



[3396]

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH AT AMARAVATI
WEDNESDAY , THE TWENTY FIRST OF JANUARY TWO THOUSAND
AND TWENTY SIX

:PRESENT:

THE HONOURABLE DR JUSTICE VENKATA JYOTHIRMAI PRATAPA
CRIMINAL PETITION NO: 332 OF 2026



Between:

1. Katikala Kranthi Kumar, S/o. Shiva Bhagya Rao, Aged about 39 Years, R/o. Flat No. 102, Gayatri Nivas, Road No. 14, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, Telangana State
2. Katikala Srikanth,, S/o. Shiva Bhagya Rao, Aged about 37 Years, R/o. Flat No. 102, Gayatri Nivas, Road No. 14, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, Telangana State.

Petitioner/Accused 19 & 20

AND

1. The State Of Andhra Pradesh, Rep. by its Public Prosecutor, High Court of Andhra Pradesh at Amaravati.

Respondent/Complainant

2. Peerubandi Prakash Rao, S/o. Late Chinnaiah, Aged about 71 years, R/o. D.No. 58-9-10, Near Karasa, Visakhapatnam City, Andhra Pradesh

Respondent/Complainant

Petition under Sections 480 & 483 of BNSS, praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed in support of the Criminal Petition, the High Court may be pleased to enlarge the petitioners on Regular Bail in F.I.R. No. 85 of 2025 on the file of Dwaraka Polices station, Visakhapatnam Commissionerate,

The petition/Appeal coming on for hearing, upon perusing the Petition and the affidavit filed in support thereof and upon hearing the arguments of Sri. BHUVANAGIRI SUBRAMANYA KUMAR Advocate for the Petitioner(s), PUBLIC PROSECUTOR Advocate for the Respondent(s) and the Court made the following.

ORDER

THE HONOURABLE DR JUSTICE VENKATA JYOTHIRMAI PRATAPA
CRIMINAL PETITION NO: 332 of 2026

Order:

The Criminal Petition under Sections 480 and 483 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (for brevity 'the BNSS'), has been filed by the petitioners/Accused Nos.19 and 20, seeking regular bail in connection with Crime No.85 of 2025 of Dwaraka Police Station, Visakhapatnam, Visakhapatnam Commissionerate, registered for the offences punishable under Sections 420, 406, 411, 414, 120b of Indian Penal Code, 1860, Sections 21(1)(2)(3), 23 of Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Act, 2019 and Sections 3 and 4 of the Prize Chits and Money Circulation Schemes (Banning) Act, 1978.

2. Case of the prosecution, in brief, is that the de facto complainant along with 16 other depositors were induced to invest a total amount of Rs.6.32 crores in "Sneha MACs", founded by Katikala Shiva Bhagya Rao (Accused No.1) under the guise of Ambedkar's ideology and the slogan "pay back to society", aimed at collecting funds from SC depositors. Deposits were collected by staff members and the said amounts were illegally diverted for purchasing lands and other assets in Visakhapatnam, Hyderabad and Ponnuru in benami names. As "Sneha MACs" failed to repay the deposits, the accused persons are alleged to have committed the aforesaid offences.

3. Heard Sri N. Subba Rao, learned Senior Counsel appearing on behalf of petitioners, and Ms. K. Priyanka Lakshmi, learned Assistant Public Prosecutor representing the respondent-State.

4. Learned Senior Counsel for the petitioners submits that the petitioners are the children of Accused No.1 and that there is no whisper about their involvement in the complaint. It is further submitted that the petitioners were not shown as accused in the FIR initially. Learned Senior Counsel submits that petitioner No.1/Accused No.19 has been in judicial custody since 03.12.2025 and is a Chartered Accountant by profession, residing at Hyderabad. Petitioner No.2/Accused No.20 has been in judicial custody since 30.11.2025; he is a Software Engineer who earlier worked abroad and is presently working at Mumbai, drawing an annual income of Rs.60 lakhs and is an income-tax assessee, having paid income tax of Rs.13 lakhs during the relevant period.

5. Learned Senior Counsel would further submit that no specific allegations are attributed against Accused No.19. With regard to Accused No.20, the allegation is that a property worth Rs.2,13,000/- was purchased in his name during the relevant period by utilizing the proceeds of the crime. It is contended that, considering his lawful income, the said allegation is untenable. Learned Senior Counsel would further submit that the learned trial Court dismissed the bail application solely on the ground that the investigation was not completed. Finally, it is prayed that the petition be allowed by imposing appropriate conditions, as the petitioners are ready to furnish

sureties to the satisfaction of the Court and assure their cooperation with the trial.

6. Learned Assistant Public Prosecutor opposed the bail and would submit that several complaints have been filed against Accused No.1 and others. It is further submitted that the petitioners here are children of Accused No.1, and Court may pass the appropriate orders.

7. Considering the submission made by the learned counsel for the petitioners and the learned Assistant Public Prosecutor, and upon perusal of the material on record, it is evident that the petitioners are children of accused No.1 and that the crucial part of the investigation has been completed. At this stage, this Court may. The petitioner No.1 is in jail since 03.12.2025 and petitioner No.2 has been in judicial remand since 30.11.2025. Taking into the consideration of stage of investigation, this Court is inclined to allow the petition, subject to the following conditions:

i) The petitioners/Accused Nos.19 and 20 shall be released on bail on each of them executing a personal bond for Rs.20,000/- (Rupees twenty thousand only) with two sureties for a like sum each to the satisfaction of the learned Special Judge for Trial of Cases under Banning of Unregulated Deposit Scheme, 2019 – cum – Principal District & Sessions Judge, Visakhapatnam.

ii) On release, the petitioners shall appear before the Station House Officer, concerned, once in a week i.e., on every Sunday between 10.30 a.m., and 05.00 p.m., till filing of the charge sheet.

iii) The petitioners shall not directly or indirectly make any statements relating to this case in the social media or any other social network platform.

iv) The petitioners shall not, directly or indirectly, make any inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case so as to dissuade him from disclosing such facts to the Court or to the investigating or police officer.

v) The petitioners shall cooperate with the Investigating Agency as and when they are called for investigation purpose.

As a sequel thereto, the miscellaneous petitions pending, if any, shall stand closed.

//TRUE COPY//

SD/- M.PRABHAKARA RAO
DEPUTY REGISTRAR
SECTION OFFICER

To,

1. The Special Judge for Trial of Cases under Banning of Unregulated Deposit Scheme, 2019-cum-Principal District & Sessions Judge, Visakhapatnam District.
2. The Station House Officer, Dwaraka Police Station, Visakhapatnam District.
3. The Superintendent, Central Prison, Visakhapatnam.
4. One CC to SRI. BHUVANAGIRI SUBRAMANYA KUMAR Advocate [OPUC]
5. Two CCs to SRI. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR, High Court of A.P [OPUC]
6. One spare copy

HIGH COURT

DR.VJP, J

DATED:21/01/2026

BAIL

CRLP.No.332 of 2026

ALLOWED

