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

\+ BAIL APPLN. 4918/2025 & CRL.M.A. 37963/2025 (interim protection)

DOMIRAJ @ TOMMY .....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Pranav Sachdeva, Mr. Sanyam Jain, Mr. P.Rohit Ram, Ms. Mishra Divya Santosh, Ms. Khushboo Singhal, Advocates.

versus

CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION .....Respondent

Through: Mr. Rajesh Kumar, SPP for CBI with Ms. Mishika Pandita, Advocate.

CORAM:
HON'BLE DR. JUSTICE SWARANA KANTA SHARMA

ORDER

% **26.02.2026**

1. By way of the present application, the applicant is seeking grant of anticipatory bail in case arising out of FIR bearing RC No. 0482024S0005, registered at Police Station Central Bureau of Investigation (hereafter *'CBI'*), for the commission of offences punishable under Sections 120B/420/370 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (hereafter *'IPC'*).

2. Briefly stated, the facts of the present case are that pursuant to receipt of credible information regarding a large-scale human trafficking racket operating across multiple States in India, an investigation was undertaken by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). It was alleged that various travel agencies, acting in conspiracy with one another, were engaged in trafficking

unsuspecting Indian nationals to Russia on the false promise of securing high-paying employment opportunities such as security guards, helpers, and other similar jobs. The investigation revealed that substantial sums of money were collected from victims on the pretext of arranging employment and, in some cases, facilitating admission to private universities in Russia by offering discounted fee structures and visa extensions. However, upon reaching Russia, the victims were allegedly left in precarious circumstances, with their Indian passports being forcibly taken away, and were compelled to enter war-affected zones against their will. It is the case of the CBI that the present applicant/accused played a pivotal role in the commission of the alleged offences and acted as a mastermind in the conspiracy. It is alleged that the applicant, in coordination with co-accused Ramesh Kumar Palanisamy and Santosh, induced victims to travel to Russia by assuring them of legitimate employment. As per the prosecution, the applicant directed the victims to report to specific locations in Russia, where they were received at Moscow Airport by co-accused Santosh and accommodated in a flat. The statements of the victims and collected electronic evidence allegedly reveal that the applicant remained in constant contact with co-accused persons and functioned as their representative in India. It is further alleged that the victims were deceived into parting with large sums of money and were transported from India to Russia under false assurances, and that their consent was obtained by fraudulent and deceitful means.

3. The learned counsel appearing on behalf of the applicant/accused submits that the investigation in the present case stands substantially completed and the charge-sheet has already been filed before the competent court. It is argued that in view of the filing of the charge-sheet against other

accused persons, the custodial interrogation of the applicant is no longer required, and his arrest at this stage would serve no investigative purpose. The learned counsel further contends that there is no direct or independent material on record linking the applicant with the alleged conspiracy or with the acts attributed to the co-accused persons. It is submitted that the prosecution case is primarily based on statements of certain witnesses, which are yet to be tested during trial, and no concrete documentary or electronic evidence has been placed on record to demonstrate the applicant's involvement in the alleged human trafficking racket. It is thus prayed that, considering the absence of necessity for custodial interrogation and the applicant's willingness to cooperate with the investigation, he be granted anticipatory bail.

4. The learned Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) for the CBI opposes the present bail application, and argues that the allegations against the applicant are of a grave and serious nature involving organized human trafficking of Indian nationals to Russia under the false pretext of employment. It is contended that the applicant is a key conspirator who acted in close coordination with co-accused persons, as reflected from WhatsApp chats, call detail records, and financial transactions retrieved during investigation, which show exchange of passport consignments, visa arrangements, and routing of payments. It is further submitted that ₹47 lakhs in cash was recovered from his residence and that substantial amounts were transferred from his accounts, including ₹18 lakhs to his mother's account, indicating attempts to conceal proceeds of crime. The applicant, despite notices under Sections 160 and 91 of Cr.P.C, allegedly failed to cooperate, did not produce his mobile phone on the pretext of repair, and evaded arrest even after

dismissal of his anticipatory bail applications, leading to his being declared a proclaimed person *vide* order dated 02.12.2024. In these circumstances, it is urged that, considering the seriousness of the offence, the material collected, and the conduct of the applicant, he is not entitled to anticipatory bail.

5. This Court has **heard** arguments addressed on behalf of the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner as well as the learned SPP for the CBI, and has perused the material available on record.

6. After hearing learned counsel for the parties and perusing the material placed on record, this Court notes that the investigation has brought forth specific material connecting the present applicant with the alleged trafficking network. The WhatsApp data and call records reveal that the applicant was in constant touch with co-accused Michael and had sent a consignment to him at Chennai through an intermediary. The conversations further disclose that Michael had sought the photograph of one of the victims, 'VL', and that the consignment sent by the applicant was meant for the purpose of processing visas. The chats also reflect that the applicant had informed Michael about payment of ₹50,000/- made to Ananda Krishnan K., who was stated to be associated with co-accused Ramesh, and that Michael had subsequently confirmed receipt of ten passports. A further payment of ₹1,000/- through PayTM was also made by the applicant. These exchanges, when read cumulatively, *prima facie* indicate a close nexus and coordinated activity between the accused persons.

7. This Court also takes note of the fact that during the search conducted at the residence of the applicant on 07.03.2024, a sum of ₹47 lakhs in cash was recovered. The magnitude of the cash recovery, coupled with the

electronic trail and financial transactions, cannot be brushed aside at this stage. It is further an *admitted position* that the applicant's earlier anticipatory bail application was dismissed by this Court on 08.05.2024. Despite the dismissal of his anticipatory bail plea, the applicant did not submit himself to the process of law and was subsequently declared a Proclaimed Offender for evading arrest and not joining the investigation.

8. It is also noted that the applicant had challenged the proclamation order; however, the said challenge was dismissed, which fact is not disputed by learned counsel for the applicant. The conduct of the applicant in avoiding arrest and not cooperating with the investigation, even after denial of anticipatory bail, weighs against him.

9. The learned counsel appearing for the applicant has sought to contend that since one of the co-accused has already been granted regular bail by the Coordinate Bench of this Court, the present applicant is also entitled to similar relief on the ground of parity. In this regard, this Court is of the considered view that an accused who did not join investigation, remained absconding for several years, such as the applicant herein, cannot claim parity with co-accused who did not abscond, was arrested, interrogated and was granted regular bail only after undergoing incarceration for a substantial period. This Court is thus of the view that the applicant cannot claim parity as a matter of right. In this regard, this Court is also guided by the observations of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Balmukund Singh Gautam v. State of Madhya Pradesh:*** *2026 INSC 157.*

10. Considering the overall facts and circumstances noted hereinabove, this Court is of the view that the allegations against the present applicant are

serious and material collected by the CBI disclose his *prima facie* involvement in an organized racket of human trafficking with transnational ramifications. During the course of arguments, the learned SPP for the CBI also submitted that the applicant is in possession of crucial electronic evidence, including his mobile phone and related digital data, which allegedly contain incriminating material not only against him but also against other co-accused persons. The material is stated to include documents relating to consignments, copies of passports of the victims, exchanges of messages with associates in India and Russia, and details of financial transactions forming part of the money trail. In view thereof, this Court is of the opinion that custodial interrogation of the applicant is necessary for effective investigation.

11. In view of the foregoing discussion, this Court finds no ground to grant the relief of anticipatory bail.

12. Accordingly, the present application stands dismissed.

13. It is, however, clarified that nothing expressed herein above shall tantamount to an expression of opinion on merits of the case.

14. The order be uploaded on the website forthwith.

DR. SWARANA KANTA SHARMA, J

FEBRUARY 26, 2026/A

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