

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

222

CRM-M-19214-2022
Date of decision: 18.07.2023

Bhinder Singh @ Jhunga

....Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab

...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AMAN CHAUDHARY

Present : Mr. A. S. Khosa, Advocate
for the petitioner

Mr. Manipal Singh Atwal, DAG, Punjab

AMAN CHAUDHARY. J.

1. The present petition has been filed under Section 439 Cr.P.C. for the grant of regular bail to the petitioner in case FIR No. 122 dated 15.06.2021, registered under Section 22 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 at Police Station City South Moga, District Moga.
2. Learned counsel contends that petitioner has been in custody for the last 2 years and 29 days. He has been falsely implicated in the present case. No independent witness was joined at the time when recovery was effected. There are 4 PWs who still remain to be examined. Though the petitioner is involved in two more cases, but he is on bail in them. Reliance is placed on the judgment passed by Hon'ble The Supreme Court titled as **Maulana Mohd. Amir Rashadi vs. State of U.P. and others**, 2012(2) SCC 382.
3. The custody certificate dated 17.07.2023 filed by the learned State counsel is taken on record. As per the same, the petitioner is behind bars for the last 2 years and 29 days.

4. Learned State counsel opposes the bail on the ground that recovery of contraband falling in commercial quantity was effected from the petitioner. However, he is unable to controvert the submissions with regard to the stage of the case and the petitioner being on bail in other cases.

5. Heard.

6. Hon'ble The Supreme Court of India in the case of **Dheeraj Kumar Shukla vs. The State of Uttar Pradesh**, SLP (Criminal) No.6690/2022 decided on 25.01.2023, observed that in case of long custody period, involving quantity recovered to be of commercial nature, where the trial is yet to commence, though charges had been framed, the condition of Section 37 of NDPS Act can be dispensed with. In the case of **Bhupender Singh vs. Narcotic Control Bureau**, (2022) 2 RCR (Crl.) 706, the Division Bench of this Court observed with regard to achieving balance between the right to speedy trial guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India and rigors of Section 37 of NDPS Act. In the case of **Munasi Masih vs. State of Punjab**, CRM-M-31504-2022, decided on 06.2.2023, this Court granted bail to a first offender from whom commercial quantity of contraband had been recovered and only 2 out of 13 PWs have been examined, by observing that in view of delayed trial, the rigors of Section 37 of NDPS Act can be diluted to an extent and the petitioner can be granted bail, keeping in mind the right to a speedy trial as envisaged under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

7. Hon'ble The Supreme Court in the case of **Maulana Mohd. Amir Rashadi** (Supra) had held that, "As observed by the High Court, merely on the basis of criminal antecedents, the claim of the second respondent cannot be rejected. In other words, it is the duty of the Court to find out the role of the accused in the case in which he has been charged and other circumstances such as

possibility of fleeing away from the jurisdiction of the Court, etc.”

8. Considering the facts and circumstances of the case, in particular that the petitioner has been in custody since last 2 years and 29 days; he is on bail in other cases; 4 PWs still remain to be examined; the trial is likely to take considerable time, thus further incarceration of the petitioner would be violative of his right enshrined under Article 21 of the Constitution of India and the rigors of Section 37 of the NDPS Act can be diluted bearing in mind the right to a speedy trial, thus the present petition for grant of regular bail deserves to be allowed.

9. As a result, the present petition is allowed. The petitioner is ordered to be released on regular bail, subject to his furnishing bail/surety bonds to the satisfaction of trial Court/Duty Magistrate concerned and subject to his not being required in any other case. The petitioner shall abide by the following conditions:-

- (i) The petitioner will not tamper with the evidence during the trial.
- (ii) The petitioner will not pressurize/ intimidate the prosecution witnesses.
- (iii) The petitioner will appear before the trial Court on each and every date fixed, unless is exempted by a specific order of Court.
- (iv) The petitioner shall not commit an offence similar to the offence of which, he is an accused, or for commission of which he is suspected of.
- (v) The petitioner shall not directly or indirectly coerce, induce, threaten or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case so as to dissuade him/ her from disclosing such facts to the Court or to any police officer or tamper with the evidence in any manner.
- (vi) The petitioner shall not in any manner misuse his liberty.
- (vii) The petitioner shall furnish his address and mobile number to the Trial Court forthwith and shall not change the same till the conclusion of the trial and in case for any reason, the petitioner seeks to change any of the aforesaid, the same shall be done only with prior

intimation to the learned Trial Court, stating the reason for the same.

- (viii) The petitioner shall not leave the country without prior permission of the trial Court.
- (ix) The trial Court/Duty Magistrate may impose any other condition, as deemed appropriate while releasing the petitioner.

10. It is made clear that in case of any infraction of the aforesaid conditions, the State shall be at liberty to seek cancellation of bail as granted to the petitioner by this order.

11. In view of the above, it is clarified that the observations made herein are limited for the purpose of present proceedings and would not be construed as an opinion on the merits of the case and the trial would proceed independently of the aforesaid observations.

(AMAN CHAUDHARY)
JUDGE

18.07.2023

Mehak

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