

IN THE HIGH COURT FOR THE STATE OF TELANGANA

AT HYDERABAD

THE HONOURABLE SMT JUSTICE K. SUJANA

CRIMINAL PETITION No.12721 of 2025

18.03.2026

Between:

Konatham Dhilip Kumar @ Konatham Dileep Reddy,
And another.

PETITIONERS

AND

The State of Telangana,
Rep by Public Prosecutor,
High Court for the State of
Telangana, at Hyderabad,
And another.

RESPONDENTS

ORDER

This Criminal Petition is filed seeking the Court to quash the proceedings initiated against the petitioners who are arrayed as accused Nos.1 & 3 in FIR.No.86 of 2025 before the Nakrekal Police Station, registered for the offences punishable under Sections 353(1)(c) and 352(2) of BNS.

2. The brief facts of the case are that basing on the complaint lodged by the 2nd respondent, the prosecution case is that the 2nd respondent, a Congress party leader belonging to BC (Yadav) community, gave a report alleging that certain YouTube channels and T-News telecasted false news linking him with one Guduguntla Shankar, a private teacher arrested in connection with the SSC Telugu Board exam paper leakage case. It was alleged that the channels portrayed him as cooperating with Shankar in the offence, thereby damaging his reputation, political career, and causing mental distress. It was further alleged that BRS party leaders and social media in-charges forwarded the said fake news on Twitter without verifying its truth, thereby insulting him and spreading false information

3. Heard Sri TV. Ramana, learned counsel for petitioners, and Sri Ramachandra Reddy, learned Additional Public Prosecutor, appearing for respondent – State.

4. Learned counsel for the petitioners submitted that petitioners are innocent and have been falsely implicated due to political rivalry and to divert public attention from the SSC

paper leakage case. He contended that the allegations in the complaint do not disclose any offence under Section 353 BNS, as there is no mens rea attributable to the petitioners. Further, no rumour or alarming news was circulated by them so as to attract Section 353(2) BNS, which requires intent to promote enmity or hatred between communities. He averred that forwarding of news items on social media does not ipso facto constitute a criminal act, and the alleged fake news was not generated by the petitioners themselves. He emphasized that multiple FIRs have been registered for the same incident, which is impermissible in law, and this Court has already quashed FIR No.86 of 2025 against another accused by order dated 09-09-2025 in Crl.P. No.8966 of 2025. Therefore, continuation of proceedings against the petitioners amounts to abuse of process of law, and the FIR is liable to be quashed.

5. On the other hand, learned Additional Public Prosecutor, appearing for respondent No.1 –State, opposed the submissions made by learned counsel for petitioners, and contended that complaint clearly discloses that the accused persons, with an intention to damage the complainant's reputation and political career, forwarded fake news on social

media. He further contended that during investigation, witnesses were examined and incriminating material including social media posts was collected. Therefore, the FIR cannot be quashed at the threshold, as the matter is under investigation and sufficient material exists to proceed against the petitioners.

6. Having regard to rival submissions made, and on going through the material placed on record, it is evident that the allegations in FIR No.86 of 2025 arise out of the incident of alleged false news circulation in connection with the SSC paper leakage case. The complainant's grievance is that her reputation and political career were damaged by social media posts linking her with one of the accused. However, even assuming for a moment that the petitioners had circulated or forwarded such content, the essential ingredients of Sections 353(1)(c) and 353(2) of BNS, are not attracted.

7. At this stage, it is imperative to note that this Court has already considered an identical issue in CrI.P. Nos.8965, 8966 and 8989 of 2025 by common order dated 09.09.2025, wherein it was categorically held that the alleged Twitter post

relating to the SSC paper leakage case does not disclose any intention to incite enmity between communities, nor does it creates fear or alarm to the public so as to disturb public tranquility. It was further held that registration of multiple FIRs on the basis of one and the same incident amounts to abuse of process of law, relying on the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in **T.T. Antony v. State of Kerala**¹ and this Court in **Jakka Vinod Kumar Reddy v. State of Telangana**².

8. That being so, it is held that applying the same reasoning to the present case, the allegations in FIR No.86 of 2025 are squarely covered by the earlier order of this Court. The alleged posts, even if assumed to be made by the petitioners, do not satisfy the statutory requirements of Section 353 BNS. Therefore, continuation of proceedings against the petitioners would amount to an abuse of process of law.

¹ (AIR 2001 SC 2637)

² (AIR ONLINE 2021 TEL 76)

9. Hence, this Criminal Petition is allowed and the proceedings initiated against the petitioners in FIR.No.86 of 2025 before the Nakrekal Police Station, are hereby quashed.

Miscellaneous applications, if any pending, shall also stand closed.

K. SUJANA, J

Date : 18.03.2026
PT

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