Central Bureau of Investigation

… Prosecution

Versus

Venkateshwarlu Guduguntla & Ors.

… Accused

Later on
06.04.2026

Mr. Anil Kushwaha Senior Public Prosecutor present for CBI.

Mr. Devashish Mathur present for applicant/accused G. Venkateswarlu and G. Sree Dhavani.

Case is put up for order on application filed by said applicant/accused under section 503 of BNSS (corresponding to section 457 of Cr.P.C.) (I.A. No. 1/26).

This order shall dispose of an application filed on behalf of the accused persons G. Venkateswarlu and G. Sree Dhavani seeking release/return of seized documents, savings instruments (NSCs, KVPs, RD, PPF), mobile phones and defreezing of certain bank accounts.

It is submitted by learned counsel for the applicants that the investigation has already been completed and charge-sheet has been filed, the seized articles are primarily personal and financial documents which are not relied upon by the prosecution, continued retention/freezing is causing undue hardship, particularly as several savings instruments have matured or are nearing maturity and the applicants undertake to produce the said articles/documents as and when directed by this Court.

Learned Public Prosecutor for CBI has opposed the application and submitted that accused G. Venkateshwarlu, in conspiracy with co-accused G. Sree Dhavani, demanded and accepted illegal gratification from private parties and the proceeds thereof were deposited in the bank account of co-accused G. Sree Dhavani. It is further submitted that certain seized articles/documents are relied upon and some have been sent to CFSL for examination.

It is not in dispute that the charge-sheet has been filed. As per the prosecution, documents/articles mentioned at Sr. No. 34 & 35 are relied upon, whereas documents/articles at Sr. No. 01 to 33 are not relied upon in the present case.

The contention of the applicants regarding hardship and non-requirement of the seized property has been considered.

From the material available on record, it prima facie appears that the alleged illegal gratification was routed through the bank account maintained in the name of co-accused G. Sree Dhavani. The timing and pattern of deposits correspond with the period of alleged demand and acceptance of bribe, thereby establishing a nexus between the alleged offence and the financial transactions.

The said deposits, being directly linked with the alleged offence, assume the character of proceeds of crime, and the bank account becomes a crucial piece of evidence for establishing the chain of demand, acceptance and utilisation of illegal gratification.

It is also well settled that economic offences, particularly under the Prevention of Corruption Act, are grave in nature and require a stricter approach, and preservation of the financial trail is of paramount importance.

At this stage, a detailed appreciation of evidence is neither warranted nor permissible, and this Court has confined itself to a prima facie assessment for the limited purpose of deciding the present application. Any observation made herein is only for this purpose and shall not affect the merits of the case at trial.

Findings-

Relied upon articles (Sr. No. 34 & 35):

These articles are relied upon by the prosecution and constitute material evidence. Hence, the prayer for their release is rejected.

Non-relied documents/articles (Sr. No. 01 to 33):

Since the prosecution has stated that these are not relied upon, their continued retention is not necessary. Accordingly, the same are directed to be released to the applicants, subject to the following conditions:

1. Proper identification and verification;

2. Preparation of copies/photographs, if required;
3. Execution of supurdginama;
4. Undertaking to produce the same as and when directed;
5. No tampering or alteration.

Bank Accounts:

(i) HDFC Bank Account (Sr. No. 01 – G. Sree Dhavani):

In view of its prima facie linkage with the alleged proceeds of crime, the said account constitutes material evidence. Hence, the prayer for defreezing is rejected.

(ii) Other Bank Accounts (Sr. No. 02 to 05):

As these accounts are stated to be not relevant to the investigation, they are directed to be defreezed, subject to:

1. Verification by the Investigating Officer;
2. Undertaking of lawful use;
3. Maintenance of transaction record;
4. Production of statements as and when directed.

Accordingly, the application under Section 503 of BNSS (I.A. No. 1/26) is **partly allowed** in the following terms:

Documents/articles at Sr. No. 01 to 33 are released on supurdginama.

Documents/articles at Sr. No. 34 & 35 shall not be released.

Bank account at Sr. No. 01 (HDFC Bank) shall not be defreezed.

Bank accounts at Sr. No. 02 to 05 are directed to be defreezed, subject to conditions.

Nothing stated herein shall be construed as an expression on the merits of the case.

Case be put up on date already fixed.

NEELAM SHUKLA

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Date: 2026.04.07 13:46:56 +0530

Neelam Shukla
Special Judge, CBI
Bhopal, M.P.