



IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

145-1

CRM-M-52036-2025 (O&M)
Date of decision: 30.03.2026

Abhishek Pandey ...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab ...Respondent(s)

145-2

CRM-M-53740-2025 (O&M)
Date of decision: 30.03.2026

Arpita Sarbabidya ...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab ...Respondent(s)

145-3

CRM-M-62006-2025 (O&M)
Date of decision: 30.03.2026

Arfin Siddiqui ...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab ...Respondent(s)

226

CRM-M-12428-2026 (O&M)
Date of decision: 30.03.2026

Shadan Shakil ...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab ...Respondent(s)

227

CRM-M-12976-2026 (O&M)
Date of decision: 30.03.2026

Amit Tiwari ...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab ...Respondent(s)

228-1**CRM-M-14501-2026 (O&M)****Date of decision: 30.03.2026**

Mukul Singh

...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab

...Respondent(s)

228-2**CRM-M-14516-2026 (O&M)****Date of decision: 30.03.2026**

Pardeep Dass

...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab

...Respondent(s)

228-3**CRM-M-14556-2026 (O&M)****Date of decision: 30.03.2026**

Akshay Kumar

...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab

...Respondent(s)

CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VINOD S. BHARDWAJ

Present :- Mr. J.S. Dadwal, Advocate for the petitioner(s)
in CRM-M-53740-2025.

Mr. Pardeep Kumar, Advocate for the petitioner(s)
in CRM-M-62006-2025 and CRM-M-12428-2026

Mr. Nitish Jhaghria, Advocate for
Mr. B.S. Makkar, Advocate for the petitioner(s)
in CRM-M-52036-2025 and CRM-M-12976-2026.

Mr. Nirbhay Garg, Advocate;
Mr. Amrinder Garg, Advocate;
Mr. Vikramjit Singh, Advocate for the petitioner(s)
in CRM-M-14501-2026, CRM-M-14516-2026 and CRM-M-14556-2026.

Mr. Mohit Kapoor, Sr. DAG Punjab.

VINOD S. BHARDWAJ, J. (Oral)

1. All these petitions, filed by different accused/petitioners, for grant of regular bail in case arising out of FIR No.32 dated 17.06.2025, registered under Section(s) 318(4), 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and Section 66-D of the Information Technology Act, at Police Station Cyber Crime Phase-7, SAS Nagar (Mohali), are being decided by this common order.

2. For the facility of reference facts are being adverted to from CRM-M-52036-2025.

3. The present FIR came to be registered on the basis of secret information received by Inspector, Police Station Cyber Crime Phase-07, Mohali to the effect that certain unknown persons were running a company in Flat No.501, Tower No.03 and Flat No.1101, Tower No.02, Acme Eden Court, Acme Emerald Sector-91, SAS Nagar (Mohali) and they were running a fraudulent call centre through the use of computers, false mobile applications, mobile games and other such digital platforms and had thereby siphoned off crores of rupees and in the event of a raid being conducted, the fraudsters could be apprehended along with incriminating material, including computers and mobile phones. Acting upon the said information, the present FIR was registered for the offences aforementioned. Pursuant to the raid conducted thereafter, the petitioners herein came to be apprehended at the spot.

4. It is revealed from the record that the petitioners had been duping foreign nationals by extending threats on the pretext that they were involved in illegal currency transactions and that their bank accounts were

linked to trade of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. On such false representations, the victims were subjected to “digital arrest,” thereby coercing them into transferring substantial sums of money. It is alleged that an enormous amount, running into crores of rupees, was siphoned off through the said modus operandi. During the course of the raid, 13 laptops and 14 mobile phones, along with one Scorpio vehicle, were recovered from the spot. It is further contended that as per the status report filed by the respondent-State, the total magnitude of the fraud is stated to be around Rs.50 crores.

5. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioners contends that the petitioners were merely employed in the aforesaid call centre and had no role to play in the commission of the alleged offence. They contend that the mobile phones and laptops belonging to the petitioners have already been seized by the police and there exists no material on record on the basis whereof it can be inferred that the petitioners derived any benefit from the alleged transactions or that any part of the extorted amount was shared with them. It is additionally contended that the petitioners have been in custody since 17.06.2025. He contends that in so far as the petitioners, namely Abhishek Pandey, Arpita Sarbabidya and Arfin Siddiqui are concerned they have already been granted the concession of interim bail, whereas the remaining accused continue to remain in custody. It is submitted that the offences alleged are triable by a Court of Magistrate and that, as of date, even the charges have not been framed.

6. Learned State counsel does not dispute the aforesaid factual aspects. He, however, submits that although the laptops and mobile phones

have been seized, the report of the FSL has not yet been received and the data contained therein is still to be retrieved and analysed. He contends that till such time the aforesaid material is obtained and examined, the prosecution would not be in a position to conclusively ascertain or comment upon the full extent of the fraud or the precise manner in which the alleged offence was committed.

7. I have heard the learned counsel appearing on behalf of the respective parties and have gone through the documents appended with the instant petition as well as the response submitted by the learned State counsel to the various queries posed by this Court.

8. Learned State Counsel is unable to give any satisfactory response to the following queries posed by this court:

- (i) the specific role attributable to any of the petitioners herein, namely, whether they were merely employed in the call centre or were, in fact, shareholders therein;
- (ii) whether the proceeds of the alleged “digital arrest”/online gaming activities were routed to the accounts of the petitioners, or whether they were only in receipt of remuneration in the nature of salary; and
- (iii) the particulars of any bank account(s) or details of any victim allegedly duped, as also any definite or specific role attributable to the petitioners in the commission of the alleged offence.

9. Learned State counsel fairly concedes that the aforesaid premises and the call centre in question were being operated by one of the

accused (a non-petitioner herein). He also does not dispute that the offences alleged are triable by the Court of Magistrate and that, as of date, even the charge has not been framed so far.

10. Having heard the learned counsel for the parties and taking into consideration the facts and circumstances noticed hereinabove, including the clean antecedents of the petitioners, the period of actual custody already undergone by them as well as the stage of the trial and bearing in mind that the conclusion of the trial is likely to take a long time, I deem it fit to allow the instant petition.

11. Accordingly, the instant petitions are allowed and the petitioners are ordered to be admitted to regular bail subject to their furnishing bail/surety bonds to the satisfaction of the trial Court/Duty Magistrate/Illaqa Magistrate concerned.

12. It is made clear that the petitioners shall not extend any threat and shall not influence any prosecution witness in any manner directly or indirectly.

13. The observation made hereinabove shall not be construed as an expression on the merits of the case and the trial Court shall decide the case on the basis of available material.

(VINOD S. BHARDWAJ)
JUDGE

30.03.2026

Mangal Singh

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