

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

209

**CRM-M No. 60894 of 2022
Date of Decision : 10.4.2023**

*Ranjot Singh**..... Petitioner**versus**State of Punjab**..... Respondent*

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE TRIBHUVAN DAHIYA

Present: Mr. Akshay Chadha, Advocate, for the petitioner

Mr. Jashandeep Singh, AAG, Punjab

Mr. J.S. Lalli, Advocate, for the complainant

TRIBHUVAN DAHIYA J. (ORAL):

The instant petition has been filed under Section 438 Cr.P.C. seeking pre-arrest bail to the petitioner in case FIR No.119 dated 21.9.2022 under Section 346 IPC (Sections 363, 366-A and 376 IPC and Section 8 of POCSO Act added later on) registered at Police Station Meharban, Ludhiana.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner contends that as per the allegations in the FIR, lodged by the victim's father, her daughter, aged about seventeen years, had left home on 5.9.2022. Later on, she was recovered and her statement under Sections 164 Cr.P.C. was recorded. It was alleged that the petitioner had enticed her away on the pretext of getting married.

3. It is not disputed that the FIR in question was lodged after about two weeks of the alleged incident, and also that the victim was about seventeen years and eleven months on the date of alleged incident. Besides, the petitioner himself was below eighteen years of age at that time, his date of birth being

18.9.2004.

4. Learned State counsel, on instructions from ASI Arun Kumar, assisted by learned counsel for the complainant, opposes the grant of interim bail on the ground that the offences alleged against the petitioner are serious in nature and the provisions of POCSO Act have been attracted. It is, however, not disputed that the petitioner has joined the investigation pursuant to interim order dated 26.12.2022, passed by this Court.

5. Since the petitioner has already joined the investigation and nothing is to be recovered from him, and also, it is debatable whether he was major at the time of alleged incident, it is deemed appropriate to confirm the interim bail granted to him.

6. Accordingly, the petition is allowed. Interim order dated 26.12.2022, passed by this Court, is made absolute.

(TRIBHUVAN DAHIYA)
JUDGE

10.4.2023
Ashwani

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