

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

CRM-M-54502-2022
Reserved on: 05.12.2022
Pronounced on: 20.12.2022

Karan Singh and another ...Petitioners

Versus

State of Punjab and others ...Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ANOOP CHITKARA

Present: Mr. Munish Puri, Advocate,
for the petitioners.

Mr. Virat Rana, AAG, Punjab.

Ms. Deepti Rampal, Advocate,
for the complainant.

ANOOP CHITKARA, J.

FIR No.	Dated	Police Station	Sections
154	05.11.2021	Division No.1, District Pathankot	307, 379-B, 341, 506, 148, 149 IPC (323 IPC added later on).

1. The petitioners, incarcerated upon his arrest in the FIR captioned above, came up before this Court under Section 439 of Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (Cr.P.C.) seeking bail.
2. In paragraph 11 of the bail petition, the accused declares that he has no criminal antecedents.
3. Petitioners' counsel has drawn attention of this court to the order dated 10.01.2022 passed in CRM-M-53400-2021 (Annexure P-7), vide which the co-accused was granted bail by this court. Counsel for petitioners claim bail on the grounds of parity and does not press on merits. Petitioners' counsel further submits that matter has been compromised between the parties.
4. State does not dispute the fact that the allegations against the petitioners are more severe than co accused who was granted bail.

REASONING:

5. A brief narration of allegations levelled against the petitioners, which are relevant for deciding the present petition, is that the petitioners along with a group of 8-9 other boys gave blow of bottle of liquor on the head of the complainant. Some of them also hit him with bricks and snatched Rs.10,000/- from him.

6. Perusal of the order dated 10.01.2022 vide which co-accused was granted bail covers petitioners' case on the grounds of parity for the reasons that they are identically placed. As per paragraph 6 of the petition petitioner no.1 is in custody from 16.09.2022 and petitioner no. 2 from 15.10.2022. It is appropriate to reproduce paragraph 8 of this order, which is as under:

"8. Considering the age of the petitioners to be just 18 and 20 years, which is a reformatory age, coupled with the fact that the petitioners are first offenders and have no criminal past, this Court is of the view that the petitioners deserve the concession of bail."

7. 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 petitioners who seek enlargement on bail from the Court. It is true that the gravity of the offence involved is likely to induce the petitioners to avoid the course of justice and must weigh when considering the question of jail. So also, the heinousness of the crime. In GudikantiNarasimhulu 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.

8. 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.

9. Without commenting on the case's merits, in the facts and circumstances peculiar to this case, and for the reasons mentioned above, the petitioners make a case for 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 petitioners are not required in any other case, the petitioners shall be released on bail in the FIR captioned above, in the following terms:

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

(b) To give one surety of Rs. Twenty-five thousand (INR 25,000/-) each, to the satisfaction of the concerned court, and in case of non-availability, any nearest Illaqa Magistrate/duty Magistrate. Before accepting the surety, the concerned court must satisfy that if the accused fails to appear in court, then such surety can produce the accused before the court.

OR

(b) Petitioners to hand over to the concerned court a fixed deposit for Rs. Ten Thousand only (INR 10,000/-) each, with the clause of automatic renewal of the principal and the interest reverting to the linked account, made in favor of the '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 sector banks. The fixed deposit need not necessarily be made from the petitioner's account.

(c). 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 Cr.P.C., 1973, and at that stage, subject to the proceedings under S. 446 Cr.P.C., the entire amount of fixed deposit, less taxes if any, shall be endorsed/returned to the depositor.

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

(e). On the reverse page of personal bond, the petitioners shall mention her/his permanent address along with the phone number, preferably that number which is linked with the AADHAR, and e-mail (if any). In case of any change in the above particulars, the petitioners shall immediately and not later than 30 days from such modification, intimate about the change to the concerned police station and the concerned court.

(f). The petitioners are 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.

12. The petitioners 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.

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

14. Till the completion of the trial, the petitioners shall not contact, call, text, message, remark, stare, stalk, make any gestures or express any unusual or inappropriate, verbal or otherwise objectionable behavior towards the victim and victim's family, either physically, or through phone call or any other social media, through any other mode, nor shall unnecessarily roam around the victim's home.

15. Given the nature of the allegations and the other circumstances peculiar to this case, the petitioners shall not enter the property, workplace, and the residence of the victim and shall also not enter within a radius of five-hundred meters from the victim's home till the recording of the statements of all non-official and informal witnesses in the trial. This Court is imposing this condition to rule out any attempt by the accused to

incapacitate, influence, or cause any discomfort to the victim. Reference be made to Vikram Singh v Central Bureau of Investigation, 2018 All SCR (Cr.) 458; and Aparna Bhatt v. State of Madhya Pradesh, 2021 SCC Online SC 230.

16. During the trial's pendency, if the petitioners repeat or commit 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 remain in force throughout the trial and after that in Section 437-A of the Cr.P.C., if not canceled due to non-appearance or breach of conditions.

17. 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."

18. Any Advocate for the petitioners and the Officer in whose presence the petitioners put signatures on personal bonds shall explain all conditions of this bail order in any language that the petitioners understand.

19. If the petitioners find bond amount beyond social and financial reach, it may be brought to the notice of this Court for appropriate reduction. Further, if the petitioners find 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 petitioners 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.

20. 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.

21. 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 petitioners notice of a minimum of seven days providing an opportunity to avail the remedies available in law.

22. 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.

23. In return for the protection from incarceration, the Court believes that the accused shall also reciprocate through desirable behavior.

24. The SHO of the concerned police station or the investigating officer shall arrange to send a copy of this order, preferably a soft copy, to the complainant and the victim, without any delay. If the victim(s) notice any violation of this order, they may inform the SHO of the concerned police station, the trial court, or even this court.

25. *There would be no need for a certified copy of this order for furnishing bonds, and any Advocate for the Petitioners 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

20.12.2022
Jyoti-II

Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes
Whether reportable: No.