

2024:PHHC:125515



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

Sr. No.224**CRM-M-46310-2024 (O&M)****Date of decision : 23.09.2024**

Sarabjeet Kaur @ Billi @ Mannu

..... Petitioner

VERSUS

State of Punjab

..... Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE KIRTI SINGH

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

Mr. Vinay Kumar, DAG, Punjab.

KIRTI SINGH, J. (Oral)

The jurisdiction of this Court under Section 439 Cr.P.C. has been invoked for grant of regular bail to the petitioner in case FIR No.176 dated 10.10.2021, under Section 22 of NDPS Act, 1985, registered at Police Station Kot Ise Khan, District Moga, Punjab.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner *inter alia* submits that allegedly 900 tablets of Etizolam was recovered from the petitioner. He submits that the petitioner has been falsely implicated in this case. She has been nominated as an accused on the basis of disclosure statement of the co-accused. The petitioner has undergone an actual custody of 02 years, 11 months and 10 days and is involved in 02 other criminal cases, however, in 01 case she has already undergone her sentence. He further submits that the co-accused has been granted the concession of regular bail vide order dated 09.01.2024 (Annexure P5) passed by a Coordinate Bench of this Court.

2024:PHHC:125515



3. *Per contra*, learned State counsel has vehemently opposed the submissions made by the learned counsel for the petitioner. He states that the petitioner was actively involved in the commission of the offence. He has filed custody certificate in Court today and the same is taken on record. As per custody certificate, the petitioner has undergone an actual custody of 02 years, 11 months and 10 days and is involved in 02 other criminal cases, however, in 01 case she has already undergone the sentence. He on instructions from ASI-Harjinder Singh submits that charges were framed on 04.06.2022 and out of a total of 16 prosecution witnesses, 02 witnesses have been examined. In view of the serious allegations against the petitioner, she is not entitled to the concession of regular bail.

4. Heard the rival submissions made by learned counsel for the parties.

5. Admittedly, the charges were framed on 04.06.2022 and 02 prosecution witnesses have been examined out of a total of 16 prosecution witnesses. The petitioner has undergone an actual custody of 02 years, 11 months and 10 days and is involved in two other criminal cases, however in one case she has already undergone his sentence. The co-accused has been granted the concession of regular bail vide order dated 09.01.2024 (Annexure P5).

6. It would be unjust to keep him behind bars looking at the condition of the jails which are not conducive for rehabilitation process and detaining the accused persons in jails would also tantamounts to violation of Article 21 of the Constitution of India including the right to speedy trial, and

2024:PHHC:125515



the judgment of Apex Court in **“Dataram Singh vs. State of Uttar Pradesh and another, (2018) 3 SCC 22”**.

7. As far as the pendency of other cases and involvement of the petitioner in other cases is concerned, reliance has been placed upon the judgment of the Hon’ble Supreme Court in **Maulana Mohd. Amir Rashadi Vs. State of U.P. and another, 2012 (2) SCC 382** in which, it is held that the facts and circumstances of the present case are to be seen while deciding a bail application and the bail application of the petitioner cannot be rejected solely on the ground that the petitioner is involved in another case. The relevant portion of the said judgment is reproduced herein-below:-

“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. Deprivation of personal liberty without ensuring speedy trial is not consistent with Article 21. While deprivation of personal liberty for some period may not be avoidable, period of deprivation pending trial/appeal cannot be unduly long. The Apex Court in **“Abdul Rehman Antulay and others v. R.S. Nayak and another”, 1992(2) RCR (Criminal) 634** observed that Right to Speedy Trial flowing from Article 21 encompasses all the stages, namely the stage of investigation, inquiry, trial, appeal, revision and retrial.

9. The veracity of the allegations leveled against the petitioner shall be established during the course of the trial. The conclusion of the trial

2024:PHHC:125515



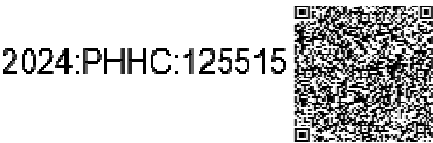
will take a considerable time. Therefore, this Court is of the view that further incarceration of the petitioner will not serve any purpose.

10. Without commenting anything on the merits of the case, lest it may prejudice the trial, the present petition is allowed and the petitioner is ordered to be released on regular bail on her furnishing adequate bail/surety bonds to the satisfaction of the concerned learned trial Court/Duty Magistrate. The petitioner shall also 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 witness(s).
- (III) The petitioner will appear before the trial Court on the date fixed, unless personal presence is exempted.
- (IV) The petitioner shall not commit an offence similar to the offence of which she is accused of, or for commission of which she is suspected.
- (V) The petitioner shall not directly or indirectly make any inducement, threat or promise to any person acquainted with the facts of the case so as to dissuade him from disclosing such facts to the Court or to any police officer or tamper with the evidence.

11. In case of breach of any of the above conditions, the prosecution shall be at liberty to move an application for cancellation of bail before this Court.

12. However, nothing stated above shall be construed as a final expression of opinion on the merits of the case and the trial Court would



proceed independently of the observations made in the present case which are only for the purpose of adjudicating the present bail petition.

Pending miscellaneous application(s), if any, also stands disposed of.

(KIRTI SINGH)
JUDGE

23.09.2024
Ramandeep Singh

Whether speaking / reasoned	Yes/No
Whether Reportable	Yes/No