

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-63021-2024
Reserved on: 05.02.2025
Pronounced on: 14.02.2025

Azam @ Vakil ...Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab ...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ANOOP CHITKARA

Present: Mr. Saqib Ali Khan, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Akshay Kumar, AAG, Punjab.

ANOOP CHITKARA, J.

FIR No.	Dated	Police Station	Sections
26	15.03.2024	City 2, Malerkotla, District Malerkotla	21, 61, 85 of NDPS Act

1. The petitioner incarcerated in the FIR captioned above had come up before this Court under Section 483 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, [BNSS], seeking regular bail.
2. As per paragraph 13 of the bail application, the petitioner has clean antecedents.
3. The facts and allegations are taken from the status report filed by the State. On 15.03.2024, based on secret information, the Police seized 270 grams heroin from a packet, which was with the three accused, namely, Mohd. Azam, Azam (petitioner) and Sagufta @ Bobby. The Investigator claims to have complied with all the statutory requirements of the NDPS Act, 1985, and CrPC, 1973.
4. Counsel for the petitioner seeks bail on the grounds of parity with co-accused Sagufta @ Shagufta @ Bobby, who was granted bail by this Court vide order dated 29.11.2024 passed in CRM-M-34735-2024. The petitioner's counsel prays for bail by imposing any stringent conditions and contends that further pre-trial incarceration would cause an irreversible injustice to the petitioner and his family.
5. The State's counsel opposes bail and refers to the status report.
6. It would be appropriate to refer to the following portions of the status report,

which read as follows:

“12. Role of petitioner and evidence

That on 15.03.2024, ASI Maghar Singh along with police party in connection with patrolling and checking of suspected persons was present at the road going towards Manna Phatak from Badi Eidgah, then he received secret information that the present petitioner and his co-accused are indulged in the business of selling Chitta/Heroin. Considering that information to be true and reliable, raid was conducted at the said relevant place and accused/petitioner Ajam @ Vakil and his co-accused were apprehended and from their conscious possession 270 gram Chitta (heroin) was recovered. As per chemical report, the recovery of 270 gram chitta (heroin) effected from the conscious possession of the petitioner and his co-accused which falls within the ambit of commercial quantity. So, a specific role is found to be attributed to the petitioner in the commission of present offence.”

REASONING:

7. The quantity allegedly involved in this case is commercial. Given this, the rigors of S. 37 of the NDPS Act apply in the present case. The petitioner must satisfy the twin conditions put in place by the Legislature under Section 37 of the NDPS Act.

8. The co-accused has already been granted bail by this Court in CRM-M-34735-2024 Sagufta @ Shagufta @ Bobby v. State of Punjab, decided on 29.11.2024. Thus, the petitioner is entitled to bail on parity.

9. As per paragraph 12 of the bail petition, the petitioner has been in custody since 15.03.2024. As per the custody certificate dated 04.02.2025, the petitioner's total custody in this FIR is ten months and seventeen days. Given the penal provisions invoked viz-a-viz pre-trial custody, coupled with the prima facie analysis of the nature of allegations, and the other factors peculiar to this case, there would be no justifiability for further pre-trial incarceration at this stage.

10. Without commenting on the case's merits, in the facts and circumstances peculiar to this case, and for the reasons mentioned above, the petitioner makes a case for bail. This order shall come into force from the time it is uploaded on this Court's official webpage.

11. Given above, provided the petitioner is not required in any other case, the petitioner shall be released on bail in the FIR captioned above subject to furnishing

bonds to the satisfaction of the concerned Court and due to unavailability before any nearest Ilqa Magistrate/duty Magistrate. Before accepting the surety, the concerned Court must be satisfied that if the accused fails to appear, such surety can produce the accused.

12. While furnishing a personal bond, the petitioner shall mention the following personal identification details:

1.	AADHAR number	
2.	Passport number (If available) and when the attesting officer/court considers it appropriate or considers the accused a flight risk.	
3.	Mobile number (If available)	
4.	E-Mail id (If available)	

13. This order is subject to the petitioner’s complying with the following terms.

14. The petitioner shall abide by all statutory bond conditions and appear before the concerned Court(s) on all dates. The petitioner shall not tamper with the evidence, influence, browbeat, pressurize, induce, threaten, or promise, directly or indirectly, any witnesses, Police officials, or any other person acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the case or dissuade them from disclosing such facts to the Police or the Court.

15. Given the background of allegations against the petitioner, it becomes paramount to protect the detection staff members of society, and incapacitating the accused would be one of the primary options until the filing of the closure report or discharge, or acquittal. Consequently, it would be appropriate to restrict the possession of firearms. [This restriction is being imposed based on the preponderance of the evidence of probability and not of evidence of certainty, i.e., beyond a reasonable doubt; and as such, it is not to be construed as an intermediate sanction]. Given the nature of the allegations and the other circumstances peculiar to this case, the petitioner shall surrender all weapons, firearms, and ammunition, if any, along with the arms license to the concerned authority within fifteen days of release from prison and inform the Investigator of the compliance. However, subject to the Indian Arms Act, 1959, the petitioner shall be entitled to renew and reclaim them in case of acquittal in this case, provided otherwise permissible under the concerned rules. Restricting firearms would instill confidence in the victim(s), their families, and society; it would also restrain the accused from influencing the witnesses and repeating the offense.

16. The conditions mentioned above imposed by this court are to endeavor to reform and ensure the accused does not repeat the offense and also to block the

menace of drug abuse. In Mohammed Zubair v. State of NCT of Delhi, 2022:INSC:735 [Para 28], Writ Petition (Criminal) No 279 of 2022, Para 29, decided on July 20, 2022, A Three-Judge bench of Hon'ble Supreme Court holds that "The bail conditions imposed by the Court must not only have a nexus to the purpose that they seek to serve but must also be proportional to the purpose of imposing them. The courts, while imposing bail conditions must balance the liberty of the accused and the necessity of a fair trial. While doing so, conditions that would result in the deprivation of rights and liberties must be eschewed."

17. In Md. Tajiur Rahaman v. The State of West Bengal, decided on 08-Nov-2024, SLP (Crl) 12225-2024, Hon'ble Supreme Court holds in Para 7, "It goes without saying that if the petitioner is found involved in such like offence in future, the concession of bail granted to him today will liable to be withdrawn and the petitioner is bound to face the necessary consequences."

18. **This bail is conditional, and the foundational condition is that if the petitioner indulges in any non-bailable offense, the State shall file an application for cancellation of this bail before the Trial Court, which shall be at liberty to cancel this bail.**

19. The concerned trial court is authorized to delete, modify, or relax any of the above conditions and shall be competent to do so in accordance with the law.

20. Any observation made hereinabove is neither an expression of opinion on the case's merits nor shall the trial Court advert to these comments.

21. A certified copy of this order would not be needed for furnishing bonds, and any Advocate for the Petitioner can download this order along with case status from the official web page of this Court and attest it to be a true copy. If the attesting officer wants to verify its authenticity, such an officer can also verify its authenticity and may download and use the downloaded copy for attesting bonds.

22. **Petition allowed** in terms mentioned above. All pending applications, if any, stand disposed of.

(ANOOP CHITKARA)
JUDGE

14.02.2025
Jyoti-II

Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes
Whether reportable: No.