

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH

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CRM-M-7661-2023 (O&M)

Date of decision: 10.08.2023

MOHIT

... Petitioner

Versus

STATE OF PUNJAB

... Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARNARESH SINGH GILL

Present:- Mr. Randeep Singh Waraich, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Gurdarshan Singh Sidhu, AAG, Punjab.

HARNARESH SINGH GILL, J. (ORAL)

Through this third petition, the petitioner seeks regular bail in case bearing FIR No.111 dated 26.07.2021, registered under Section 21-C of the NDPS Act, at Police Station Special Task Force Wing, District SAS Nagar (Mohali), the earlier two bail petitions having been dismissed as withdrawn vide orders dated 14.12.2021 and 19.07.2022.

Status report by way of an affidavit dated 06.07.2023 of the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Special task Force, Ludhiana Range, Ludhiana, filed on behalf of the respondent-State, in the Registry, is taken on record. Copy whereof has already been supplied to the learned counsel opposite.

Learned counsel for the petitioner contends that the petitioner has falsely been implicated in the present case; that though extent of contraband allegedly recovered in the present case, falls under commercial quantity, yet the fact remains that the petitioner has been in

custody since 26.07.2021 and that out of 17 prosecution witnesses, only 2 witnesses have been examined so far, including the complainant. It is further submitted that there is no other case registered or pending against the petitioner, at least of a similar nature.

In support of his contentions, learned counsel relies upon the order dated 01.08.2022 passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Special Leave to Appeal (Crl.) No.5769-2022, titled as 'Nitish Adhikary @ Bapan Vs. State of West Bengal'.

On the other hand, learned State counsel, while opposing the grant of bail to the petitioner, submits that recovery of intoxicating contraband effected in the present case, falls under commercial quantity and that Section 37 NDPS Act bars the grant of bail to the accused in case of commercial quantity. It is further submitted that material witnesses are yet to be examined and thus, the petitioner be not granted the concession of regular bail.

I have heard the learned counsel for the parties.

Indisputably, extent of contraband recovered in the present case, falls under commercial quantity, but the fact remains that the petitioner has been in custody since 26.07.2021. Complainant has already been examined and fifteen prosecution witnesses are yet to be examined. Trial is unlikely to conclude any time soon. There is no other case registered or pending against the petitioner, at least of a similar nature.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court in Nitish Adhikary @ Bapan, while granting the benefit of bail to the petitioner therein, has held as under:

“The petitioner seeks enlargement on bail in F.I.R. No. 612 of 2020 dated 17.10.2020 filed under Section 21 (c) and 37 of the NDPS 2 Act, registered at Police Station Bongaon, West Bengal.

During the course of the hearing, we are informed that the petitioner has undergone custody for a period of 01 year and 07 months as on 09.06.2022. The trial is at a preliminary stage, as only one witness has been examined. The petitioner does not have any criminal antecedents.

Taking into consideration the period of sentence undergone by the petitioner and all the attending circumstances but without expressing any views in the merits of the case, we are inclined to grant bail to the petitioner.

The petitioner is accordingly, directed to be released on bail subject to him furnishing bail bonds to the satisfaction of the Trial Court.

The Special Leave Petition is disposed of on the aforestated terms.

Pending application(s), if any, shall stand disposed of.”

In view of the above, this Court finds that no useful purpose would be served by keeping the petitioner behind the bars. Resultantly, without commenting anything on the merits, lest it should prejudice the case of either side, the present petition is allowed and the petitioner is ordered to be released on bail on his furnishing bail and surety bonds to the satisfaction of the learned trial Court/Duty Magistrate.

10.08.2023

Aman Jain

(HARNARESH SINGH GILL)

JUDGE

Whether reasoned/speaking?

Yes/No

Whether reportable?

Yes/No