

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH

209

CRM-M-37300-2024
DATE OF DECISION: 24.09.2024

KARANVIR SINGH

...PETITIONER

Versus

STATE OF PUNJAB

... RESPONDENT

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANDEEP MOUDGIL

Present: Ms. Neetu Singh Aashat, Advocate for the petitioner(s).
Mr. J.S. Rattu, DAG, Punjab.

SANDEEP MOUDGIL, J (ORAL)1. Relief Sought

The jurisdiction of this Court under Section 439 Cr.P.C., has been invoked seeking the concession of regular bail for the petitioner in FIR No.85 dated 29.06.2017, under Sections 379-B, 411, 34 IPC, 1860 registered at Police Station Division No. 8, District Ludhiana.

2. Prosecution story set up in the present case as per the version in the FIR read as under :-

‘Statement of Kumar resident Avdesh Kumar of son Raghunath village Dattigarha, PS Kasampur, District Hardoi UP, present Sukhbeer Singh Nambardar's Jhuggiyan, near Red Kothi, Haibowal Kalan District Ludhiana. Age about 17 years old. Stated that I am a resident of the above address and work in A grocery store at Tagore Nahar Krishan Karyana Store near Radha Krishan Temple Plot No. On date 28-06-2017 I came from shop on bycycle for urinate near Bassi Hospital, then time would about 7:30 PM, that two cut hair youngsters came on white colour active, who slow down active and pillion rider



snatched the mobile phone from my right hand and ran away from the spot. I could read active No. PB 10 EJ 6701 colour white. I can recognize both the person on have given my statement confront. I and verified and while going they gave me threat to life by showing me khanjar. SD/- Avdesh Kumar (Hindi) 9464438498, attested Balveer Singh ASI, I/C PP-DMCH, PS Div No.8/LDH, 29.06.17.'

3. **Contentions**

On behalf of the petitioner

Learned counsel for the petitioner submits that in the instant FIR the petitioner was on bail but one day, the Naib Court of the concerned Court told the petitioner that he has been acquitted by the concerned Trial Court in the above noted FIR and as such, there is no need for the petitioner to come present before the Court and as such, due to these reasons, the petitioner did not come present before the Trail Court in the above noted FIR and due to his non presence, the petitioner was declared proclaimed offender vide order dated 01-05-2019 by the Trial Court and another FIR No.0012 dated 14.01.2024 U/S 174-A IPC, PS Div. No. 8, Ludhiana has been got lodged against him. He further submits that non-presence of the petitioner was not intentional and was only a result of miscommunication and now he undertakes to surrender before the trial Court.

This Court finds the petitioner innocent and therefore, order dated 01.05.2019 declaring the petitioner proclaimed offender is ordered to be quashed subject to the petitioner surrendering before the Trial Court within a period of 10 days.



Learned counsel for the petitioner further submits that on that account he was arrested on 05.07.2024 and since then he is in custody.

On behalf of the State

On the other hand, learned State Counsel appearing on advance notice, accepts notice on behalf of respondent-State and has filed the custody certificate of the petitioner, which is taken on record. According to which, the petitioner is behind bars for 9 months and 4 days.

Learned State Counsel on instructions from the Investigating Officer opposes the prayer for grant of regular bail due to involvement of the petitioner in one more FIR i.e. FIR No. 12 dated 14.01.2024, under Section 174 IPC, at P.S. Div. No. 8, Kailash Chowk, Ludhiana but is not in a position to controvert the submissions made by counsel for the petitioner. He informs the Court that in the present FIR challan stands presented on 09.10.2017 and charges stands framed on 28.03.2018.

4. Analysis

From the above case it can be culled out that the petitioner has suffered sufficient period in custody i.e. 9 months and 4 days; the order declaring the petitioner as PO is ordered to be quashed by this Court; and as per the principle of the criminal jurisprudence, no one should be considered guilty, till the guilt is proved beyond reasonable doubt, whereas in the instant case, challan stands presented on 09.10.2017 and charges stands framed on 28.03.2018 out of 9 prosecution witnesses, 4 has been examined so far which is sufficient



for this Court to infer that the conclusion of trial is likely to take considerable time and detaining the petitioner behind the bars for an indefinite period would solve no purpose.

Reliance can be placed upon the judgment of the Apex Court rendered in “***Dataram versus State of Uttar Pradesh and another***”, 2018(2) R.C.R. (Criminal) 131, wherein it has been held that the grant of bail is a general rule and putting persons in jail or in prison or in correction home is an exception. Relevant paras of the said judgment is reproduced as under:-

“2. A fundamental postulate of criminal jurisprudence is the presumption of innocence, meaning thereby that a person is believed to be innocent until found guilty. However, there are instances in our criminal law where a reverse onus has been placed on an accused with regard to some specific offences but that is another matter and does not detract from the fundamental postulate in respect of other offences. Yet another important facet of our criminal jurisprudence is that the grant of bail is the general rule and putting a person in jail or in a prison or in a correction home (whichever expression one may wish to use) is an exception. Unfortunately, some of these basic principles appear to have been lost sight of with the result that more and more persons are being incarcerated and for longer periods. This does not do any good to our criminal jurisprudence or to our society.

3. There is no doubt that the grant or denial of bail is entirely the discretion of the judge considering a case but even so, the exercise of judicial discretion has been circumscribed by a large number of decisions rendered by this Court and by every High Court in the country. Yet, occasionally there is a necessity to introspect whether denying bail to an accused person is the right thing to do on the facts and in the circumstances of a case.



4. While so introspecting, among the factors that need to be considered is whether the accused was arrested during investigations when that person perhaps has the best opportunity to tamper with the evidence or influence witnesses. If the investigating officer does not find it necessary to arrest an accused person during investigations, a strong case should be made out for placing that person in judicial custody after a charge sheet is filed. Similarly, it is important to ascertain whether the accused was participating in the investigations to the satisfaction of the investigating officer and was not absconding or not appearing when required by the investigating officer. Surely, if an accused is not hiding from the investigating officer or is hiding due to some genuine and expressed fear of being victimised, it would be a factor that a judge would need to consider in an appropriate case. It is also necessary for the judge to consider whether the accused is a first-time offender or has been accused of other offences and if so, the nature of such offences and his or her general conduct. The poverty or the deemed indigent status of an accused is also an extremely important factor and even Parliament has taken notice of it by incorporating an Explanation to section 436 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. An equally soft approach to incarceration has been taken by Parliament by inserting section 436A in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

5. To put it shortly, a humane attitude is required to be adopted by a judge, while dealing with an application for remanding a suspect or an accused person to police custody or judicial custody. There are several reasons for this including maintaining the dignity of an accused person, howsoever poor that person might be, the requirements of Article 21 of the Constitution and the fact that there is enormous overcrowding in prisons, leading to social and other problems as noticed by this Court in *In Re-Inhuman Conditions in 1382 Prisons*, 2017(4) RCR (Criminal) 416; 2017(5) Recent Apex Judgments (R.A.J.) 408 : (2017) 10 SCC 658



6. *The historical background of the provision for bail has been elaborately and lucidly explained in a recent decision delivered in Nikesh Tara chand Shah v. Union of India, 2017 (13) SCALE 609 going back to the days of the Magna Carta. In that decision, reference was made to Gurbaksh Singh Sibbia v. State of Punjab, (1980) 2 SCC 565 in which it is observed that it was held way back in Nagendra v. King-Emperor, AIR 1924 Calcutta 476 that bail is not to be withheld as a punishment. Reference was also made to Emperor v. Hutchinson, AIR 1931 Allahabad 356 wherein it was observed that grant of bail is the rule and refusal is the exception. The provision for bail is therefore age-old and the liberal interpretation to the provision for bail is almost a century old, going back to colonial days.*

7. *However, we should not be understood to mean that bail should be granted in every case. 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 and in a humane manner and compassionately. 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.”*

As far as the pendency of other cases and involvement of the petitioner in other case is concerned, reliance can be placed upon the order of this Court rendered in CRM-M-25914-2022 titled as **“Baljinder Singh alias Rock vs. State of Punjab”** decided on 02.03.2023, wherein, while referring Article 21 of the Constitution of India, this Court has held that no doubt, at the time of granting bail, the criminal antecedents of the petitioner are to be looked into but at the same time it is equally true that the appreciation of evidence during the course of trial has to be looked into with reference to the evidence in that case alone and not with respect to the evidence in the other



pending cases. In such eventuality, strict adherence to the rule of denial of bail on account of pendency of other cases/convictions in all probability would land the petitioner in a situation of denial of the concession of bail.

5. Decision:

In view of the aforesaid discussions made hereinabove, the petitioner is directed to be released on regular bail under Section 439 Cr.P.C. on his furnishing bail and surety bonds to the satisfaction of the trial Court/Duty Magistrate, concerned.

However, it is made clear that anything stated hereinabove shall not be construed as an expression of opinion on the merits of the case.

The petition in the aforesaid terms stands allowed.

(SANDEEP MOUDGIL)
JUDGE

24.09.2024
anuradha

<i>Whether speaking/reasoned</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>Whether reportable</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>