

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

**112**

**CRWP No. 1115 of 2021  
Date of decision:04.02.2021**

Harjeet Singh

... Petitioner

Vs.

State of Punjab and others

... Respondents

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUVIR SEHGAL**

Present:- None for the petitioner.

**SUVIR SEHGAL J. (ORAL)**

The Court has been convened through video conferencing due to Covid-19 pandemic.

There is no representation on behalf of the petitioner.

Message has been received from counsel for the petitioner in the whatsapp group formulated for the smooth functioning of the Court. Print out of which is taken on record.

This petition has been filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India for issuance of a writ in the nature of Habeas Corpus directing official respondents to get the dentenues, mentioned in para No.4 of the petition, released from the illegal detention of respondent No. 4.

A Division Bench of this Court in *LPA No. 32 of 2013*, titled

**'Murti versus The State of Punjab and others'**, has held as under:

*“It may be mentioned here that the allegations of the appellant in the writ petition are that the alleged detenues mentioned in para No.3 of the writ petition who are working as labourers at the brick kiln of respondent Nos. 4 & 5 are being kept as bonded labours. There can indeed be no doubt that if a labourer has been detained as bonded labour, it amounts to an offence under Sections 16 & 17 of the Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976. We, however, clarify that the aforesaid observation does not mean that the allegations levelled by the appellant have been accepted. Suffice it to observe that under the Act, the District Magistrate is under statutory obligation to hold a fact finding enquiry as and when a complaint alleging violation of the provisions of Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976 is received. Since the appellant in the instant case has specifically averred that the persons mentioned in para No.3 of the writ petition have been detained as bonded labourers, we allow this appeal and set aside/ modify the order dated 9.1.2013 passed by the learned Single Judge to the extent that the petitioner's writ petition is disposed of with a direction to the District Magistrate, Sangrur, to treat this writ petition as a complaint under the 1976 Act and take immediate action in accordance with law, within a period of one week from the date of*

*receiving a certified copy of this order  
alongwith a copy of the writ petition.”*

Accordingly, this Criminal Writ Petition is disposed of with a direction to District Magistrate, District Amritsar to treat this petition as a complaint under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 and take immediate action in accordance with law, within a period of one week from the date of receipt of a certified copy of this order along with a copy of the writ petition.

**04.02.2021**

pooja saini

**(SUVIR SEHGAL)  
JUDGE**

Whether Speaking/Reasoned : Yes/No

**Whether Reportable : Yes/No**