affidavit, show the petitioner, the third accused and the fourth accused travelling between India and Malaysia together in the relevant period.

(b) The *second* is the record of calls: 94 calls and five messages are said to have passed between the petitioner's number and that of the third accused, and the mobile phones and SIM cards of the accused, with WhatsApp chats including chats between the petitioner and Kasim, are said to have been placed before the Special Court.

(c) The *third* is the seizure of counterfeit notes from the petitioner himself, already referred to. The transfer of money into his account and onwards to Kasim is also said to have been ascertained, though the counter affidavit does not say whether

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the bank records have been collected. The submission that the petitioner has no connection with the third accused does not accord with the record as it stands. What weight this material will bear is for the trial; at this stage it is enough that it exists and that it connects the petitioner with the accusation.

8. I turn to the recovery. The petitioner says that the money was found at his residence at Thanjavur; the counter affidavit says, in paragraph 5, that he was arrested near a bus stop at Triplicane and that the seizure followed. Which of the two is true is a matter for the trial, and I leave it open. But the submission that the money was his agricultural income answers a case that is not made, for the prosecution does not say that the larger sum, which the counter affidavit itself describes as Indian currency notes, is counterfeit. What is said against him is the smaller sum of counterfeit notes. The counter affidavit does not explain the relevance of the fifteen passports, and I leave them out of account. Nor is the counter affidavit consistent on how much of the currency seized from the third accused is counterfeit: paragraph 4 describes 4,400 notes of Rs.500/- as counterfeit, while paragraph 9 puts the counterfeit notes at Rs.11,00,000/- and treats the rest as genuine. The report of the Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran Private Limited, Mysore, on the notes sent for analysis was placed before the trial court in a sealed cover on 09.10.2026 and is not before me. I therefore record no finding on the quantity of counterfeit currency involved, and I place no reliance on the assertion in the counter affidavit that the offence has serious implications for national security, for which no material has been placed before me.

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9. What weighs with me is the role attributed to the petitioner and the stage at which the matter stands. On the counter affidavit he stands apart from the other three accused: he is said to have induced the journey to Malaysia, received the money for the purchase and sent it to the supplier, brought part of the consignment into India himself, and directed the disposal of the rest. That is the foundation of the objection that he is the kingpin, and on the material it is not without basis. The laying of the final report has closed the investigation as against the four accused named in it, but not as against the supplier and the carrier, both of whom are abroad. Further investigation under Section 193 of the BNSS has been sought before the Special Court on 26.10.2026, and the respondent proposes to secure the two of them through the procedure under the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. The counter affidavit states that the petitioner is *"in direct contact with Kasim and Parimala"* (paragraph 23), and apprehends that he would alert them. That apprehension is not stated in general terms; the record supplies its particulars, in the journey together, the payment to Kasim and the chats between them. A risk of that kind is not one a condition of bail can meet, since no condition this Court can impose will prevent a message to Malaysia. A custody of a little under four months is not long custody for an accusation which carries imprisonment for life, and the laying of the final report does not, by itself, entitle an accused to bail.

10. I do not, however, accept the plea in the counter affidavit that the petitioner must remain in custody until the trial is completed. That is not the test, and nothing in this order is to be read as accepting it. No previous case is alleged against the

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petitioner, and I have kept that in view. Considering the nature of the accusation, the punishment it carries, the role attributed to the petitioner, the pendency of further investigation as to the two foreign accused and the real risk that his release would hamper it, I am not persuaded that this is a case for the exercise of discretion in his favour at this stage.

11. **In the result, this Criminal Original Petition is dismissed.**

10-11-2026

DRL

To

1.The Inspector of Police
CBCID, Counterfeit Currency Wing (CCW),
Chennai.

2.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

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N.RAMESH, J.

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