

CRM-M-7857-2024
Decided on: 14.02.2024

Jatinder Singh ...Petitioner

Versus

State of Punjab ...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ANOOP CHITKARA

Present: Mr. Fateh Singh Bhullar, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Ms. Swati Batra, DAG, Punjab (Through VC).

ANOOP CHITKARA, J.

FIR No.	Dated	Police Station	Sections
0131	26.08.2023	Bhikhiwind, District Tarn Taran	363, 366-A, 120-B IPC

1. A boy aged 22 years, apprehending arrest in the FIR captioned above because a girl aged 17 years & 06 months had eloped with him, has come up before this Court under Section 438 CrPC seeking anticipatory bail.

2. In paragraph 17 of the bail petition, the accused declares that he has no criminal antecedents.

3. Petitioner's counsel prays for bail by imposing any stringent conditions. Petitioner's counsel argued that the custodial investigation would serve no purpose whatsoever, and the pre-trial incarceration would cause an irreversible injustice to the petitioner and family.

4. Counsel for the State has appeared through Video conferencing but the investigator is present in the Court and has handed over the investigation file for perusal of this Court.

5. I have perused the investigation file and no formal reply or instructions are required from the State.

6. As per the FIR, father of the victim had informed the police about missing of her

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daughter, who was born on 21.03.2006 and studying in 12th Class. On 14.08.2023, when family had slept after taking dinner and on next day, when the victim's father woke up he found his daughter not in the room. An analysis of the FIR itself clearly points out that there is no allegation that petitioner had entered the house or had forcibly kidnapped the victim. It is implied that victim had left on her own and the element of enticement is prima facie missing. When the victim was traced, she was produced before the Judicial Magistrate, Patti, where on 30.08.2023, she made a statement under Section 164 CrPC, which is in Gurumukhi. I have gone through the statement of the victim and my Law researcher who is well-conversant to read Gurumukhi, read the same for me. As per the said statement, victim stated that she knew the petitioner for last four years and they would talk to each other on phone. It is also stated that she on her own will and out of naiveness, had gone with him and stayed for two weeks. She further stated that during that period, petitioner did not do any forceful act with her. It is also stated that petitioner is innocent.

7. Given above, it is neither a case of pre-trial incarceration nor custodial interrogation is required.

8. 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 require, 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 petitioner who seeks enlargement on bail from the Court. It is true that the gravity of the offence involved is likely to induce the petitioner 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

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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:INSC:107 [Para 7]**, (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.

9. 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 v. State (NCT of Delhi)*, **2020:INSC:106 [PARA 92]**, (2020) 5 SCC 1, Para 92, the Constitutional Bench held that unusually, subject to the evidence produced, the Courts can impose restrictive conditions. In *Sumit Mehta v. State of N.C.T. of Delhi*, (2013)15 SCC 570, Para 11, Supreme Court holds that while exercising power Under Section 438 of the Code, the Court is duty-bound to strike a balance between the individual's right to personal freedom and the right of investigation of the police. While exercising utmost restraint, the Court can impose conditions countenancing its object as permissible under the law to ensure an uninterrupted and unhampered investigation.

10. Without commenting on the case's merits, in the facts and circumstances peculiar to this case, and for the reasons mentioned above, the petitioner makes 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.

11. In *Madhu Tanwar and Anr. v. State of Punjab*, **2023:PHHC:077618 [Para 10, 21]**, CRM-M-27097-2023, decided on 29-05-2023, this court observed,

[10] The exponential growth in technology and artificial intelligence has transformed identification techniques remarkably. Voice, gait, and facial recognition are incredibly sophisticated and pervasive. Impersonation, as we know it traditionally, has virtually become impossible. Thus, the remedy lies that whenever a judge or an officer believes that the accused might be a flight risk or has a history of fleeing from justice, then in such cases, appropriate conditions can be inserted that all the expenditure that shall be incurred to trace them, shall be recovered from such person, and the State shall have a lien over their assets to make good the loss.

[21] In this era when the knowledge revolution has just begun, to keep pace with exponential and unimaginable changes the

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technology has brought to human lives, it is only fitting that the dependence of the accused on surety is minimized by giving alternative options. Furthermore, there should be no insistence to provide permanent addresses when people either do not have permanent abodes or intend to re-locate.

12. Given above, provided the petitioner is not required in any other case, the petitioner shall be released on bail in the FIR captioned above, in the following terms:

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

(b) To give one surety of Rs. Twenty-five thousand (INR 25,000/-), to the satisfaction of the concerned Investigator/SHO, before whom the bonds are required to be furnished. When the bonds are to be furnished before a Judicial Magistrate, then in case of the non-availability of the concerned Judicial Magistrate, to any other nearest Ilaqa Magistrate/duty Magistrate. Before accepting the surety, the concerned officer/court must satisfy that if the accused fails to appear in court, then such surety can produce the accused before the court.

OR

(b). Petitioner to hand over to the concerned investigator a fixed deposit for Rs. Ten thousand only (INR 10,000/-), 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, or blocking the aforesaid amount in favour of the concerned 'Chief Judicial Magistrate'. Said fixed deposit or blocking funds can be from any of the banks where the stake of the State is more than 50% or from any of the well-established and stable private sector banks. In case the bankers are not willing to make a Fixed Deposit in such eventuality it shall be permissible for the petitioner to prepare an account payee demand draft favouring concerned Chief Judicial Magistrate for a similar amount.

(c). Such court shall have a lien over the funds until the case's closure or discharged by substitution, or up to the expiry of the period mentioned under S. 437-A CrPC, 1973, and at that stage, subject to the proceedings under S. 446 CrPC, the entire amount of fixed deposit, less taxes if any, shall be endorsed/returned to the depositor.

(d). The petitioner is 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

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the bail petition and all other stipulations, terms, and conditions of section 438(2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and of this bail order.

(e). While furnishing personal bond, the petitioner shall mention the following personal identification details:

1.	AADHAR number	
2.	Passport number, (If available), when the attesting officer/court thinks appropriate or considers the accused as a flight risk.	
3.	Mobile number (If available)	
4.	E-Mail id (If available)	

13. The petitioner is directed to join the investigation within seven days and also as and when called by the Investigator. The petitioner shall be in deemed custody for Section 27 of the Indian Evidence Act. The petitioner shall join the investigation as and when called by the Investigating Officer or any Superior Officer; and shall cooperate with the investigation at all further stages as required. In the event of failure to do so, it will be open for the prosecution to seek cancellation of the bail. Whenever the investigation occurs within the police premises, the petitioner shall not be called before 8 AM, let off before 6 PM, and shall not be subjected to third-degree, indecent language, inhuman treatment, etc.

14. 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.

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

16. 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.

17. In case the Investigator/Officer-In-Charge of the concerned Police Station arraigns

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

18. 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.

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

20. 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.

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

14.02.2024
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Whether speaking/reasoned: Yes
Whether reportable: No.