

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-45240-2022
Reserved on: 29.10.2022
Pronounced on: 02.11.2022

Kesar ...Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab ...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ANOOP CHITKARA

Present: Mr. Kanish Ganeriwala, Advocate and
Ms. Ananya Bhardwaj, Advocate for the petitioner.

Mr. Harsimar Singh Sitta, DAG, Punjab.

ANOOP CHITKARA, J.

FIR No.	Dated	Police Station	Sections
131	05.09.2022	Dhanaula, District Barnala	21/22/29 NDPS Act.

1. The petitioner, apprehending arrest for violating the above-mentioned provisions of Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS Act) per the FIR captioned above, has come up before this Court under Section 438 CrPC seeking anticipatory bail.
2. Petitioner’s counsel seeks bail on the grounds that the petitioner has been nominated on the basis of the disclosure statement of the main accused, and such statement is legally inadmissible.
3. State’s counsel opposes the interim bail.

REASONING:

4. In Inderjeet Singh alias Laddi v. State of Punjab, 2014(3) RCR(Cri) 953, a division bench of this court holds,

[66] (viii) It is suggested that the State authorities should get the drugs in respect of which there is a contravention and that are recovered examined by the Chemical Analysts at the earliest and a report provided to the offender at the earliest so that the position can be ascertained as to whether the alleged offender was in possession of permissible quantity of the drug or otherwise. In case there is delay this would entitle the offender to at least interim bail till the report is finally received.

5. A recovery of 200 tablets of Tramadol and 5 vials of Rexof 100 ml was made from the petitioner .Thus, in the light of the rationale of Inderjit Singh alias Laddi *supra*, this court is inclined to grant interim bail. However, this interim bail is subject to a condition that after the FSL report, if the quantity of contraband is found to be commercial, this bail shall be canceled automatically. After that, the petitioner shall surrender before Special Court within ten days from the date the Investigator/SHO conveys through phone call or message or by calling him to the police station, the outcome of FSL report to him. However, it shall also be permissible for the petitioner to apply for an anticipatory bail under section 438 CrPC within this period, to this court or a regular bail under section 439 CrPC, before Special Court or this Court, and the said application(s) shall be heard on its own merits. This order shall remain in force for ten days after communicating the outcome of the FSL report to the petitioner.

6. The possibility of the accused influencing the investigation, tampering with evidence, intimidating witnesses, 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.

7. Without commenting on the case's merits, in the facts and circumstances peculiar to this case, and for the reasons mentioned above, the petitioner makes a case for limited period interim 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.

8. 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.

9. Given above, provided the petitioner is not required in any other case, the petitioner shall be released on bail in the FIR captioned above, in the following terms:

(a). Petitioner to furnish personal bond of Rs. Ten thousand (INR 10,000/-); AND

(b) To give one surety of Rs. Twenty-five thousand (INR 25,000/-), to the satisfaction of the concerned investigator/SHO. Before accepting the surety, the concerned officer must satisfy that if the accused fail to appear in court, then such surety can produce such accused before the court.

OR

(b) Petitioner to hand over to the concerned investigator/SHO a fixed deposit for Rs. Ten Thousand only (INR 10,000/-), with the clause of automatic renewal of the principal and the interest reverting to the linked account, made in favour of the 'Chief Judicial Magistrate' of the concerned district. The 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 sector banks. The fixed deposit need not necessarily be made from the petitioner's account.

(c). In case of the launching of the prosecution, the said fixed deposit be forwarded to the concerned court along with the police report/challan under 173 CrPC.

(d). 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, and at that stage, 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.

(e). It shall be the discretion of the petitioner to choose between surety bonds and fixed deposits. It shall also be open for the petitioner to apply to the Investigator or the concerned court to substitute the fixed deposit with surety bonds and vice-versa.

(f). On the reverse page of personal bond, the petitioner shall mention her/his permanent address along with the phone number, preferably that numbers which is linked with the AADHAR, and e-mail (if any). 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.

(g). The petitioner is 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 declarations made in the bail petition and all other stipulations, terms, and conditions of section 438(2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and also of this bail order.

10. 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.

11. Within fifteen days from today, the petitioner shall procure a smartphone 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.

12. 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 fifteen days from today 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.

13. During the trial's pendency, if the petitioner repeats or commits any offence where the sentence prescribed is more than seven years or violates any condition as stipulated in this order, it shall always be permissible to the respondent to apply for cancellation of this bail. It shall further be open for any investigating agency to bring it to the notice of the Court seized of the subsequent application that the accused was earlier cautioned not to indulge in criminal activities. Otherwise, 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. in case the outcome of the FSL report, the quantity of contraband does not fall in the category of commercial quantity.

14. The conditions mentioned above imposed by this court are to endeavour that the accused does not repeat the offence and to ensure the safety of the witnesses, victim, and their families. In Mohammed Zubair v. State of NCT of Delhi, Writ Petition (Criminal) No 279 of 2022, Para 29, decided on July 20, 2022, A Three-Judge bench of Hon'ble Supreme Court holds that “The bail conditions imposed by the Court must not only have a nexus to the purpose that they seek to serve but must also be proportional to the purpose of imposing them. The courts while imposing bail conditions must balance the liberty of the accused and the necessity of a fair trial. While doing so, conditions that would result in the deprivation of rights and liberties must be eschewed.”

15. 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.

16. If the petitioner finds bond amount beyond social and financial reach, it may be brought to the notice of this Court for appropriate reduction. Further, if the petitioner finds bail condition(s) as violating fundamental, human, or other rights, or causing difficulty due to any situation, then for modification of such term(s), the petitioner may

file a reasoned application before this Court, and after taking cognizance, even to the Court taking cognizance or the trial Court, as the case may be, and such Court shall also be competent to modify or delete any condition.

17. This order does not, in any manner, limit or restrict the rights of the Police or the investigating agency from further investigation as per law.

18. In case the Investigator/Officer-In-Charge of the concerned Police Station arraigns another section of any penal offence in this FIR, and if the new section prescribes maximum sentence which is not greater than the sections mentioned above, then this bail order shall be deemed to have also been passed for the newly added section(s). However, suppose the newly inserted sections prescribe a sentence exceeding the maximum sentence prescribed in the sections mentioned above, then, in that case, the Investigator/Officer-In-Charge shall give the petitioner notice of a minimum of seven days providing an opportunity to avail the remedies available in law.

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 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

02.11.2022
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Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes
Whether reportable: No.