

CRM-M-21295-2022

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

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Date of Decision: 18.05.2022

Karanjeet Singh @ Bassu ...Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab ...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ANOOP CHITKARA

Present: Mr. Aman Deep Saini, Advocate for the petitioner.
Mr. Dhruv Dayal, Sr. DAG, Punjab.

ANOOP CHITKARA, J.

FIR No.	Dated	Police Station	Sections
109	03.09.2019	Nurpur Bedi, Tehsil Anandpur Sahib, District Rupnagar	21, 61, 85 of NDPS Act and 25, 54, 59 of Arms Act

1. The petitioner apprehending arrest due to issuance of non bailable warrants vide order dated 23-11-2021, by the Ld. Trial Court, in the FIR captioned above has come up before this Court under Section 438 Cr.P.C seeking anticipatory bail.
2. Ld. Counsel for the petitioner contends that the petitioner shall not remain absent during the trial nor shall he seek any exemption.
3. The contention on behalf of the State is that given the judicial pronouncements, once non-bailable warrants have been issued, anticipatory bail cannot be granted.

REASONING:

4. Although the petitioner failed to attend the trial, yet he has offered an explanation and it needs consideration.
5. The explanation offered by the petitioner is mentioned in paragraph 4 of the petition, which is extracted as follows:

“That thereafter the petitioner is regularly appearing before the trial Court on each and every date without any fail, but on 23.11.2021, the petitioner could not appear before the trial Court as due to after discharge from the de-addiction center, petitioner was not feeling well and he could not contact his counsel with regard to next date, nor the counsel appeared for the trial Court

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to apprise the court about the health condition of the petitioner and resultantly vide order dated 23.11.2021. Ld. Court below cancelled the bail order dated 27.09.2019. Copy of the order dated 23.11.2021 is attached as Annexure P-6.”

6. Although the explanation is not that convincing but given the fact that the petitioner has now given an undertaking in paragraph 9 to appear on each and every date, is a ground for affording him a final opportunity.

7. Without adjudicating the maintainability of this petition under section 438 CrPC, and leaving that question open; given the explanation offered by the accused coupled with the facts and circumstances peculiar to this case, a balanced approach would work as an incentive, a catalyst, speeding up the process, and bringing the guilty to Justice and Justice to the guilty.

8. In the present case, the maximum sentence imposable for the offences mentioned in FIR does not exceed seven years. Thus, directions passed in Arnesh Kumar v. State of Bihar, (2014) 8 SCC 273, (Para 13), apply to this petition, wherein Hon’ble Supreme Court directed all the State Governments to instruct its police officers not to arrest the accused automatically when the offence is punishable with imprisonment for a term which may be less than seven years or which may extend to seven years; whether with or without fine.

9. In the facts and circumstances peculiar to this case, and for the reasons mentioned above, the petitioner makes a case for anticipatory bail, subject to the following terms and conditions, which shall be over and above and irrespective of the contents of the form of bail bonds in chapter XXXIII of CrPC, 1973.

10. In Mahidul Sheikh v. State of Haryana, CRM-33030-2021 in CRA-S-363-2020, decided on 14-01-2022, Para 53, [Law Finder Doc Id # 1933969], this Court observed,

[53]. The pragmatic approach is that while granting bail with sureties, the “Court” and the “Arresting Officer” should give a choice to the accused to either furnish surety bonds or to handover a fixed deposit, or direct electronic money transfer where such facility is available, or creating a lien over his bank account. The accused should also have a further option to switch between the modes. The option lies with the accused to choose between the sureties and deposits and not with the Court or the arresting officer.

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

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personal bond of Rs. Ten thousand (INR 10,000/-) and shall furnish one surety of Rs. Twenty-five thousand (INR 25,000/-), to the satisfaction of the concerned Court/Judicial Magistrate having the jurisdiction over the Police Station conducting the investigation, and in case of non-availability, any nearest Ilaqa Magistrate/duty Magistrate. Before accepting the sureties, the concerned Court must satisfy that if the accused fails to appear in Court, then such surety is capable of producing the petitioner before the Court.

12. In the alternative, the petitioner may furnish a personal bond of Rs. Ten Thousand only (INR 10,000/-), and hand over to the concerned court a fixed deposit(s) for Rs. Ten Thousand only (INR 10,000/-), made in favour of Chief Judicial Magistrate of the concerned district. Said fixed deposit may be made from any of the banks where the stake of the State is more than 50%, or any of the well-established and stable private banks, with the clause of automatic renewal of the principal and the interest reverting to the linked account.

13. The fixed deposit need not necessarily be made from the applicant's account. If such a fixed deposit is made in physical form, i.e., on paper, then the original receipt shall be handed over to the concerned court. If made online, its printout, countersigned by the accused, shall be given; and the depositor shall get the online liquidation disabled. The applicant shall inform the concerned branch of the bank at the earliest that it has been tendered as surety. Such information be sent either by e-mail or by post/courier about the fixed deposit, whether made on paper or in any other mode, along with its number and FIR number. After that, the applicant shall hand over such proof and endorsement to the concerned police station. Such court shall have a lien over the deposit until the case's closure, or discharged by substitution, or up to the expiry of the period mentioned under S. 437-A CrPC, 1973, as the case may be. Subject to the proceedings under S. 446 CrPC, the entire amount of fixed deposit, less taxes, if any, shall be endorsed/returned to the depositor.

14. It shall be the total discretion of the applicant to choose between surety bonds and fixed deposits. It shall also be open for the applicant to apply to the investigator or the concerned court to substitute fixed deposit with surety bonds and vice-versa.

15. On the reverse page of personal bonds, the attesting officer shall mention the permanent address of the petitioner along with the phone number linked with the AADHAR card, the other phone numbers (if any), and e-mail (if any). In case of any change in the above particulars, the petitioner shall immediately and not later than 30

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days from such modification, intimate about the change to the concerned Police Station and the concerned Court.

16. The petitioner to also execute a bond for attendance in the concerned Court(s), as and when asked to do so. The presentation of the personal bond shall be deemed acceptance of the following and all other stipulations, terms, and conditions of this bail order.

17. The bail bonds shall continue to remain in force throughout the trial and after that in terms of Section 437-A of the Cr.P.C.

18. The petitioner shall not influence, browbeat, pressurize, make any inducement, threat, or promise, directly or indirectly, to the witnesses, the police officials, or any other person acquainted with the facts and the circumstances of the case, to dissuade them from disclosing such facts to the police, or the court, or to tamper with the evidence.

19. Within ten days of release on bail, the petitioner shall procure a smartphone and inform its IMEI number and other details to the SHO/I.O. of the Police station mentioned above. 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, call logs 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, whichever is earlier.

20. Given the nature of the allegations and the other circumstances peculiar to this case, the petitioner shall surrender all weapons, firearms, ammunition, if any, along with the arms license to the concerned authority within ten days from release from prison and inform the Investigator about the compliance. However, subject to the Indian Arms Act, 1959, the petitioner shall be entitled to renew and take it back in case of acquittal in this case, provided otherwise permissible in the concerned rules.

21. **Within ten days from today**, 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 alongwith a copy of this order to the Secretary, Punjab & Haryana High Court Bar Association, either in physical or electronic mode.

22. **This order is subject to the petitioner appearing before the concerned court with in ten days from today.**

23. 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.

24. 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.

25. *There would be no need for a certified copy of this order 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. 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 allowed in aforesaid terms. All pending applications, if any, stand disposed.

(ANOOP CHITKARA)
JUDGE

18.05.2022

Jyoti-II

Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes
Whether reportable: **NO.**