

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

**CRA-S-1776-SB of 2004.
Date of Decision: 30.11.2016.**

MANWINDER SINGH

....APPELLANT.

VERSUS

STATE OF PUNJAB

....RESPONDENT.

CORAM : HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE SNEH PRASHAR

Present: Mr. Gaurav Sharma, Advocate for the appellant.

Mr. Neeraj Sharma, Assistant Advocate General, Punjab.

SNEH PRASHAR, J.

Appellant Manwinder Singh was held guilty, convicted and sentenced for commission of offence punishable under Section 25 of the Arms Act, 1959 (for short “the Act”) vide judgment of conviction and order of sentence dated 23.08.2004 recorded by learned Additional Sessions Judge (Adhoc) Fast Track Court, Ludhiana, in case based on First Information Report No.296 dated 11.09.2002 registered at Police Station Focal Point, Ludhiana.

The accusation of the prosecution was that in pursuance of a secret information received on 11.09.2002 by Sub Inspector Dilpreet Singh, a raid was conducted constituting different police parties at the specified place and the appellant alongwith four other persons, who were armed with deadly weapons and were making preparations to commit decoity, were apprehended. The appellant was apprehended by the police party headed by

ASI Lehmber Ram and on his personal search, a spring actuated knife was recovered from his possession and besides registration of a case under Section 399/402, 379/411 of the Indian Penal Code (for short, "IPC") against the appellant and his co-accused, the instant case under Section 25 of the Act was also registered against the appellant.

The appellant was charge-sheeted under Section 25 of the Act, to which he pleaded not guilty. The trial was completed in due process of law. Considering the evidence led by the prosecution and the appellant and the submissions made on behalf of the appellant, learned trial Court convicted the appellant under Section 25 of Act and sentenced him to undergo rigorous imprisonment for six months and to pay fine of Rs.500/- and in default of payment of fine to further undergo rigorous imprisonment for one month.

Feeling aggrieved by the impugned judgment of conviction and order of sentence dated 23.08.2004 passed by learned trial Court, the appellant preferred the instant appeal.

The submissions made by Mr. Gaurav Sharma, learned counsel representing the appellant and Mr. Neeraj Sharma, Assistant Advocate General for the State of Punjab have been heard and record perused.

As per allegation of the prosecution, the appellant alongwith four other persons was apprehended by the police on 11.09.2002 when they were found to be armed with deadly weapons and were making preparations to commit decoity. First Information Report No.294 dated 11.09.2002 under Section 399/402, 379/411 IPC and Section 25 of the Act was registered against the appellant and his co-accused. After trial of the said case, all the accused including the appellant were acquitted of the charges levelled

against them. In other words, the testimony of the police officials, on whom rested the story of the prosecution regarding apprehension/arrest of the appellant at a specified time and place, was disbelieved by the Court. For the said reason, the deposition of the same official witnesses with regard to arrest of the appellant from the alleged place in particular circumstances and then recovery of a spring actuated knife from his possession, cannot be held to be trustworthy.

In addition to the above, it is the case of the prosecution that the secret information, which led to raid by the police, was received by Sub Inspector Dilpreet Singh at 8:40/ 8:45 a.m. The place, from where the appellant and his co-accused were apprehended at about 11:00 p.m., was a public park. Needless to say that at such hour of the day it was not difficult for the police to join some independent public witness either in the raiding party or atleast at the time of taking personal search of the appellant after his arrest. PW1 HC Iqbal Singh and PW2 ASI Lehmbhar Ram admitted that the road leading towards the spot was a thoroughfare and was also a crowded place. PW2 ASI Lehmbhar Ram stated that the spring actuated knife recovered from the petitioner was not packed in a separate sealed parcel and that was a plane knife. His testimony indicates that the knife allegedly recovered was the kind easily available in the market. If the weapon was not packed in a sealed parcel with a slip containing the particulars of the case affixed on the same, it becomes difficult to accept that the knife that was produced in the Court was the actual case property. From that, the very story of recovery of knife from the appellant is rendered doubtful.

As a consequence to the above discussion, I conclude that the

reliance. Finding that the prosecution had failed to prove its charge against the appellant beyond the shadow of doubt, the appeal is accepted, the judgment of conviction and order of sentence dated 23.08.2004 recorded against the appellant are set aside and the appellant stands acquitted of the charge levelled against him. His bail/ surety bonds stand discharged.

(SNEH PRASHAR)
JUDGE

30.11.2016.
jitender sharma

Whether speaking/ reasoned	:	Yes
Whether Reportable	:	Yes