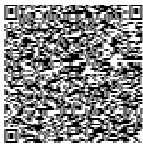


2026:PHHC:052005



107 (3 cases)
IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT CHANDIGARH

1. CRM-M-15848-2026

Vikram @ Vikram Singh

State of Haryana

....Petitioner

versus

....Respondent
2. CRM-M-15959-2026

Ankush Yadav @ Ankit

State of Haryana

....Petitioner

versus

....Respondent
3. CRM-M-16289-2026

Sonu

State of Haryana

....Petitioner

versus

....Respondent

Date of Decision: April 06, 2026
Date of Uploading: April 06, 2026

CORAM: HON’BLE MR. JUSTICE SUMEET GOEL

Present: Mr. Sandeep Kumar Yadav, Advocate for the petitioner(s)
(in CRM-M-15848-2026 and CRM-M-16289-2026).

Mr. Prashant Singh Chauhan, Advocate for the petitioner
(in CRM-M-15959-2026).

Ms. Mahima Yashpal Singla, Senior DAG Haryana.

Mr. Mayank Yadav, Advocate for the complainant.

SUMEET GOEL, J. (Oral)

By this common order, the aforesaid three petitions filed under
Section 482 of BNSS, 2023 (corresponding to Section 438 Cr. P.C.) seeking
grant of anticipatory bail to the petitioners, namely Vikram @ Vikram Singh,

Ankush Yadav @ Ankit and Sonu, in case bearing FIR No.0022 dated 24.01.2024, registered under Sections 406, 420 of IPC (Sections 465, 467, 468, 471 of IPC added later on), at Police Station Sadar Narnaul, District Mahendergarh are being disposed of together, as they emanate from a common FIR.

2. The prosecution case, as emanating from the FIR and the material collected during investigation, is that the complainant was approached in the month of July, 2022 by the accused persons, namely Sonu, Vikram @ Vikram Singh and Ankush Yadav @ Ankit (petitioners *herein*), who induced him on the pretext of securing a job in the Air Force/Army. It has been alleged that the accused persons represented themselves as having links in government departments and assured the complainant of arranging employment in lieu of monetary consideration. Acting upon such inducement, the complainant initially transferred an amount of ₹50,000/- through electronic means at the instance of accused Sonu. It has been further alleged that thereafter, a purported appointment letter was sent to the complainant through electronic communication, pursuant to which he was called to Chandigarh and made to stay there for about three months under the pretext of training, during which he incurred additional expenses. During this period, the accused persons (petitioners *herein*) allegedly continued to demand further amount and the complainant, along with his father, had paid additional amounts through bank transfers as well as cash transactions through accounts linked with co-accused Ankush Yadav and others. It has been further alleged that a total amount of approximately ₹8.00 lacs, were extracted from the complainant on the false assurances. The complainant has further alleged that the petitioner Vikram (in CRM-M-15848-2026) had actively participated in the transaction by assuring

the complainant regarding the genuineness of the process and even guaranteeing return of money while petitioner Ankush (in CRM-M-15959-2026) facilitated the routing of funds through his bank accounts. As regards petitioner Sonu (in CRM-M-16289-2026), the complainant has alleged that he is the primary person who initiated contact and communicated demands and documents. Despite repeated inquiries by the complainant regarding the joining letter, the accused persons (petitioners *herein*) allegedly avoided him and did not respond. Later on, the appointment letter issued to the complainant was found to be forged and fabricated and he had come to know that no such recruitment process existed. Upon making inquiries from the concerned department, the complainant came to know that he had been cheated. Despite repeated demands, the accused persons (petitioners *herein*) allegedly failed to return the money. On the basis of these allegations, the present FIR came to be registered and during investigation, the involvement of the petitioners has surfaced.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner –Vikram @ Vikram Singh has iterated that the allegations in the FIR are false, concocted and mala fide as he is presently serving in the Border Security Force. Learned counsel has further iterated that the petitioner has no role whatsoever in the alleged offence and has been roped in only on the basis of vague and omnibus allegations. According to learned counsel, in fact, the petitioner and his son are themselves victims of the alleged fraud as they have also paid substantial amount to the main accused persons namely Ashu and Pardeep who have assured them of securing government employment. Learned counsel has emphasized that the petitioner has merely facilitated certain transactions on behalf of the complainant without any dishonest intention and no wrongful gain has been accrued to him. It has

been further contended that the FIR pertains to the year 2024 whereas the alleged transaction is of the year 2022 which cast serious doubts about the veracity of the allegations. Learned counsel has further asserted that no promise of securing a government job was ever made by the petitioner and that the entire narrative projected by the complainant is fabricated. According to learned counsel, in the absence of any substantive or cogent material, the prosecution case is nothing but an abuse of the process of law. Learned counsel has emphasized that the custodial interrogation of the petitioner is not required as the entire case is based on documentary evidence which is already in the possession of the investigating agency. Moreover, the petitioner is ready to join and cooperate with the investigation and that there is no possibility of his absconding or tampering with the prosecution evidence in the event he is granted the concession of pre-arrest bail. On strength of these submissions, the grant of anticipatory bail on behalf of petitioner – Vikram @ Vikram Singh is prayed for.

3.1. Learned counsel appearing for the petitioner – Ankush Yadav @ Ankit has iterated that the petitioner has been falsely implicated into the FIR in question as he has no direct role in the alleged offence. Learned counsel has further iterated that the allegations leveled against the petitioner are general and lack specific attribution of any act constituting cheating or forgery. It has been further contended that the petitioner, in fact, is one of the victims of the alleged fraud as he was also induced by the main accused namely Anshu and Pardeep on the pretext of securing government job. According to learned counsel, the petitioner has no knowledge of any alleged conspiracy and has been unnecessarily arrayed as an accused. Furthermore, the implication of the petitioner is primarily on the basis of certain bank transactions which are stated

to be linked with him. Learned counsel has emphasized that mere routing of money through a bank account without any evidence of *mens rea* or active participation does not constitute an offence under Sections *ibid*. It has been further contended that the custodial interrogation of the petitioner is not required as the entire case is based on documentary evidence which is already in the possession of the investigating agency. Moreover, the petitioner is ready to join and cooperate with the investigation and that there is no possibility of his absconding or tampering with the prosecution evidence in the event he is granted the concession of pre-arrest bail. On the strength of these submissions, it is prayed that the petitioner be granted the concession of anticipatory bail.

3.2. Learned counsel for the petitioner – Sonu has iterated that the petitioner has been falsely implicated into the FIR in question as the allegations leveled in the FIR are exaggerated and devoid of merit. Learned counsel has further iterated that no specific role has been attributed to the petitioner which would attract the offences alleged. According to learned counsel, the dispute is essentially civil in nature arising out of monetary transactions but the same has been projected in a manner to give it a criminal colour. Learned counsel has emphasized that the petitioner has not induced the complainant with any fraudulent intention and has not derived any wrongful gain from the alleged transactions. It has been further contended that the allegations regarding demand of money and transmission of documents are not supported by any cogent evidence. Furthermore, the petitioner has neither misused any forged document nor played any role in the preparation of any alleged fabricated appointment letter. It has been further contended that the custodial interrogation of the petitioner is not required as the entire case is based on documentary evidence which is already in the possession of the investigating

agency. Moreover, the petitioner is ready to join and cooperate with the investigation and that there is no possibility of his absconding or tampering with the prosecution evidence in the event he is granted the concession of pre-arrest bail. On the basis of aforesaid grounds, it is prayed that petitioner – Sonu be granted the concession of anticipatory bail.

4. *Per contra*, learned State counsel has opposed the grant of anticipatory bail to the petitioner(s) by arguing that allegations are serious in nature and submits that the instant case involves a well planned and organized fraud. According to learned State counsel, the petitioner(s), in active connivance with each other, cheated the complainant and other innocent persons on the false pretext of securing employment in the Armed Forces. Learned State counsel has iterated that specific and direct allegations have been leveled against each of the petitioners in the FIR and during the course of investigation. Furthermore, the petitioner(s) have actively participated in inducing the complainant to part with substantial amounts of money and issued false and fabricated appointment letter. It has been further contended that the investigation is still at a crucial stage and custodial interrogation of the petitioner(s) is necessary to unearth the complete conspiracy, trace the money trail and recover the cheated amount. Accordingly, a prayer has been made for the dismissal of the petition(s).

4.1. Learned counsel for the complainant has vehemently opposed the grant of anticipatory bail to the petitioner(s) by arguing that the allegations leveled against the petitioner(s) are serious in nature. Learned counsel has argued that the petitioner(s), in connivance with each other, have cheated the complainant, by alluring to provide him a job in the Air Force, and, has extracted ₹8 lakhs, however, neither the job was provided nor was the aforesaid

amount returned to the complainant. In case, the petitioner(s) are granted the concession of anticipatory bail, there is all likelihood that they may abscond from the process of justice as also interfere/ intimidate the prosecution evidence/ witnesses. On the strength of these submissions, dismissal of the petition(s) in hand is entreated for.

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 leveled against all the petitioners. The record reflects that the allegations are not merely of a simple monetary dispute but pertain to well orchestrated fraud wherein the complainant was induced to part with substantial amounts on the assurance of securing a government job in the Armed Forces. The role attributed to petitioner - Sonu is that he has initially approached the complainant, communicated through electronic means, demanded money and transmitted documents including alleged appointment letters whereas petitioner Vikram @ Vikram Singh is alleged to have actively participated in the inducement by assuring the complainant regarding the genuineness of the recruitment process. He was even present during subsequent demands and part of the alleged amount had been routed through accounts and transactions linked with him which *prima facie* connects him with the monetary trail. The allegations further indicate that part of the amount has been handed over to him in cash, which also *prima facie* reflects his involvement. As regards petitioner - Ankush Yadav @ Ankit is concerned, the material on record indicates that the bank accounts linked to him have been used for routing the cheated amount. His role, therefore, cannot be segregated at this stage. In the considered opinion of this Court, the *modus operandi*, as

alleged reflect a well coordinated effort and active participation of all the petitioner(s) in inducing the complainant to part with substantial amounts. The contention of the petitioners that they themselves are victims and that the main accused are other persons, is a matter of defence which cannot be conclusively adjudicated at this stage while considering the plea for grant of anticipatory bail. The plea that nothing is to be recovered from the petitioner(s) also does not *ipso facto* entitle them to the concession of anticipatory bail particularly when serious allegations supported by financial transactions and documentary material are on record. At this stage of consideration, the record *prima facie* indicates that all the petitioner(s) have actively associated with the alleged acts which culminated in cheating and fraud. The nature of allegations reflects a calculated attempt to deceive the complainant and the allegations disclose the existence of a common intention and conspiracy amongst the petitioners (herein). The allegations in the FIR indicate that the complainant was induced to pay a substantial amount by the petitioner(s) on the pretext of securing employment in the Armed Forces. The money was neither refunded nor was any job arranged. The material which has come on record discloses that the allegations against the petitioner(s) are not vague or general but are specific, supported by details of payments. At the stage of considering the plea of anticipatory bail, the Court is not required to conduct a meticulous examination of evidence but only to assess whether a *prima facie* case is made out or not. In the considered opinion of this Court, the offence alleged is not merely of a civil nature but involves criminal intent from the inception as the complainant was deceived into parting with his money under a false pretext. At this stage, the investigation is still underway and the custodial interrogation of the petitioner(s) is essential to trace the financial flow, recover relevant documents

and ascertain the involvement of other individuals. The seriousness of the allegations, the involvement of the petitioner(s) in inducing the complainant as also the money trail weigh heavily against the grant of anticipatory bail to the petitioner(s).

7. It is well settled with economic offences involving cheating and misappropriation are to be treated as serious offences affecting not only the individual complainant but also public confidence in financial dealings. It is trite law that anticipatory bail is an extraordinary remedy not to be granted as a matter of course, particularly in 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. Moreover, the plea that the dispute is civil in nature cannot be accepted at this stage, as the allegations *prima facie* disclose deception and dishonest intention at the inception which constitute the essential ingredients of Section 420 of IPC. The investigation is ongoing and to identify the other possible accused persons, 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(s) at this stage may likely to hamper the ongoing investigation. No cause *nay* plausible cause has been shown, at this stage, from which it can be deciphered that the petitioner(s) have 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(s). 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(s), 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 seriousness of the allegations, the nature of the offence and the stage of investigation as also the necessity of custodial interrogation to discover the entire chain of events, recovery of the amount in question and identify the other beneficiaries of the fraud, this Court is of the considered opinion that the petitioner(s) do 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) All the three petitions are devoid of merits and are 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

April 06, 2026
Ajay/mahavir

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