APHC010138802026

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
AT AMARAVATI
(Special Original Jurisdiction)

WEDNESDAY, THE 29th DAY OF JULY 2026

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE SRI JUSTICE RAVI CHEEMALAPATI

WRIT PETITION NO: 7582 OF 2026

Between:

1. B VAJPAYEE REDDY, S/o. B. Subbarami Reddy Aged about 30 years, Occ Software Professional R/o G5, Udyoga Nilayam, N.G.O Colony, Near Apsara Circle, Kadapa Andhra Pradesh - 516002

...Petitioner

AND

1. THE UNION OF INDIA MINISTRY OF FINANCE, Rep. by its Secretary, 166-B North Block, New Delhi - 110001.

2. ICICI Bank, Rep by its Manager D.No 5/495-496, Ward No 5, Trunk Road, YSR Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh-516001.

3. The Additional S P Crime Branch, Rani Sarai, Regal Square Indore, Madhya Pradesh

4. ICICI Bank, Rep by its CEO, ICICI Bank towers, Bandra-kurla complex, Mumbai, Maharastra-400051.

5. The Reserve Bank of India, Represented by Regional Director for Andhra Pradesh 6-1-56, Secretariat Road Saifabad, P.B. No.I Hyderabad - 500004.

...Respondents

Petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed therewith, the High Court may be pleased to issue a Writ, Order or Direction more particularly one in the nature of Writ of Mandamus declaring the action of the 3rd Respondent in addressing e-mail dated 25.10.2023 to ICICI Bank, Kadapa Branch with IFSC Code 1C1C0000674 relating to the account number 056701512986 and thereby instructing to Debit Freeze the account of the petitioner and consequential action of respondents 2 in Debit Freezing the accounts of the petitioner basing on such communication is being assailed as being illegal, arbitrary, unconstitutional and in violation of provisions of CRPC/BNSS and Set aside the said proceedings and further direct the respondents not to interfere with the operation of the said bank account by the petitioner and pass

IA NO: 1 OF 2026

Petition under Section 151 CPC praying that in the circumstances stated in the affidavit filed in support of the petition, the High Court may be pleased to direct the respondent no 2 to permit the petitioner to operate the account number 056701512986 in ICICI Bank, Kadapa Branch with IFSC Code ICIC0000674, pending disposal of the above writ petition and pass

Counsel for the Petitioner: BARRI PARTHASARADHI REDDY

Counsel for the Respondents: THENEPALLI NIRANJAN SC FOR CENTRAL. GOVT

Counsel for the Respondents: KUNUKU RAJA SEKHAR

The Court made the following order:

Challenging the action of respondent No.3 in addressing e-mail dated 25.10.2023 to ICICI Bank, Kadapa Branch with IFSC Code ICIC0000674 relating to the account No.056701512986 and thereby instructing to Debit Freeze the account of the petitioner and the consequential action of respondent No.2 in Debit Freezing the accounts of the petitioner based on such communication, the present Writ Petition has filed..

2. Heard Sri B.Parthasaradhi Reddy, learned counsel for the petitioner, Sri T.Niranjan, learned counsel for respondent No.1, Sri M.Vipin Viswas, learned counsel, representing Sri K.Rajasekhar, learned counsel for respondent Nos.2 & 4. No representation on behalf of respondent No.3.

3. Learned counsel for the petitioner, while reiterating the contents of the writ affidavit contended that the petitioner received a request for purchase of 1,360 USDT at the price of Rs.92.60 per USDT, which was accepted by the petitioner. Subsequently, on 26.05.2023, the said purchaser paid an amount of Rs.1,25,936/- from his bank account to the petitioner's account, which is presently under debit freeze. He further submitted that a cyber complaint was registered at Indore against the purchaser, alleging cyber fraud. Neither the petitioner's name was included in the said complaint nor was the petitioner involved in the alleged cyber fraud. He further submitted that respondent No.3 addressed an e-mail dated 25.10.2023 to ICICI Bank, Kadapa Branch, instructing it to debit-freeze the petitioner's account. Consequently, respondent No.2 debit-froze the petitioner's account, thereby disabling the

petitioner from operating the said account. The petitioner tried to contact respondent No.3 through e-mail, explaining that the transactions which led to the debit freeze of the petitioner's account were lawful. However, there was no response from respondent No.3. Hence, prayed to direct the respondents not to interfere with the petitioner's operation of the said bank account.

4. On the other hand, learned counsel for Respondent Nos.2 and 4, while reiterating the contents of the counter-affidavit, contended that the respondent-bank received a notice dated 25.10.2023 from the Additional Superintendent of Police, Crime Branch, Indore, directing the respondent-bank to mark a debit freeze on the specified account. Upon receipt of the said notice, the respondent-bank, in discharge of its statutory obligations and in compliance with the directions issued by the competent investigating authorities, took necessary action to mark a debit freeze on the petitioner's account. He further submitted that the action taken by the respondent-bank was solely pursuant to the communications received from the investigating authorities and was not the result of any independent decision taken by the respondent-bank. He submitted that the respondent-bank had acted *bona fide* and strictly in accordance with its statutory and regulatory obligations and it had neither initiated nor influenced any action against the petitioner, but had merely complied with the directions issued by the investigating authorities in connection with the ongoing investigation. The respondent-bank has no personal interest in the subject matter of the present writ petition. Hence, prayed to dismiss the writ petition.

5. Perused the material available on record and considered the submissions made by learned counsel for the parties.

6. Admittedly, the petitioner's bank account was debit-frozen pursuant to the instructions received from the Additional Superintendent of Police, Crime Branch, Indore. However, there is no material placed on record to show that the petitioner is an accused in any crime or that the entire amount lying in the petitioner's bank account represents the proceeds of any alleged cyber fraud.

7. It is fairly settled that debit freezes must be strictly confined to the disputed or suspected amount rather than blocking the entire account. Freezing an entire bank account is considered disproportionate, illegal, and a violation of rights under Articles 19(1)(g) and 21 of the Constitution, as it paralyzes livelihoods and legitimate business operations.

8. In the present case, from the communication issued by the Superintendent of Police, Crime Branch, Indore, it appears that the disputed transaction relates only to an amount of Rs.26,600/-. In the absence of any material establishing that the entire balance lying in the petitioner's account is connected with the alleged fraudulent transaction, freezing the entire bank account cannot be sustained. Therefore, this Court is inclined to direct the bank to mark a lien only on the specific fraudulent/disputed amount while unfreezing the remainder of the account so as to enable the petitioner to operate it normally. This Court, in similar circumstances, has already disposed of Writ Petition No.3444 of 2026 directing the respondent bank to mark lien

only on the specific disputed amount while unfreezing the remainder of the account of the petitioner.

9. Accordingly, this writ petition is disposed of, directing the respondent bank to mark lien only on the specific disputed amount while unfreezing the remainder of the account of the petitioner. There shall be no order as to costs.

Consequently, miscellaneous petitions, pending if any, shall stand closed.

JUSTICE RAVI CHEEMALAPATI

29.07.2026
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THE HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE RAVI CHEEMALAPATI

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