

CRM-M-37565-2022

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH**

CRM-M-37565-2022

Date of decision: 24.08.2023

KARAN DHILLON

...Petitioner

Versus

STATE OF HARYANA

.....Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARNARESH SINGH GILL

Present:- Mr. Anmol Rattan Sidhu, Sr. Advocate with
Mr. Amit Choudhary, Advocate,
for the petitioner.

Ms. Ankita Ahuja, AAG, Haryana.

HARNARESH SINGH GILL, J. (ORAL)

1. Through this petition, the petitioner seeks regular bail in case FIR No.197 dated 07.06.2021, registered at Police Station Sirsa Sadar, District Sirsa, under Section 15 NDPS Act.
2. As per the prosecution version, recovery of 190-kilogram poppy straw was effected from a water tank attached to the tractor occupied by the petitioner and co-accused, Ranjit Singh @ Sewak.
3. Learned Senior 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 09.06.2021 and that out of 15 prosecution witnesses, only 06 witnesses have been examined so far. It is further submitted that in fact, the

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Gazetted Officer, who was called at the spot at the time of effecting the recovery, was the same BDPO against whom the co-accused had given a complaint to the higher officers for not taking action against the illegal occupants of the land of Gram Panchayat, and that co-accused, namely, Kailash Dhanker and Ranjeet Singh @ Sewak Singh have since been granted the concession of regular bail by a Coordinate Bench, vide order dated 07.07.2022. It is further submitted that there is no other case registered or pending against the petitioner, under the provisions of NDPS Act. In support of his contentions, learned Senior 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'.

4. On the other hand, learned State counsel, while opposing the grant of bail to the petitioner, submits that recovery of 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 the petitioner was driving the aforesaid tractor, and that recovery had been effected in the presence of the Gazetted Officer. It is further submitted that material witnesses are yet to be examined and that the petitioner has as many as three other cases registered or pending against him, under provisions of the Indian Penal Code.

5. I have heard the learned counsel for the parties.

6. 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 09.06.2021. The prosecution witnesses

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are yet to be examined. Trial is unlikely to conclude any time soon. There is no other case registered or pending against the petitioner, under the provisions of NDPS Act.

7. 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.”

8. 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

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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.

24.08.2023
parveen kumar

(HARNARESH SINGH GILL)
JUDGE

Whether reasoned/speaking?	Yes/No
Whether reportable?	Yes/No