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IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH

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Manav Singla ...Petitioner

V/s

State of Haryana and another ...Respondent

Date of decision: 05.03.2026
Date of Uploading : 05.03.2026

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUMEET GOEL

Present: Mr. Amit Kaith, Advocate for the petitioner.
Ms. Mahima Yashpal Singla, Senior DAG Haryana.

SUMEET GOEL, J. (Oral)

1. Present petition has been filed on behalf of the petitioner seeking grant of anticipatory/pre-arrest bail under Section 482 of BNSS, 2023 in FIR No.195 dated 22.12.2025 registered for offences punishable under Sections 316(2), 318(4) and 61 of BNS, 2023 (i.e. Sections 406, 420 and 120-B of IPC) at Police Station Sector 7, Panchkula.
2. The prosecution case, in brief, is that the complainant was induced on the pretext of securing an MBBS seat for his daughter through management quota by the petitioner. It has been alleged that the substantial amounts were paid to the petitioner at different stages on assurances of admission in various medical colleges and further on the representation that he was having connections with officials of the Directorate of Medical Education and Research. It has been further alleged that despite the receipt of the amounts, the daughter of the complainant did not get the admission and only a part amount was subsequently returned while the remaining

amount was stated to be outstanding. The complainant has further alleged



that when he contacted the petitioner to return the balance amount, he was threatened. In this manner, the complainant was duped of the huge amount and the acts disclose cheating, criminal breach of trust and conspiracy. On these set of allegations, the FIR in question was registered and investigation ensued.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner has iterated that the petitioner has been falsely implicated into the FIR in question. Learned counsel has further iterated that the FIR is the result of misuse of criminal process in order to exert pressure for recovery of money arising out of a purely civil dispute. According to learned counsel, the daughter of the complainant has already secured admission in a medical college and the dispute, if any, relates only to the settlement of accounts between the parties. It has been further submitted that the petitioner has neither misappropriated any amount nor has any dishonest intention from the inception of the transaction. Learned counsel asserts that the money received by the petitioner is on account of the service charges and expenses incurred in the process of counseling and admission & the same has been acknowledged by the complainant. Learned counsel has emphasized that the petitioner has joined the earlier enquiries conducted at Faridkot and Chandimandir and has cooperated with the investigating agencies on each occasion. According to learned counsel, the instant case has been registered without proper justification and without considering the material collected during the earlier enquiries. It has been further contended that the petitioner has already returned a substantial part of the amount to the complainant through banking channels and is ready and willing to pay the remaining amount which itself



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to fully cooperate with the investigating agency and there is no likelihood of the petitioner absconding from the process of justice or tampering with the prosecution evidence in case he is enlarged on pre-arrest bail. On strength of these submissions, the grant of anticipatory bail is entreated for.

4. *Per contra*, learned State counsel has opposed the grant of anticipatory bail to the petitioner by arguing that the offence committed by the petitioner is serious in nature. According to learned State counsel, the complainant was induced to part with huge amount of money on the false promise of securing an MBBS seat for his daughter through management quota. According to learned State counsel, the allegations are not of a simple monetary dispute but disclose the commission of cognizable and serious offences involving cheating, criminal breach of trust and criminal conspiracy. It has been further contended that the petitioner has himself admitted receipt of money during the course of earlier enquiry. The partial return of money clearly establishes the financial transaction and *prima facie* support the prosecution case that the complainant was dishonestly induced to part with money. Learned State counsel has contended that the petitioner has played an active role in the offence in question and his custodial interrogation is essential to unearth the full extent of the conspiracy, identify the role of other persons and verify the alleged payments & effect recovery of the remaining amount. Furthermore, in case the petitioner is granted the concession of pre-arrest bail, at this stage, it may impede the ongoing investigation. Accordingly, a prayer has been made for the dismissal of the instant petition.

5. I have heard the learned counsel for the rival parties and have

gone through the available record of the case.



6. As per the case put forth in the FIR in question, indubitably, serious allegations have been levelled against the petitioner. The material collected during the course of inquiry and investigation *prima facie* indicates the receipt of money by the petitioner from the complainant. Furthermore, the petitioner has acknowledged that a sum of Rs.15.50 lacs was to be returned and admitted that part payment has already been made. The explanation furnished by the petitioner is that the amount in question was towards the service charges. In the considered opinion of this Court, such a stand, at this stage, cannot be brushed aside as a mere civil dispute. The act of returning a portion of the amount after the dispute arose coupled with the issuance of cheques as security *prima facie* indicates that the petitioner recognized the financial liability arising out of the same transaction of which the present FIR has been registered. The allegations involve a well-planned conspiracy whereby the petitioner projected himself to be having influence in medical education authorities and defrauded the complainant of substantial amount to procure MBBS course seat for his daughter. The stand of the investigating agency before this Court is that the custodial interrogation of the petitioner is indispensable to unearth the extent of the conspiracy and identify the role of other persons. The seriousness of the allegations and the involvement of other accused weigh heavily against the grant of anticipatory bail to the petitioner. The recovery of the remaining amount, the flow of funds and role of co-accused are matter which requires custodial interrogation for effective investigation.

7. The plea of the petitioner that the matter is purely civil in nature is also not borne out at this stage. It is trite law that anticipatory bail is an



cases involving heinous offences. While considering anticipatory bail, the Court must strike a balance between the right of the individual to liberty and the need for free, fair and effective investigation. The allegations involve a well planned conspiracy whereby complainant was defrauded of his valuable money, this Court does not consider it appropriate to grant bail at this nascent stage. In the considered opinion of this Court, granting anticipatory bail to the petitioner at this stage may likely to hamper the on-going investigation. No cause *nay* plausible cause has been shown, at this stage, from which it can be deciphered that the petitioner has been falsely implicated into the present FIR.

8. It is befitting to mention here that while considering a plea for grant of anticipatory bail, the Court has to equilibrate between safeguarding individual rights and protecting societal interests. The Court ought to reckon with the magnitude and nature of the offence; the role attributed to the accused; the need for fair and free investigation as also the deeper and wide impact of such alleged iniquities on the society. At this stage, there is no material on record to hold that *prima facie* case is not made out against the petitioner. The material which has come on record and preliminary investigation, appear to be established a reasonable basis for the accusations. Thus, it is not appropriate to grant anticipatory bail to the petitioner, as it would necessarily cause impediment in effective investigation. In ***State v. Anil Sharma, (1997) 7 SCC 187 : 1997 SCC (Cri) 1039***, the Hon'ble Supreme Court held as under : (SCC p. 189, para 6)

“6. We find force in the submission of CBI that custodial interrogation is qualitatively more elicitation-oriented than questioning a suspect who is well-ensconced with a favourable order under Section 438 of the Code. In a case like this, effective interrogation of a suspected person is of



tremendous advantage in disinterring many useful informations and also materials which would have been concealed. Success in such interrogation would elude if the suspected person knows that he is well protected and insulated by a pre-arrest bail order during the time he is interrogated. Very often interrogation in such a condition would reduce to a mere ritual. The argument that the custodial interrogation is fraught with the danger of the person being subjected to third-degree methods need not be countenanced, for, such an argument can be advanced by all accused in all criminal cases. The Court has to presume that responsible police officers would conduct themselves in task of disinterring offences would not conduct themselves as offenders.”

9. Considering the gravity of the offence, the magnitude of alleged fraud, the conduct of the petitioner and the stage of investigation as also the necessity of custodial interrogation to unearth the complete *modus operandi*, this Court is of the considered opinion that the petitioner does not deserve the concession of anticipatory bail in the factual *milieu* of the case in hand.
10. In view of the prevenient ratiocination, it is ordained thus:
- (i) The instant petition is devoid of merits and is hereby dismissed.
- (ii) Nothing said hereinabove shall be deemed to be an expression of opinion upon merits of the case/investigation.
- (iii) Pending application(s), if any, shall also stand disposed off.

(SUMEET GOEL)
JUDGE

March 05, 2026
Ajay

Whether speaking/reasoned:	Yes/No
Whether reportable:	Yes/No