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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ BAIL APPLN. 20/2026 & CRL.M.A. 263/2026

AKSHAY MAHARANAPetitioner

versus

THE STATE GOVT OF NCT OF DELHIRespondent

+ BAIL APPLN. 22/2026 & CRL.M.A. 285/2026

ARPITA MAHARANAPetitioner

versus

THE STATE GOVT OF NCT OF DELHIRespondent

+ BAIL APPLN. 91/2026

PRATIBHA MAHARANAPetitioner

versus

THE STATE(GOVT.OF NCT
OF DELHI) & ANR.Respondents

Appearance: Mr. Aman Mudgal and Mr. Mustafa, Advocates for
petitioners
Mr. Ajay Vikram Singh, APP for State

CORAM:
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PRATEEK JALAN

ORDER
20.02.2026

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1. The petitioners seek anticipatory bail in connection with FIR No. 497/2025, dated 25.10.2025, registered at Police Station KN Katju Marg, under Sections 318(4)/3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. The



petitioners in BAIL APPLN. 20/2026 and BAIL APPLN. 22/2026 are siblings. The petitioner in BAIL APPLN. 91/2026 is their mother.

2. I have heard Mr. Aman Mudgal, learned counsel for the petitioners, and Mr. Ajay Vikram Singh, learned Additional Public Prosecutor for the State. Although the complainant has notice of these petitions, and was represented by counsel on 06.01.2026 in BAIL APPLN. 20/2026 & BAIL APPLN. 22/2026 and 12.01.2026 in BAIL APPLN. 91/2026, he is not represented today.

3. The allegations in the FIR are summarized in the order dated 06.01.2026 in BAIL.APPL Nos. 20/2026 and 22/2026, as follows:

“7. The allegations in the said FIR, which was registered at the instance of the complainant – Mr. Rajesh Goyal, are as follows:

a) The complainant became acquainted with one Mr. Sunil Kumar approximately five years prior to the date of the incident and had a continuing relationship with him through interactions at spiritual gatherings.

b) Mr. Sunil Kumar assured the complainant that he would facilitate the admission of the complainant’s son to an M.D. (Medicine) course in Delhi.

c) Mr. Sunil Kumar thereafter introduced the complainant to one Mr. Ramesh Maharana, who is stated to be working as a supervisor at a medical college in Ghaziabad. The complainant was informed that Mr. Ramesh Maharana and his family run a school as well as a coaching, admission, and counselling centre in Ghaziabad, and that they have knowledge of counselling and admission processes.

d) On the assurance of securing admission to an M.D. (Medicine) course in Delhi, Mr. Sunil Kumar obtained the original educational documents of the complainant’s son and handed the same over to Mr. Ramesh Maharana.

e) At the instance of Mr. Sunil Kumar, the complainant handed over a sum of Rs.15,00,000/- (Rs.5,00,000/- through bank transfer and Rs.10,00,000/- in cash) to Mr. Ramesh Maharana, with the assurance that the original documents of the complainant’s son would be returned prior to the counselling process.

f) Mr. Sunil Kumar also persuaded the complainant to entrust Mr. Ramesh Maharana with the task of construction on a plot owned by the complainant. However, no construction has commenced till date.



- g) The complainant's son secured a rank of approximately 14,000 in the NEET PG examination. Upon seeking return of his son's original documents, Mr. Sunil Kumar, Mr. Ramesh Maharana, Ms. Pratibha (wife of Ramesh Maharana), and others allegedly demanded a sum of Rs. 1 crore from the complainant.*
- h) It is further alleged that the complainant and his son are being threatened by the aforesaid persons and others."*

4. The petitioners in BAIL.APPL Nos. 20/2026 and 22/2026 were granted interim protection by the said order dated 06.01.2026, in the presence of the learned Additional Public Prosecutor and learned counsel for the complainant. The Court found that the complainant, four days after registration of the present FIR, had lodged another FIR [FIR No. 534/2022], contending that the amount of Rs. 15,00,000/- was paid to Ramesh Maharana by him for the purpose of construction of his plot, which had not commenced. Interim protection was granted on the basis that the petitioners were not accused of any entrustment of document or payment of money, and due to the discrepancy in the stated purpose of payment, between the two FIRs. However, the petitioners were directed to join the investigation as and when required by the Investigating Officer ["IO"].

5. A similar order was passed in the case of the petitioner in Bail APPLN. No. 91/2026, on 12.01.2026.

6. Mr. Singh, instructed by the IO who is present in Court, submits that all petitioners have joined the investigation, and that there is no allegation of non-cooperation on their part. He further submits that the investigation, with regard to these petitioners, is complete, although investigation with regard to Ramesh Maharana remains pending, as he has not joined the investigation.



7. Having regard to the aforesaid submissions, particularly to the absence of allegations of entrustment of documents or payment of money against the present petitioners, and the discrepancy with regard to the purpose of remittance by the complainant, the petitioners are entitled to protection from arrest in the present case. It is therefore directed that, in the event of their arrest in connection with FIR No. 497/2025, dated 25.10.2025, registered at Police Station KN Katju Marg, the petitioners be released on bail subject to furnishing a personal bond in the sum of Rs. 50,000/- each, with one surety of the like amount, to the satisfaction of the IO/Duty Magistrate, and subject to the following conditions:

- A. They will report to the IO on each and every occasion, as required by the IO, and will cooperate in the investigation.
 - B. The petitioners shall not directly/indirectly try to get in touch with the complainant and any witness or tamper with the evidence.
 - C. The petitioners will furnish their mobile numbers to the IO, and shall keep the said mobile phones running and always switched on. The mobile numbers shall not be changed or switched off without prior intimation to the IO.
 - D. The petitioners will give their residential address to the IO, and will not change their residential address without prior intimation to the IO.
 - E. The petitioners will not leave the country without prior permission of the Court.
 - F. The petitioners shall not commit any offence during pendency of these proceedings.
8. The petitions are disposed of accordingly.



9. It is clarified that the observations made herein are solely for the purpose of adjudication of the present bail applications and shall not be construed as an expression of opinion on the merits of the case, nor shall they prejudice the rights and contentions of the parties at any stage of the proceedings.

PRATEEK JALAN, J

FEBRUARY 20, 2026/‘SV’/AD/