



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

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**CRA-D-436-2026 (O&M)
Date of decision: 15.07.2026**

Narinder Singh @ Shipu

...Appellant(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab

...Respondent(s)

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**CRA-D-593-2026 (O&M)
Date of decision: 15.07.2026**

Gagandeep Bangar

...Appellant(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab

...Respondent(s)

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**CRA-D-708-2026 (O&M)
Date of decision: 15.07.2026**

Dalip Kumar

...Appellant(s)

VERSUS

State of Punjab

...Respondent(s)

**CORAM : HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VINOD S. BHARDWAJ
HON BLE MRS. JUSTICE SUKHVINDER KAUR**

Present :- Mr. Nikhil Ghai, Advocate;
Ms. Akshita Kansal, Advocate;
Mr. Aditya Rampal, Advocate;
Mr. Armaanveer Singh, Advocate for the appellant
in CRA-D-436-2026.

Mr. Saurav Bhatia, Advocate;
Mr. Kuljinder Billing, Advocate;
Ms. Divyangana Chauhan, Advocate;

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Mr. Navdeep Khokhar, Advocate for the appellant
 in CRA-D-593-2026.

Mr. Hakam Singh, Advocate;
 Ms. Amrita Negi, Advocate;
 Mr. Ajayveer Singh Virk, Advocate for the appellant
 in CRA-D-708-2026.

Mr. Mohit Kapoor, Sr. DAG Punjab.

VINOD S. BHARDWAJ, J. (Oral)

1. These three appeals, having been filed by different accused/appellants, for grant of regular bail in case bearing FIR No.20 dated 04.04.2024, registered under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Sections 25, 27 of the Arms Act, 1959 and Sections 10, 13, 15, 16 of UAPA (Sections 212, 121, 121-A and 120-B of IPC added later on), at Police Station Balachaur, District Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar, are being decided by this common order.

2. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the appellants submits that, as per the prosecution case, the FIR was registered on the statement of Gurpreet Singh, son of Gurdev Singh, resident of Village Jatpura, Police Station Sadar Karnal, District Karnal, who stated to the effect that on 03.04.2024, at about 1:00 p.m., he received a telephonic call from his maternal uncle, Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta, son of Jagtar Singh, resident of Village Rod, Police Station Safidon, District Jind, requesting him to accompany him to Balachaur for collecting certain money from some person. In pursuance thereof, the complainant accompanied his maternal uncle in an MG Hector motor vehicle bearing registration No. HR-05BJ-4505, which was being driven by Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta and the complainant occupied the front

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passenger seat. Learned counsel further submits that the complainant and his maternal uncle reached Balachaur at approximately 6:30 p.m. Thereafter, Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta received a telephone call from an unidentified person, who directed him to proceed near a hospital situated adjacent to HR Dhaba. Acting upon the said directions, they reached the indicated location at about 6:40 p.m., where two persons were waiting on a Splendor motorcycle on the left side of the road. Upon the signal given by the said motorcyclists, the vehicle was stopped. At the instance of his maternal uncle, the complainant alighted from the vehicle to collect the money from the persons present on the motorcycle while Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta remained seated inside the vehicle. It is alleged that while the complainant was engaged in conversation with one of the motorcyclists, the other person approached towards the left side of the vehicle, opened the rear left door and fired a gunshot from a pistol at Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta. Upon hearing the gunshot, the complainant immediately rushed towards the vehicle and found that his maternal uncle had sustained the firearm injury and had succumbed thereto. It is further alleged that both the assailants fled from the spot on the motorcycle, carrying with them the pistol used in the commission of the offence. The assailants also removed the mobile phones of both i.e. the complainant and the deceased, along with the SIM cards contained therein. Hence the present FIR.

3. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the appellants submit that during the investigation conducted at the place of occurrence, the investigating agency allegedly recovered a poster bearing the photograph of one Gurpreet Singh @ Gopi Nawashariya from the vehicle of the deceased wherein responsibility for the murder of Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta was

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allegedly claimed by Gurpreet Singh @ Gopi Nawashariya. It is further contended that, during investigation, the call detail records and other electronic evidence were collected and on the basis thereof, the investigating agency identified mobile SIM No. 88725-00869 as having been used by the assailants involved in the commission of the offence. Upon verification, the said SIM card was found to have been issued in the name of one Sat Parkash.

4. Learned counsel submit that, since Sat Parkash was already in custody in another case, he was produced before the investigating agency on production warrants. During interrogation, he made a disclosure to the effect that he had handed over the aforesaid SIM card to one Manish Kumar @ Lucky whereupon Manish Kumar @ Lucky was also nominated as an accused in the present case. It is further submitted that Manish Kumar @ Lucky, during the course of investigation, disclosed that he had, in turn, handed over the said SIM card to one Narinder Singh @ Shipu, who is the appellant in CRA-D-436-2026. It is contended that, on the basis of the disclosure statements attributed to Sat Parkash and Manish Kumar @ Lucky, Narinder Singh @ Shipu was nominated as an accused in the present case vide GD No. 26 dated 22.06.2024.

5. Learned counsel further submit that appellant-Narinder Singh @ Shipu was arrested on 22.06.2024 and he allegedly disclosed to the effect that, at the instance of Jaswinder Singh @ Chindu, he had handed over the aforesaid SIM card to one Gagandeep Singh Bangar, appellant in CRA-D-593-2026, and Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi (who has been alleged to be one of the principal assailants/shooters). It is further alleged that, in consideration thereof, Narinder Singh @ Shipu received an amount of Rs.2,000/- from

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Gagandeep Singh Bangar and Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi. On the basis of the said disclosure statement, Gagandeep Singh Bangar and Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi were also nominated as accused vide GD No. 16 dated 23.06.2024.

6. It is further contended that Gagandeep Singh Bangar, appellant in CRA-D-593-2026, was subsequently arrested in the present case after being brought on production warrants from Kapurthala Jail. His disclosure statement was thereafter recorded wherein he stated that his associate Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi and one Simranjit Singh @ Bablu, who were in possession of firearms, had met him at the house of one Dalip Singh @ Kashi and during the said meeting, a plan was hatched to eliminate Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta.

7. Learned counsel further submit that, as per the aforesaid disclosure statement, Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi and Simranjit Singh @ Bablu thereafter stayed at the house of Dalip Kumar (appellant in CRA-D-708-2026) situated in Village Bakapur Guru and that Gagandeep Singh Bangar was in alleged possession of the keys of the said house and facilitated their stay therein and on the following day, i.e., 04.04.2024, Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi and Simranjit Singh @ Bablu left the said premises in an Indigo car while leaving behind the motorcycle used by them at the residence of Dalip Kumar.

8. It is further contended that the Police alleged that the motorcycle used in the offence belonged to one Sanjeev Kumar, which was sold by him to Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi (shooter) and the said motorcycle was later recovered from the house of one Jaskaran Singh, at the disclosure of Gagandeep Bangar. Hence, all these persons were nominated as accused in the present case.

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9. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the appellants further submit that accused-Simranjit Singh @ Bablu, who has been alleged to be one of the principal shooters in the occurrence, stated in his disclosure that while lodged in jail in the year 2018, he came into contact with Gurpreet Singh @ Gopi Nawashariya and the two developed acquaintance during their incarceration. As per the prosecution, Simranjit Singh @ Bablu further disclosed that Gurpreet Singh @ Gopi Nawashariya subsequently directed him to establish contact with Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi, the other shooter, at whose residence he used to communicate with Gurpreet Singh @ Gopi Nawashariya.

10. Learned counsel further submit that, as per the prosecution case, Harwinder Singh @ Rainda, Surinder Singh @ Shinda and Harpreet Singh @ Happy remained in contact with Simranjit Singh @ Bablu and coordinated with him through the 'Signal' messaging application. It is alleged that the aforesaid persons informed Simranjit Singh @ Bablu that Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta (since deceased) was acting as an agent of the Indian security forces and was also involved in the murder of their associate, Paramjeet Singh @ Panjwar, hence, Simranjit Singh @ Bablu was instructed to eliminate Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta for obstructing their activities. It is contended that, in the said disclosure statement, Simranjit Singh @ Bablu confessed to having participated in the murder of Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta and attributed the conspiracy and instigation for the commission of the offence to Gurpreet Singh @ Gopi Nawashariya, Harwinder Singh @ Rainda, Surinder Singh @ Shinda and Harpreet Singh @ Happy.

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11. Counsel contend that the prosecution has not referred to any collected evidence on the basis whereof the appellant could be said to be involved in the unlawful activities or any terrorist activities as defined under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. Further, there is also nothing on record on the basis whereof he may be said to be a part of an organised gang as the evidence nowhere establishes that Narinder Singh @ Shipu, Gagandeep Bangar and Dalip Kumar were in any manner in contact with any of the aforesaid operators who allegedly planned and executed the assassination of Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta.

12. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of appellant Narinder Singh @ Shipu has vehemently argued that the allegations attributed to the said appellant are limited in nature and do not disclose his involvement in the commission of the main offence. It is contended that the name of appellant Narinder Singh @ Shipu surfaced in the disclosure statement of Sat Parkash who disclosed that the SIM card issued in his name, which had been used by the assailants, had been handed over by him to Manish Kumar @ Lucky. Manish Kumar @ Lucky, in turn, disclosed that he had subsequently delivered the said SIM card to appellant Narinder Singh @ Shipu. It is also been alleged that Gagandeep Singh Bangar and Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi thereafter obtained the said SIM card from appellant Narinder Singh @ Shipu.

13. Learned counsel submits that, even if the prosecution version is accepted in its entirety, the only allegation against appellant Narinder Singh @ Shipu is that he handed over the aforesaid SIM card and, in lieu thereof, received a sum of Rs.2,000/-. It is contended that there is no material whatsoever to suggest that the appellant was aware of the conspiracy, the

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intended use of the SIM card, or the criminal design conceived by the principal accused. There is also no allegation that he participated in the planning, execution or facilitation of the murder beyond the aforesaid act. He thus submits that the limited role attributed to appellant Narinder Singh @ Shipu does not, by itself, justify an inference that he was a member of an organised crime syndicate or that he had knowingly participated in any organised criminal activity and that the mere act of handing over a SIM card, in the absence of any material demonstrating the knowledge, intention or common object, is wholly insufficient to fasten criminal liability upon the appellant or to attribute to him conscious participation in the alleged offence.

14. He further contends that the appellant was arrested in the present case on 21.06.2024 and has undergone an actual sentence of more than two years and only three prosecution witnesses have been examined out of total 42. It is also contended that there is no other pending case against the appellant and even though, he was nominated as an accused in case bearing FIR No.160 dated 05.10.2020 registered under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and Section 25 of the Arms Act, 1959 at Police Station Bullowal, however, he stands discharged in the said FIR vide order dated 20.10.2025 passed by the Judicial Magistrate 1st Class, Hoshiarpur. It is also contended that the role of the appellant cannot be distinguished from that of Manish Kumar @ Lucky, who has already been granted the concession of regular bail by this Court vide order dated 01.12.2025 passed in CRA-D-876-2025.

15. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of appellant Gagandeep Singh Bangar contends that the implication of the appellant rests primarily on the disclosure statement of co-accused Narinder Singh @ Shipu and that the

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prosecution attributes only two specific roles to him. It is submitted that, firstly, the appellant is alleged to have accompanied Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi for collecting the SIM card from appellant Narinder Singh @ Shipu. Secondly, it is alleged that, pursuant to the disclosure statement made by the appellant, the Splendor motorcycle used in the commission of the offence was recovered from the house of one Jaskaran Singh.

16. Learned counsel submits that the prosecution case is rendered inherently inconsistent by its own version of events. It is submitted that, after the occurrence, Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi and Simranjit Singh @ Bablu are alleged to have proceeded to the house of appellant Dalip Kumar (appellant in CRA-D-708-2026), where they met appellant Gagandeep Singh Bangar. It is further the prosecution case that the Splendor motorcycle used in the commission of the offence had been left at the house of Dalip Kumar when the assailants departed in an Indigo car. However, learned counsel points out that the prosecution has subsequently improved its case by alleging that the appellant thereafter removed the said motorcycle from the house of Dalip Kumar and shifted it to the residence of one Jaskaran Singh, from where it was ultimately recovered. It is argued that these two versions are mutually inconsistent.

17. Learned counsel has further drawn attention to the fact that the motorcycle in question was registered in the name of one Sanjeev Kumar, who is alleged to have sold the same to Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi. It is, thus, contended that the recovery of the motorcycle from the residence of Jaskaran Singh does not, by itself, establish the complicity of the appellant in the absence of any material connecting him either with the said premises or with

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Jaskaran Singh, who is admittedly not an accused in the present case. It is thus contended that the prosecution has failed to establish the necessary link connecting the appellant with the recovery or with the commission of the offence.

18. He further contends that the appellant was arrested on 12.07.2024 and has undergone an actual sentence of more than two years and that apart from one another case bearing FIR No.52 dated 30.11.2023 registered under Sections 25, 25(7) of the Arms Act, 1959 and Sections 120-B, 153, 153A, 201, 212, 216 and 384 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 at Police Station SSOC (State Special Operation Cell), there is no other case that has been registered against the appellant. It is further contended that there is no material available on record to establish that the appellant was, at any point of time, in contact with any of the kingpins behind the occurrence. The prosecution seeks to attribute knowledge and criminal participation to the appellant solely on the basis of the disclosure statement made by him, wherein he is stated to have disclosed that he had seen Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi carrying a firearm. It is contended that the mere fact that the appellant may have seen Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi in possession of a weapon, even if assumed to be true, is wholly insufficient to infer that the appellant had knowledge of the conspiracy or of the intended commission of the offence and there is no material to indicate that the appellant shared the common intention of the principal accused or that he knowingly facilitated or participated in the planning or execution of the crime.

19. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of appellant Dalip Kumar vehemently contends that the allegations against the appellant are confined to

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the effect that the assailants had stayed at his house prior to the occurrence, however, the said allegation is founded entirely upon the disclosure statement of co-accused Gagandeep Singh Bangar. Learned counsel submits that Gagandeep Singh Bangar had disclosed that he was in possession of the keys of the house of appellant Dalip Kumar and that it was he who facilitated the stay of Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi and Simranjit Singh @ Bablu at the said premises. He thus argues that the prosecution's own case indicates that the shelter, if any, was arranged by Gagandeep Singh Bangar and not by appellant Dalip Kumar.

20. It is further contended that there is no material whatsoever on record to suggest that appellant Dalip Kumar had knowledge that the assailants had stayed in his house or that he had permitted them to occupy the premises. Also, there is no evidence to indicate that the appellant was aware of their involvement in any criminal activity or that he had any prior knowledge of the conspiracy or the proposed commission of the offence. Learned counsel submits that, even if the prosecution version is accepted in its entirety, the allegations against the appellant, at best, would be of harboring offenders. However, even such an allegation remains wholly unsubstantiated in the absence of any material demonstrating that the appellant knowingly or intentionally provided shelter to persons whom he knew, or had reason to believe, to have committed or intended to commit an offence. He contends that the appellant has clean antecedents and no recovery has been effected from him and that he had surrendered before the Court on 23.04.2026 but challan qua him has not been filed so far.

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21. Per contra, learned State counsel, submits that the material collected during the course of investigation prima facie establishes that the appellants were participants in an organised criminal network, wherein persons operating from outside the country were recruiting individuals to execute targeted killings with the object of furthering terrorist activities within the territory of India. Learned State counsel contends that the murder of Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta was one such targeted killing and that the appellants, by their respective acts, facilitated the execution of the said conspiracy in concert with the principal conspirators and other members of the organised crime syndicate.

22. However, upon a specific query posed by the Court, learned State counsel fairly does not dispute that, at this stage, he is unable to point out any material, independent of the disclosure statements relied upon by the prosecution, which would prima facie establish the appellants' knowledge of the larger conspiracy or their conscious association with the principal conspirators or kingpins operating from abroad.. The period of custody as well as the criminal antecedents are not disputed.

23. We have heard the learned counsel appearing on behalf of the respective parties and have gone through the documents appended with the instant appeals with their able assistance.

24. Taking into consideration the rival submissions and the material presently available on record, we are of the prima facie view that arguable questions arise with regard to the precise nature and extent of the participation of the appellants in the conspiracy culminating in the murder of Rattandeep Singh @ Ratta, as also the degree of criminal liability, if any, that can

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ultimately be attributed to each of them. These are matters which would necessarily require a detailed examination during the course of trial. It also deserves to be noticed that Manish Kumar @ Lucky, against whom the allegations, insofar as the transfer of the SIM card is concerned, stand on a footing comparable to those levelled against appellant Narinder Singh @ Shipu, who has already been enlarged on regular bail by this Court vide order dated 01.12.2025 passed in CRA-D-876-2025. In the absence of any distinguishing circumstance having been pointed out by the prosecution, the principle of parity also weighs in favour of appellant Narinder Singh @ Shipu.

25. Insofar as appellant Dalip Kumar is concerned, the prosecution case itself proceeds on the premise that the keys of his house were in the possession of appellant Gagandeep Singh Bangar and that it was Gagandeep Singh Bangar who facilitated the stay of Jaspreet Singh @ Jassi and Simranjit Singh @ Bablu at the said premises. At this stage, there is no material to prima facie indicate that appellant Dalip Kumar had knowledge of the presence of the assailants in his house or that he consciously permitted them to use the premises with the requisite criminal intent. The extent of his knowledge and involvement, thus, remains a matter to be established during trial.

26. Similarly, the allegations attributed to appellant Gagandeep Singh Bangar are also open to serious debate. Apart from the allegation regarding the procurement of the SIM card and the recovery of the motorcycle, there remains an arguable issue as to the manner in which the prosecution proposes to establish that the appellant had prior knowledge of the conspiracy or was consciously participating therein. Equally arguable is

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the question as to how the appellant is alleged to have known about the presence of the motorcycle at the residence of Jaskaran Singh.

27. Keeping in view the aforesaid prima facie observations, the existence of substantial arguable issues, the fact that similarly placed co-accused has already been granted the concession of regular bail, the period of incarceration already undergone by the appellants and the stage of the trial, we deem it appropriate to enlarge the appellants on regular bail to the satisfaction of the trial Court.

28. The instant appeals are accordingly **allowed** and the appellants are ordered to be released on regular bail on their furnishing requisite bail bonds/surety bonds to the satisfaction of the trial Court/Duty Magistrate, concerned.

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

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

(VINOD S. BHARDWAJ)
JUDGE

(SUKHVINDER KAUR)
JUDGE

15.07.2026
Mangal Singh

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