2026:PHHC:056344

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH**

208+217

2026:PHHC:056344

Date of decision: 10.04.2026.

(1)

CRM-M-18262-2026 (O&M).

PARKASH RAM DEVRA

...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

STATE OF HARYANA

...Respondent(s)

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(2)

CRM-M-18521-2026 (O&M).

VISHNU RAM

...Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

STATE OF HARYANA

...Respondent(s)

CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VINOD S. BHARDWAJ

PRESENT Mr. Sanjeev Majra, Advocate, and
Mr. Hement Kumar, Advocate,
for the petitioner(s) in CRM-M-18262-2026.

Mr. Santosh Kumar, Advocate, and
Mr. Sonu Kashyap, Advocate,
for the petitioner(s) in CRM-M-18521-2026.

Mr. Onkar Singh Wahla, Sr. DAG, Haryana.

<u>VINOD S. BHARDWAJ, J. (Oral)</u>

Both the above mentioned petitions filed under Section 483 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, for grant of regular bail to the petitioner(s) in case bearing FIR No.64 dated 04.10.2024, under Section(s) 61(2), 318(4), 319(2), 308(2) and 238 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (erstwhile Sections 120-B, 420, 419, 384 and 201 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860) and Section 66-C of the Information and Technology Act, registered at Police Station Cyber Crime, Kurukshetra, District Kurukshetra, are being decided by a common order since they arise out of the same incident.

Briefly stated, the present case arises out of a written complaint submitted by Dr. Vibha Singh, wife of late Dr. Kulbhushan Singh, resident of House No. 691, Sector-7, Kurukshetra. The complainant, a retired Assistant Professor, stated that she was using mobile SIM Card No. 98965-44980 and was also in possession of another SIM Card bearing No. 98963-62499, which had earlier been used by her deceased husband. She further stated that she maintained bank accounts in five different banks. It is alleged that on 13.09.2024, at about 11:28 A.M., she received a phone call from mobile number 95805-05659. The caller introduced himself as Arun Kumar and claimed to be calling from TRAI. He allegedly informed her that a complaint had been registered against her on 08.08.2024 for uploading pornographic content on the internet and that her Aadhaar Card had been linked to the said activity. The caller thereafter transferred the call to another person, who introduced himself as Constable Vikram, who in turn connected her to an alleged Investigating Officer named Anand Rana. It is further alleged that the said Anand Rana informed the complainant that her Aadhaar Card was linked to three bank accounts being used for illegal money laundering activities. He allegedly asked her to travel to Mumbai to lodge a complaint; however, upon her expressing inability to do so on account of old age, he inquired whether she had ever submitted her Aadhaar Card in places such as Mumbai, Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana or Kerala. The complainant stated that she had visited Ayodhya in September 2023. On the instructions of the said person, she sent a copy of her Aadhaar Card via WhatsApp. It is further alleged that the said Anand Rana subsequently initiated a video call from mobile number 85285-76914 and questioned her regarding one Mohammad Islam Nawab Malik, allegedly involved in money laundering. Upon her denying any knowledge of such a person, she was threatened with arrest and further intimidated by reference to her daughter and son-in-law, including threats that her daughter would be deported from the United States if she did not comply. The complainant has alleged that she was thereafter kept under continuous "digital arrest" through video calls. On 17.09.2024, at the instance of the said persons, she downloaded the Skype application and created an account in her name. She was then instructed to connect to a Maharashtra Emergency Portal, where another individual, claiming to be a DCP, threatened her further and shared a link appearing to be of the Supreme Court of India. It is further alleged that, under coercion and fear, the complainant was directed to liquidate her fixed deposits and transfer the amounts to various bank accounts provided by the accused persons.

Acting upon such instructions, she transferred multiple amounts, including Rs.20,00,000/-, Rs.28,50,000/-, Rs.69,00,000/-, Rs.59,00,000/-, Rs.8,50,000/-, Rs.30,00,000/-, Rs.20,00,000/-, Rs.4,00,000/-, Rs.5,00,000/- and Rs.2,75,000/-, amounting in total to Rs.2,46,75,000/- into different accounts. On the basis of these allegations, the complainant sought initiation of criminal proceedings against the accused persons and prayed for recovery of the defrauded amount.

Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioner(s) contend that the role attributed to the petitioners is limited in nature, inasmuch as they merely provided their bank accounts, which were subsequently used by the main fraudsters for routing the defrauded amounts obtained from the complainant. It is contended that so far as petitioner Parkash Ram Devra in CRM-M-18262-2026 is concerned, the bank account in question belongs to him, into which an amount of Rs.69 lakhs was credited. It is, however, contended that in his disclosure statement, he nominated co-petitioner Vishnu Ram (in CRM-M-18521-2026), who was his tenant and was running a photography business from the shop owned by Parkash Ram Devra. It is further contended that the petitioner Parkash Ram Devra derived only a sum of Rs.10,000/- from the said transaction and that the amounts credited into his account were thereafter transferred to various other accounts.

They submit that similarly placed co-accused, namely Manjeet Singh, has already been granted the concession of regular bail vide order dated 18.03.2026 passed in CRM-M-40884-2025 and connected petitions, and thus, the petitioners are entitled to parity. It is also contended that the petitioners have been in custody since 12.04.2025 and have undergone an actual custody of nearly one year. It is submitted that, although the investigation stands complete, charges have not yet been framed and the trial has not commenced. It is further pointed out that out of 33 prosecution witnesses cited, not a single witness has been examined thus far, indicating that the trial is likely to take considerable time. Learned counsel submits that the petitioners have clean antecedents and are not involved in any other criminal case. It is further contended that the offences alleged are triable by the Court of Judicial Magistrate and, thus, in the totality of the circumstances, the petitioners deserve to be enlarged on regular bail.

State counsel, however, does not dispute that the petitioners herein were only account holders and have clean antecedents. It is also not disputed that, although certain amounts were credited into their respective accounts, the petitioners were not the ultimate beneficiaries of the entire sum and that the amounts so received were subsequently transferred to various other accounts. It is further fairly conceded that the case of the present petitioners stands on a footing similar to that of co-accused Manjeet Singh, who has already been granted the concession of regular bail vide order dated 18.03.2026 passed in CRM-M-40884-2025.

Having heard the learned counsel for the parties and taking into consideration the period of actual custody undergone by the petitioners herein which is nearly 01 year, the stage of the trial where the same is yet to commence and there are total 33 witnesses cited by the prosecution, the nature of allegations, their clean antecedents and also bearing in mind that similarly placed co-accused Manjeet Singh has already been released on regular bail vide order dated 18.03.2026 passed in CRM-M-40884-2025, I deem it appropriate to allow the present petitions.

Accordingly, the present petitions are allowed. The petitioners are ordered to be released on bail on their furnishing requisite bail bond/surety bond to the satisfaction of the Trial Court/Duty Magistrate, concerned.

It is made clear that the petitioners shall not extend any threat and shall not influence any prosecution witnesses in any manner directly or indirectly.

The observation made hereinabove shall not be construed as an expression on the merits of the case and the trial Court shall decide the case on the basis of available material.

April 10, 2026. **(VINOD S. BHARDWAJ)**
raj arora **JUDGE**

Whether speaking/reasoned : Yes/No
Whether reportable : Yes/No