

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-6946-2022
Reserved on: 21.03.2022
Pronounced on: 30.03.2022

Laxman Singh
...Petitioner(s)
Versus
State of Punjab
...Respondent(s)

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ANOOP CHITKARA

Present: Mr. Vivek K. Thakur, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Harpreet Singh Multani, AAG, Punjab.

ANOOP CHITKARA, J.

FIR No.	Dated	Police Station	Sections
15	23.02.2016	Sadar, Kapurthala, District Kapurthala	453, 454, 427, 380 IPC

1. Challenging the order of proclamation dated 2.8.2016 (Annexure P-5), the petitioner, who claims to be residing in the United Kingdom for last two decades, has come up before this court under section 482 of Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (CrPC). Learned counsel for the petitioner does not press this petition for quashing of FIR captioned above as well as proclamation order dated 2.8.2016 at this stage and submits that he will be satisfied in case this Court directs the trial Court to release the petitioner on bail in case he surrenders before it.
2. Ld. counsel for the petitioner submitted that the main accused in the case stands acquitted by the trial court vide judgment dated 13-12-2021, Annexure P-6., and consequently the petitioner be extended the similar benefit.
3. After arguing for considerable time for the extension of similar benefit to the petitioner, who had been declared as a proclaimed offender, Id. counsel for the petitioner submits that the criminal justice system must not hamper and suffer because of the petitioner. Thus, would confine the prayers in the petition to grant of bail on the

petitioner's surrendering before the majesty of the concerned court, and reserving liberty to raise the given-up relief in the subsequent petition(s), if the need so arises.

4. Ld. counsel appearing for the State has strenuously opposed this petition, including the limited relief as confined by the petitioner.

5. Given above, this court is confining the adjudication of this matter to the extent mentioned herein, reserving the petitioner the liberty to file a fresh petition(s) as prayed. It is clarified that it shall be open and permissible to the petitioner to challenge the proclamation order and quashing of FIR on the grounds of similar benefit extended to the main accused, who stands acquitted in the trial.

6. The gist of the facts relevant to decide the remaining prayer is that some financial bungling allegedly took place in relation to family property, which led to the registration of FIR captioned above.

7. Due to non-appearance of the petitioner, Ld. ACJM, Kapurthala, vide order dated 2.8.2016, issued proclamation and proceeded against the petitioner under section 82 of CrPC.

8. The petitioner offers a detailed explanation in paragraphs 3 to 6. The crux of the entire explanation is that the petitioner was living abroad and despite the knowledge of this fact, the complainant intentionally arraigned him as an accused and went on to see that he is declared a proclaimed offender. The nature of order this court proposes to pass, there would be no necessity to reproduce the lengthy explanation, running into eleven pages.

9. The primary object of service is to secure the accused's presence in trial. The petitioner has approached this court on its own, which establishes the bona fide at this stage. Without adjudicating the explanation offered and stand taken by the petitioner, this court, in the exercise of its inherent powers under section 482 CrPC, deems it appropriate to grant the following limited relief to the petitioner, subject to the compliance of the conditions mentioned in this order.

10. In Gurbaksh Singh Sibbia v State of Punjab, 1980 (2) SCC 565, (Para 30), a Constitutional Bench of Supreme Court held that the bail decision must enter the cumulative effect of the variety of circumstances justifying the grant or refusal of bail. In Kalyan Chandra Sarkar v Rajesh Ranjan @ Pappu Yadav, 2005 (2) SCC 42, (Para 18) a three-member Bench of Supreme Court held that the persons accused of non-bailable offences are entitled to bail if the Court concerned concludes that the prosecution has failed to establish a prima facie case against him, or despite the existence of a prima

facie case, the Court records reasons for its satisfaction for the need to release such person on bail, in the given fact situations. The rejection of bail does not preclude filing a subsequent application. The courts can release on bail, provided the circumstances then prevailing requires, and a change in the fact situation. In State of Rajasthan v Balchand, AIR 1977 SC 2447, (Para 2 & 3), Supreme Court noticeably illustrated that the basic rule might perhaps be tersely put as bail, not jail, except where there are circumstances suggestive of fleeing from justice or thwarting the course of justice or creating other troubles in the shape of repeating offences or intimidating witnesses and the like by the petitioner who seeks enlargement on bail from the Court. It is true that the gravity of the offence involved is likely to induce the petitioner to avoid the course of justice and must weigh when considering the question of jail. So also, the heinousness of the crime. In Gudikanti Narasimhulu v Public Prosecutor, (1978) 1 SCC 240, (Para 16), Supreme Court held that the delicate light of the law favors release unless countered by the negative criteria necessitating that course. In Prahlad Singh Bhati v NCT, Delhi, (2001) 4 SCC 280, Supreme Court highlighted one of the factors for bail to be the public or the State's immense interest and similar other considerations. In Dataram Singh v State of Uttar Pradesh, (2018) 3 SCC 22, (Para 6), Supreme Court held that the grant or refusal of bail is entirely within the discretion of the judge hearing the matter and though that discretion is unfettered, it must be exercised judiciously, compassionately, and in a humane manner. Also, conditions for the grant of bail ought not to be so strict as to be incapable of compliance, thereby making the grant of bail illusory.

11. The possibility of the accused henceforth not attending the trial, and the likelihood of fleeing justice, can be taken care of by imposing elaborative and stringent conditions. In Sushila Aggarwal, (2020) 5 SCC 1, Para 92, the Constitutional Bench held that unusually, subject to the evidence produced, the Courts can impose restrictive conditions. In Sumit Mehta v. State of N.C.T. of Delhi, (2013)15 SCC 570, Para 11, Supreme Court holds that while exercising power Under Section 438 of the Code, the Court is duty-bound to strike a balance between the individual's right to personal freedom and the right of investigation of the police. While exercising utmost restraint, the Court can impose conditions countenancing its object as permissible under the law to ensure an uninterrupted and unhampered investigation.

12. A reference to the judgment dated 13-12-2021, passed by Ld. Additional Chief Judicial magistrate, Kapurthala, reveals that the petitioner was arraigned as accused no. 1, alongwith 2nd accused Gurmeet Singh, who was prosecuted and the case against him was dismissed, consequently Gurmeet Singh was acquitted. Without commenting on the case's merits, and in the facts and circumstances peculiar to this case, and also for the reasons mentioned above, the ends of justice would meet with the following order.

13. The petitioner shall surrender before the concerned court on or before April 30, 2022. Provided the petitioner had not already filed bail petition(s) in this case FIR, then he may file a bail application under section 437/439 CrPC before the competent court and subject to submitting proof of filing the said bail application, the concerned court shall release the petitioner on bail on the same day, subject to furnishing bail bonds to its satisfaction and imposing additional conditions, as it may deem appropriate in the background of the accused's conduct.

14. The petitioner to execute a bond for attendance in the concerned court. On the reverse page of personal bonds, the petitioner shall mention the permanent address, along with the phone number linked with the AADHAR card, if any, Passport details, the UK phone number, and e-mail. In case of any change in the above particulars, the petitioner shall immediately and not later than 30 days from such modification, intimate about the change to the concerned Police Station and the concerned Court.

15. **There shall be a stay of the petitioner's arrest in the case mentioned above upto 30 April, 2022; however, if the petitioner fails to appear within the time stipulated above, then stay on arrest shall stand vacated, without any further reference to this court. It is clarified that if the petitioner appears before the concerned court, then all warrants issued by the concerned court against the petitioner, in the matter mentioned above shall stand recalled and canceled. It is further clarified that this order shall not be construed as bail or stay in any other FIR in which the petitioner has been arraigned as an accused.**

16. **On or before April 30, 2022**, the petitioner shall procure a smart phone and inform its IMEI number and other details to the SHO/I.O. of the Police station mentioned before. The petitioner shall always keep the phone location/GPS on the "ON" mode. Whenever the Investigating officer asks to share the location, the petitioner shall immediately do so. The petitioner shall neither clear the location history, WhatsApp chats, calls nor format the phone without permission of the concerned SHO/I.O. This condition shall continue till the completion of the trial or closure of case, whatever is earlier.

17. **On or before April 30, 2022**, the petitioner shall deposit a sum of rupees ten thousand in 'High Court Lawyers Welfare Fund,' Account number 65018692589, SB, IFCI code SBIN0050306, Branch Code 50306, Branch Address State Bank of India, High Court Branch, Sector 1, Chandigarh. After depositing, the petitioner shall file the proof of deposit, before the concerned court and send its copy along with a copy of this order to the Secretary, Punjab & Haryana High Court Bar Association, either in physical or electronic mode.

18. Any Advocate for the petitioner and the Officer in whose presence the petitioner puts signatures on personal bonds shall explain all conditions of this bail order in any language that the petitioner understands.
19. Any observation made hereinabove is neither an expression of opinion on the merits of the case nor shall the trial Court advert to these comments.
20. *There would be no need for a certified copy of this order, 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. In case the attesting officer wants to verify the authenticity, such an officer can also verify its authenticity and may download and use the downloaded copy for attesting bonds.*

Petition partly allowed to the extent mentioned above. All pending applications, if any, stand disposed.

(ANOOP CHITKARA)
JUDGE

March 30, 2022
AK

Whether speaking/reasoned:	Yes
Whether reportable:	No.